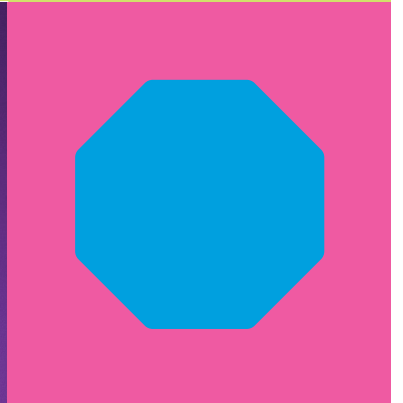




# New Leader's Guide to Success



# Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan

**1. Camp Linden**  
Linden, MI

**2. Camp Merrie Woode**  
Plainwell, MI

**3. Camp O' the Hills**  
Brooklyn, MI

**4. Camp Wacousta**  
Grand Ledge, MI

**5. Saginaw Regional Center**  
Saginaw, MI 48604

**6. Kalamazoo Regional Center**  
Kalamazoo, MI

**7. Ann Arbor Regional Center**  
Whitmore Lake, MI

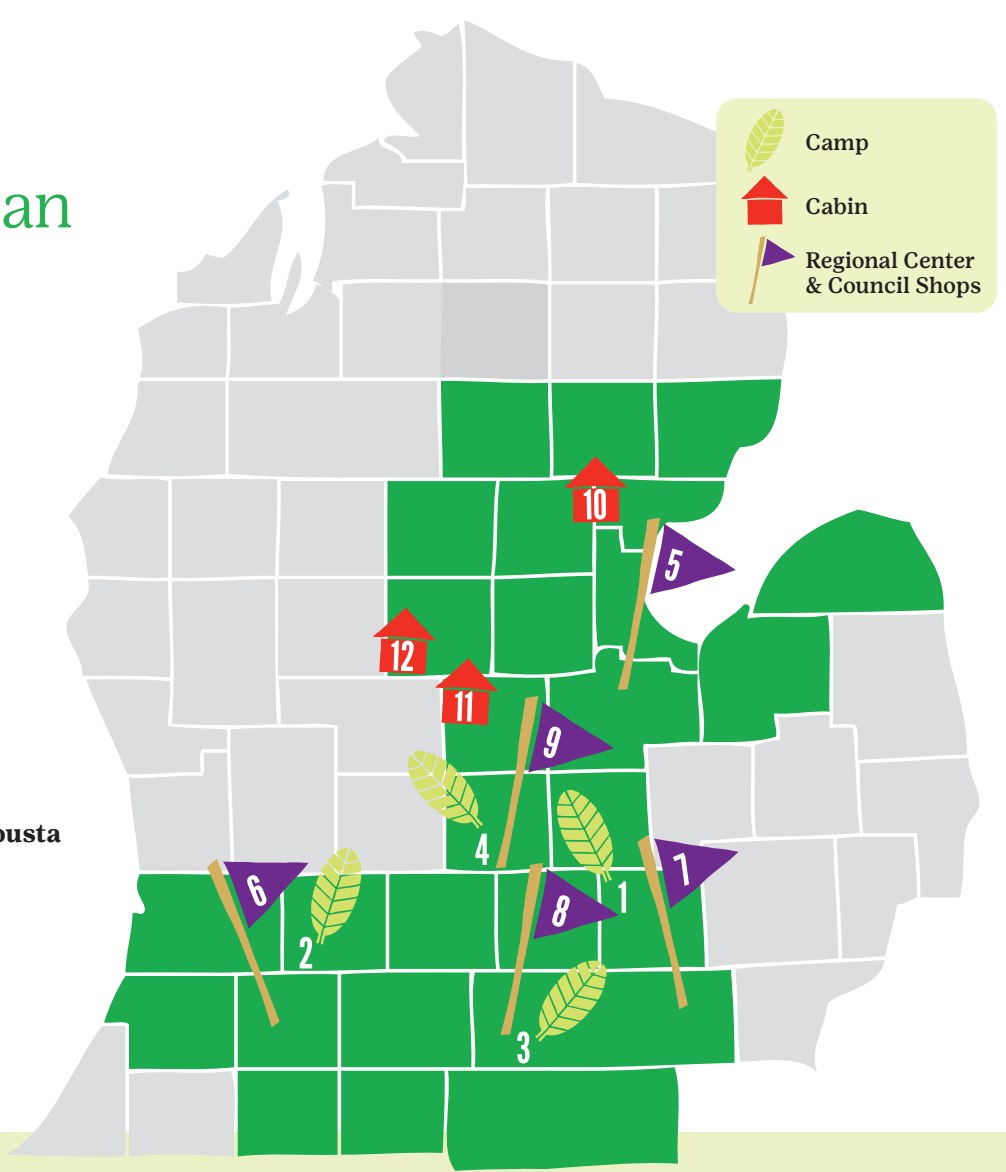
**8. Jackson Regional Center**  
Jackson, MI

