

the Family Guide

girl scouts 
heart of michigan

2023-2024
What you need to know!





The Family Guide

There's so much we want to tell you—so we're going to take it one step at a time! The best part about Girl Scouts is that it's really a family affair; she'll need your support along the way. Throughout this guide, you'll learn the ins and outs of Girl Scouts and what sets us apart.

So your girl joined Girl Scouts.

Congratulations—you just made the best imaginable choice for her and her future!

Because you made this choice, your girl will learn who she is and how to stand by what she believes in with confidence. She will achieve more academically and in her future career. Signing her up for Girl Scouts now ensures that she will rise above her peers for the rest of her life. Kudos to you for making that happen! By partnering with an organization that has been the expert in girl development for over a century, you're giving her the advantage of a lifetime. Parenting WIN.

You may have been a Girl Scout growing up, or you may only know us for our beloved cookies. Either way, you're about to embark alongside your girl on the journey of a lifetime. During this journey, she will make the best friends of her life. She'll work on badges, earn awards, do crafts, go camping, and more. You might know that already.

But did you know that Girl Scouts is the single most important thing you can do for your daughter to give her an advantage? Girl Scout alumnae achieve more, earn more, and strive for more. There are 15 research-proven competencies that Girl Scouts develop. Our famous cookie program is so much more than sweet treats; it's a real-life opportunity for your girl to start her own business. Our highest award, the Gold Award, sets your girl up with college scholarship opportunities and if she enters the military, she could enter at one rank higher for having earned her Gold Award.

Prework:

Mind Map—What do you want for your girl?

As a parent or caretaker, you have dreams and goals for your girl. Use this space to write down as many of these as you can. Are there things on your list you might need help in achieving? There are no right or wrong answers, this is for you to think about your goals as a parent or caretaker.

Example: be successful!

This exercise has helped you focus on what you want for your girl and your parenting expectations. ***We hope the rest of this document demonstrates how Girl Scouting can help you and your girl achieve your goals!***

FIVE REGIONAL CENTERS & SHOPS TO SERVE YOU!

Ann Arbor Regional Center
1671 Plymouth Rd, Ste A-4
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-714-5140
734-714-3037 FAX

Jackson Regional Center
4403 Francis St
Jackson, MI 49203
517-784-8543
517-784-9553 FAX

Kalamazoo Regional Center
601 West Maple St
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
269-343-1516
269-492-1439 FAX

Lansing Regional Center at Wacousta
13287 Wacousta
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
517-699-9400
517-699-9405 FAX

Saginaw Regional Center
5470 Davis Rd
Saginaw, MI 48604
989-799-9565
989-799-1450 FAX

Dear Girl Scout families,

Girl Scouting is a very special space designed just for girls!

At Girl Scouts, our goal is to provide hands-on and girl-led experiences in a safe, fun and friendly cooperative learning atmosphere.



As experts in girl development, staff at Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan are trained to actively help both leaders and volunteers develop your girl's curiosity, confidence, and leadership skills she'll need to thrive throughout her life. Staff stay up-to-date on the latest youth development literature and issues facing our girls today and apply this knowledge with your girl's well-being front of mind.

The three operational program model processes in Girl Scouting are: 1) Girl-Led; 2) Experiential Learning or hands-on learning; and 3) Cooperative Learning.



Hands-on is the most fun way to learn!



Girl Scouts lead the way in all their activities

Girl Scouts is Girl-Led

Research clearly states girl-led makes girls smarter! By trying new things and operating at the edge of their abilities, when a girl makes a mistake and recovers by thinking through her experiences, learning from it and making adjustments, she grows her ability to cope and gains valuable self-reliance and resilience. Girl-led helps girls slow down, make errors, and correct them, making her smarter and more skilled. Practicing Ggirl- led helps her see mistakes as a positive learning experience and can help her overcome any fear of failure she may have.

Safe girl-led Girl Scout experiences allow girls to try new things and learn new skills which, in-turn, builds their confidence and strengthens their internal locus of control. Girl-led guides girls toward courage, independence, and resourcefulness.