**9. Lansing Regional Center at Wacousta**  
Grand Ledge, MI

**10. The Hut**  
West Branch, MI

**11. Barbara Osterman Cabin**  
Alma, MI

**12. Jane Harris Cabin**  
Mt. Pleasant, MI



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# Girls Scouts Heart of Michigan

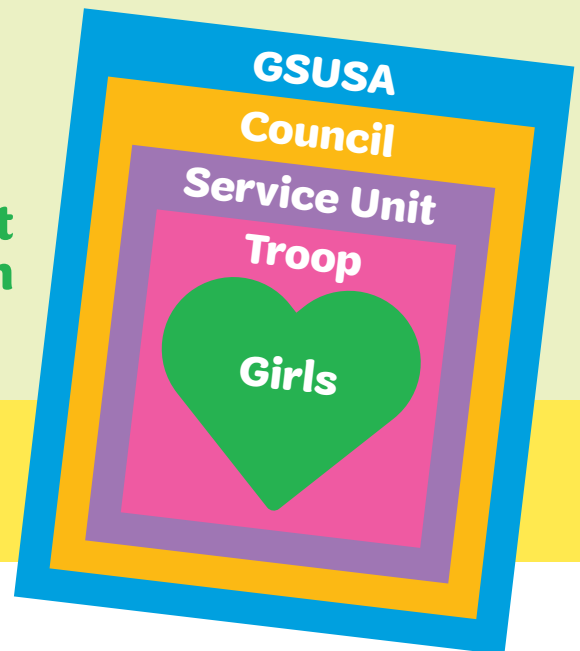
**Organizational Structure Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA):** A national organization supporting the work of more than 110 councils across the U.S. for more than 100 years. Headquartered in New York City.

**Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan:** Independent 501(c) (3) nonprofit chartered by GSUSA, operating under the direction of a local board of directors and overseeing all service units and troops within a specific geographic area.

**Service Unit:** Made up of volunteers who support the work of troop volunteers within a given geographic area.

**Troops:** Volunteer-supervised groups of girls.

**Girls are the heart  
of our organization**



## **The 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.



Scan to download  
the Girl Scout  
Promise and Law  
here and share  
with your troop.

## **The 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.

## **Our Mission:**

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage,  
confidence, and character, who  
make the world a better place.

## **Girl Scout Motto:**

Be Prepared

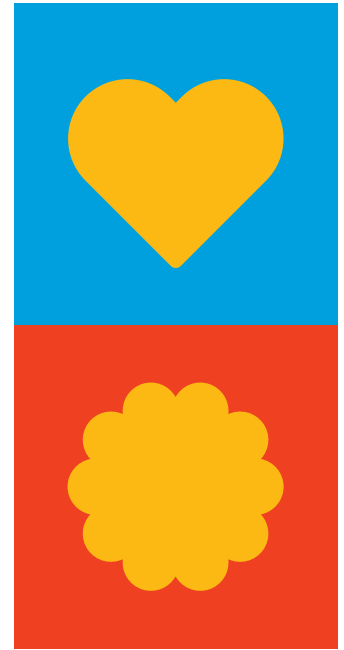
## **Girl Scout Slogan:**

Do a Good Turn Daily

\*Members may substitute for the word God in accordance with their own spiritual beliefs.

# New Leader Checklist

- 1) Register as Adult Member with Girl Scouts.
- 2) Complete a Welcome Chat with a Girl Scout staff partner.
- 3) Complete required virtual training courses.
- 4) Plan first troop meeting logistics (to be held 2-3 weeks after registration as an adult member).
- 5) Promote your new troop and recruit members to first meeting.
- 6) Open Troop Bank Account.
- 7) Meet your community of Troop Leaders.
- 8) Host First Troop Meeting.