Hands-on Learning

Hands-on learning is the fun, effective way to enrich a girl's mind and helps her retain what she learned and experienced. Hands-on, also called experiential learning, engages both sides of the brain, thus building a stronger connection between the right and left brain. While learning by doing, the left brain actively engages in listening and analyzing and the right brain is practicing visual and spatial relationships. Hands-on inspires a girl's innate curiosity, awakens the desire to investigate, and learn for themselves using analytical abilities of their own. Hands-on learning is a real world opportunity for close engagement in a project and often produces something unique that, in-turn, is a source of pride and confidence builder.



Get ready for the adventure of a lifetime!



Teamwork makes the dream work!

Cooperative Learning inspires a team atmosphere where girls can coordinate, cooperate, collaborate, and communicate, while building support for themselves and empathy for others. Through kind, mindful, and considerate dialog through a troop setting, camp, or at a council program/event, girls learn team work, democratic process and group dynamics, and problem solving. To become well adjusted, girls need the freedom to make mistakes, solve problems and “have a go” at sorting out challenging situations in a supportive safe atmosphere and Girl Scouting has just such an environment.

Today, girls face unprecedented challenges; but, luckily, Girl Scouting provides a clear path toward their learning to thrive through adversity, build competence (see 15 outcomes/competency on page?), courage, embrace critical values (see promise and law on page 6) and healthy relationships.

By enrolling your daughter in Girl Scouts, you have increased her opportunity to succeed and have given her a significant advantage to:

- Recover from mistakes and gain confidence to problem-solve on her own
- Grow her self-esteem
- Make meaningful friendships
- Build empathy and caring
- Build critical thinking skills and

courage to tackle challenges.

Many parents and volunteers are astounded by their girl's abilities to expand and grow more joyful and resilient through their Girl Scouting experiences. In fact, Girl Scout leaders tell us that, through Girl Scouts, they learned helpful strategies to nurture a girl toward her future success and happiness that they never imagined possible.

Your encouragement and support of your daughter's Girl Scout journey can make all the difference. By positively interpreting her challenges and experiences, you can strengthen the benefits of Girl Scouting even more.

At Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan, we grow girl greatness. Welcome to Girl Scouting, where a girl prospers and her abilities are nurtured.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Jan Barker, Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan

**The research is clear:
Girl Scouts soar above their peers
in personal and professional
achievements.**



Where to Find What You Need!

It doesn't matter what questions you might have about Girl Scouting. Finding the answer is easy once you get to know our resources:

Help Desk

Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan has an entire team of staff dedicated to helping you and answering any questions you may have about Girl Scouting! We are here for you. Please don't hesitate to call 1-800-497-2688 or email helpdesk@gshom.org.

gshom.org

Our website is packed with information! Explore and browse www.gshom.org.

The Source

The Source contains our current year events and programs. There are things to do for every level of Girl Scouting, as well as their families. It also has helpful information about Girl Scouts, being a volunteer, and more. It is printed and mailed to current members and is available on our website.

Rallyhood


Rallyhood is our new onestop shop to connect, share resources, and get inspired with Girl Scout families, volunteers, and Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan staff.

Facebook

Follow us to keep up with events, and more.


Stay Connected!

 www.facebook.com/gshom

 www.instagram.com/gshom

 www.tiktok.com/@gshom

 www.x.com/girlscoutsgshom

 www.linkedin.com/company/girl-scout-heart-of-michigan

 www.youtube.com/user/gshom

Council Events Calendar

October

Cyber Security Awareness Month

10/1: Happy New Girl Scout Year!

10/31: Founder Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

November

11/19: Women's Entrepreneurship Day

December

Cookie Season Begins

12/6-12/12: Computer Science Education Week

January

Self-Love & Confidence Month

1/16: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February

2/16-2/18: National Girl Scout Cookie Weekend

2/22: World Thinking Day

March

Women's History Month

3/12-3/18: Girl Scout Week

April

National Volunteer Month

4/22: Girl Scout Leader's Day

May

National Bridging Week

5/4: The Great Space Challenge at the Air Zoo

5/18: Higher Award Prep Session

June

6/1: Bridging Ceremony in all Regionals

6/28-6/30: Jamboree

July

Girl Scout Overnight Camp

7/4: Independence Day

August

Girl Scout Overnight Camp

8/10: National S'mores Day

September

Treats & Reads Begins

9/10-9/11: Girl Scout Love State Parks

9/30: Last day for on-time renewal!

Girl Scouts: The premiere leadership experience for girls. Period.

Girls Scouts:

Discover and

1. develop a strong sense of self.
2. develop positive values.
3. gain practical life skills.
4. seek challenges in the world.
5. develop critical thinking.



Girls Scouts:

Connect and

1. develop healthy relationships.
2. promote cooperation and team building.
3. can resolve conflicts.
4. advance diversity in a multicultural world.
5. feel connected to their communities, locally and globally.



Girls Scouts:

Take Action and

1. can identify community needs.
2. are resourceful problem solvers.
3. advocate for themselves and others, locally and globally.
4. educate and inspire others to act.
5. feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

**Members may substitute for the word God in accordance to their own spiritual beliefs*

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be
honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,
and to
respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and be a
sister to every Girl Scout.

Girls Scouts:

Become Leaders

We want girls to build the confidence they need to achieve anything and everything that they want in life—
and that's what we do in Girl Scouts.

There are different ways to volunteer!

There are three main areas in which you can volunteer. You can volunteer with troops and be a troop leader, troop product manager, or troop helper. You can volunteer with the Service Unit by helping troops in your area get together, planning events, programs, trips, and camping adventures, supporting product program, or keeping track of finances. You can become a Trainer where you educate new and existing volunteers about Girl Scouts, outdoor adventures, money managing, and badge requirements. Do you know a community member that would make a great Girl Scout volunteer? Get them connected with us through helpdesk@gshom.org.

Volunteer Troop Leaders

A major part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is the adult volunteer team that works together to make Girl Scouting possible for girls. As a Troop Leader, you help girls plan and execute their Girl Scout experience, from the conception of an idea, to setting goals, to knocking those goals out of the park.

Troop Leaders are encouraged to develop a team of adults who can help you facilitate the troop experience; after all, many hands make for light work. Two unrelated adults are required to start a troop. We highly recommend that Troop Leaders identify parents to help with carpooling, snacks, chaperoning, the Product Program (i.e., the Cookie Program), and more. Our classic program model, volunteer-led troops allow girls to build lifelong friendships unlike any others. With your help girls learn incredible life skills, such as conflict management and how to become leaders among their peers.

Consider how you can help out the troop as a parent volunteer! It's an incredible way to be involved in what will be a life-changing experience for your girl.

Volunteer Product Managers

If running troop meetings and planning programs is not your thing but you still want to volunteer your time to your girls troop, a Product Manager might be the role for you. In this role you would coordinate annual treats & reads and cookie sales at the troop level. Help the girls set up booths and manage inventory and money. Then watch the girls light up when they earn the rewards for being the best entrepreneurs ever!

Elements of a Foundational Girl Scout Experience

By volunteering, you help girls get the most out of Girl Scouting by:

- Attending regular meetings
- Badges and Highest Awards (see page 12)
- Community service and Take Action projects
- The great outdoors and Girl Scout camp
- Field trips and Girl Scout events
- Product Programs
- Girl Scout traditions

Use Your Skills to Help a Troop

Do you have a skill or niche interest that you are passionate about? The odds are there is a badge for it. If you do not have the time to dedicate to leading a troop or organizing a product cupboard, running a badge workshop is another volunteer option. Whether you like gardening, math, planets, cooking, literature, camping, cartography, etc., you have something to offer girls and enrich their education. Talk to your girl's troop leader today about hosting a badge workshop.



Not Sure Where You Fit?

So you decided that volunteering is something you were interested in, but you don't know which role is the best fit for you? Scan the QR code to take our quiz designed to help you find the best volunteer position for you!





Daisies
Grades K-1



Brownies
Grades 2-3

Wear it Where?

Where do those well-earned badges, patches, and pins belong? Here's the rundown on what goes where on your tunic, sash, or vest.

Flag patch, council names patches, and troop numbers go on the front right, in that order, starting at troop.

Badges and Journey awards always go on the front, starting at the bottom. On a vest, Badges go on the right and Journey awards on the left. On a sash, badges go below the Journey awards.

Fun patches from trips and experiences always go on the back.



Juniors
Grades 4-5



Cadettes & Seniors & Ambassadors
Grades 6-8 & Grades 9-10 & Grades 11-12

Shop for all her
Girl Scout needs at
one of our five
Regional Offices

“Badges are not medals to wear on your sleeve to show what a smart girl you are. A badge is a symbol that girls have done the thing it stands for often enough, thoroughly enough, and well enough to be prepared to give service in it. You wear the badge to let people know that you are prepared and willing to be called on because you are a Girl Scout.”

Juliette Gordon Low
Girl Scouts Founder

Badges and Patches

Girl Scouts are well-known for our history of celebrating female accomplishments through our badges and patches. What is the difference between the two? A badge indicates that a girl has mastered a topic, at an age-appropriate level, by completing necessary steps to earn the badge. A patch is typically associated with a fun event or program that a girl might attend, or can be used to symbolize a troop passion or area of interest.

Events and Programs

Beyond troop meetings and field trips, Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan hosts events and programs all year long! Check out our Program book for an in-depth look at current programming. You can attend these events with your girl—her Girl Scout experience does not need to be limited to what her troop does! Your girls troop hasn't started yet? Don't worry! Anyone is welcome to attend GSHOM Program Events!



If you have registered, and have not received a copy of the *Source*, you can check it out on our website: gshom.org.

Virtual Programming

We have a library of virtual programming, including astronomy, gardening, cooking, entrepreneurship, and so much more. Find them at www.youtube.com/user/gshom.

The Most Valuable Lessons

Even when the world can seem upside down, Girl Scouts stays rooted in the values listed below. The simple, positive values your family holds dear are spelled out in the Girl Scout Law. Ask your girl what she thinks the following parts of the Girl Scout laws means to her.

Be honest



Be fair

Be friendly and helpful

Be considerate and caring

Be courageous and strong



Be responsible for what I say and do

Our Famous Cookie Program

Did you know that the Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led business in the world? Girls learn fundamental entrepreneurial skills that they can't get anywhere else, while providing a tasty treat for their customers! The five skills that Girl Scouts learn from participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program that help them thrive are:

- Goal setting
- Decision making
- Money management
- People skills
- Business ethics



Treats & Reads Program

The Girl Scout Product Program includes more than just our beloved cookies. Girls also participate in Treats & Reads, which includes the sale of nuts, candies, and magazines, and takes place during the off-season of Girl Scout cookies. Girls learn the same five important life skills as in the Cookie Program. If you haven't had a chance to sample our high quality nuts and candies, you are in for a treat. They are delicious and make great welcome gifts. Together, the Cookie Program and Treats & Reads make up the Girl Scouts Product Program.

How the Girl Scout Product Programs Benefit Your Girl

Participating in Product Program not only helps your girl to learn the five skills, it also helps her to raise funds that she can use during her Girl Scout experience. The more Girl Scout Cookies or Treats & Reads that your girl sells, the more funds she raises that can help her have more fun during Girl Scouts! She can use these funds to buy things from our Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan Retail Shops, plan a camping trip with her troop, go to Girl Scouts Camp, and learn goal setting at the same time!

Product Program	
Cookies	Begins December
Treats & Reads	Begins September

Giving Back to Your Local Home Town Heros

The Girl Scout Product Programs provide our girls and you with a fantastic opportunity to donate our delicious products to members of your community who you think deserve recognition for their hard work and service. It is made possible through our Home Town Heroes program.



Girl Scouts choose what local Hometown Heroes they would like to give an extra smile to when you donate directly to them. Plus, you can donate all year long, not just during Product Program season! The Hometown Heroes program gives Girl Scouts the ability to give back and learn about the people who make a difference in their community.

Go Outside, Come Back Better.

At Girl Scout Camp, your girl can canoe, climb a rock wall, learn to build a fire, earn badges, ride horses, learn about outdoor skills, participate in hatchet throwing, hike under the stars, make new friends, try archery, learn about wildlife, and so much more! There are also so many ways to camp. In the summer, your girl can participate in day and overnight camp with other Girl Scouts throughout our footprint. You can find all of the details about our summer camps from our annual Camp Guide.

All year long your girl can experience camp through day, overnight, and weekend camps with her troop, where they choose what activities they want to do. If your girl isn't ready for over night camp just yet, then come have a blast at one of our all day events.

Join Your Girl At Camp

Research shows significant benefits associated with spending time in the great outdoors. This research isn't limited to just girls. Join your Girl Scout at camp for a day program or for longer at the Me & My Gal or Me & My Guy programs. It's possible to bring the whole family and rent a cabin at one of our 5 amazing camp and cabin properties.

Me & My Programs

The Me & My programs are a perfect way for your girl to explore the benefits and fun of camp while having the support of a family member there with them. If your girl is nervous about going to camp for the first time, this is the perfect program for her to dip her toes in at staying away from home. These programs are open for a girl and an adult 18 years or older to come and enjoy the camp experience.



Sister to Sister Fund

Help Girl Scout sisters throughout Michigan by donating to the Sister to Sister Fund. All donations support local Girl Scouts with financial scholarships.

Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan give girls over \$150,000 in scholarships annually. Your donation will help your Girl Scout sisters with registration, uniform pieces, programs, camp programs, and more.

Each family that donates will be listed in our monthly e-newsletter. Check your inbox on the first of the month for all the great information!

[Bit.ly/GSSister2Sister](https://bit.ly/GSSister2Sister)

Highest Awards & Ceremonies

Making the world a better place is more than our mission statement. It is at the heart of everything we do. That is why our Highest Awards recognize girls for contributions they make to their communities.. Girl Scout Juniors can achieve the bronze award. Girl Scout Cadettes can complete the Silver Award. Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors may achieve the Gold Award, earning them the prestigious title, Gold Award Girl Scout.

Benefits of Your Girl Attaining the Highest Awards

These awards have a real impact on the lives of girls, as they build the skills and resilience needed to achieve massive goals. Additionally, girls who earn the Gold Award qualify for many college scholarships and are entitled to enlist at a higher pay grade if they choose to join the military. This represents an amazing advantage only available to Girl Scouts.



The Bronze Award is the Highest Award a Junior Girl Scout (grades 4-5) can earn.

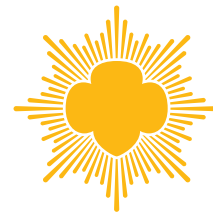
- Girls work together to create a sustainable solution to a problem that they identify around them, this is called a Take Action Project
- Girls gain understanding of sustainability by talking together about how solutions can be long-lasting
- Requires 20 hours of work



The Silver Award is the Highest Award a Cadette Girl Scout (grades 6-8) can earn.

- Individual or small groups of girls identify and address a community problem they care about
- Girls demonstrate an understanding of sustainability by talking together about how solutions can be long-lasting
- Step outside of their comfort zone to connect with community members to learn how others have solved similar problems. Then work with their new friends to determine how the ideas can inform their plan
- Requires 50 hours of work

The Girl Scout Gold Award symbolizes the highest achievement in Girl Scouting. It is the capstone to a series of awards available exclusively to Girl Scouts: the Highest Awards.



The Gold Award is the Highest Award a Senior or Ambassador Girl Scout (grade 9-12) can earn.

Girls find a problem in their community and work to create a sustainable solution to the problem. This process includes four elements

- Girls work individually to identify the root cause of a community issue about which she is passionate
- Girls must demonstrate leadership, and projects must be sustainable and measurable
- The Gold Award project includes a plan to share results beyond the local community
- Requires 80 hours of work



All about my troop

Fill in the details of your girl's troop and keep this handy all year long!

Troop number: _____

Troop co-leader phone: _____

Troop co-leader phone: _____

Meeting place: _____

We meet at _____ on _____, every _____ weeks.
[TIME] [DAY] [NUMBER]

The girls in the troop are: _____

Important cookie dates: _____

My family is helping out by: _____

Other important information: _____