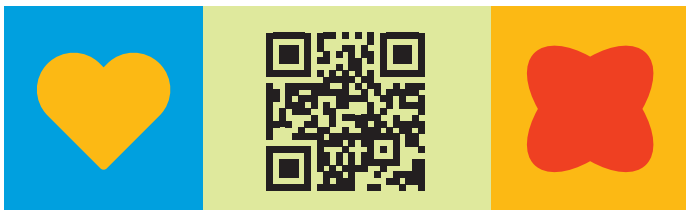


# Getting Started

Once you register as an adult member of Girl Scouts, you'll receive an email prompting you to log into your MyGS.

MyGS is your digital portal to all things Girl Scouts. MyGS allows you to manage your membership & any other members in your household, access your troop roster, access the VTK (Volunteer Toolkit), access training on gsLearn, and manage your troop meeting details.

You can access MyGS via our website [mygs.girlscouts.org](https://mygs.girlscouts.org) and look for the MyGS symbol in the top right or scan here:



## New Leader Training: Your Launchpad to Success!

You've said "YES" to leading—and that's amazing! Now, let's make sure you feel **confident, prepared, and ready to shine.** Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan provides training designed to set you up for success from day one.

If you haven't already, be on the look out for a 'Welcome' email from a Girl Scout Staff Partner. This email will outline where you are in the onboarding process and explain next steps in detail, including required New Leader courses to be completed in gsLearn before being able to host the first troop meeting.

## How to Access Training

Log in to **MyGS**, click **gsLearn**, and start your courses at your own pace. Most leaders finish each course in under 2 hours —so you'll be ready to lead in no time!



New Leader's Guide to Success

## Required Courses for New Leaders

Before hosting your first troop meeting, complete these quick, practical courses in gsLearn:

### New Leader 101

Your foundation for success! This orientation walks you through everything you need to know—troop basics, safety guidelines, and how to make Girl Scouts unforgettable for girls.

Complete this course before your first troop meeting.

Available **24/7 in gsLearn** for your convenience.

### Grade Level Essentials: Your Key to Age-Appropriate Fun!

Every Girl Scout experience is tailored to her age—and this training helps you understand exactly what girls love and learn at each level.

Complete this course within 90 days of your first troop meeting.

#### Here's what to know:

Available **24/7 in gsLearn** for your convenience.

**Prefer live interaction?** Check the Events Calendar for scheduled virtual sessions for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors.

These quick trainings ensures your meetings are **fun, meaningful, and just right for your troop's grade level.** You'll feel confident knowing you're giving girls the best experience possible!

## Why Training Matters

Every troop leader is a role model, guide, and cheerleader for girls. Training gives you the tools to:

- Plan fun, meaningful meetings.
- Keep girls safe and engaged.
- Navigate Girl Scout resources with ease.
- Feel confident in your leadership role.

# New Leader Support System

**Girl Scouting is all about sisterhood. As a leader, you are not alone!** Your troop volunteers, co leader(s), and caregivers are your primary team. Get to know them and allow them to help!

**Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan (GSHOM) Council Staff Partners:** Every staff partner, from your membership team, to the camp rangers, to the CEO are here to support your Girl Scout Leader journey.

**Help desk:** our team of experts, equipped with the kindness and knowledge to help you through any problem. When in doubt, Help Desk it out! Reach them at 1-800-497-2688 or by emailing [helpdesk@gshom.org](mailto:helpdesk@gshom.org).

**Placement Specialist:** Works directly with prospective members and leaders to place members and start the Girl Scout Leader Onboarding.

**Membership Specialist:** Supports all volunteers in a assigned territory, works with volunteers to recruit new members, and helps new troop leaders complete onboarding. Your Membership Specialist will support you in your first year as a leader by:

- Reaching out to you monthly to check on your troops progress, give you any information needed to know for the current month, and answer any questions you may have.
- Connecting you with resources needed to be a successful leader.
- Introducing you to your Service Unit Key Volunteers and connecting you with local Service Unit Meetings to get involved with your local community of Girl Scout Volunteers.
- Help recruit new members to your troop.

**Girl Scout Experience Box (GSEB):** This is for qualifying troops K-3 that are either brand new, or have 4 new members that year in those grades. Check with your Membership Specialist to see if your troop qualifies.

**Service Unit Manager:** As a new troop leader, you're not alone—your Service Unit Manager (SUM) is here to help! Think of them as your local Girl Scout connector. They lead the Service Unit (that's the group of troops in your area) and make sure leaders like you have the support, resources, and community you need.

- Keeps you in the loop about council updates, events, and opportunities.
- Hosts Service Unit meetings where leaders share ideas and get support.
- Helps with questions about troop management, traditions, and best practices.
- Builds a local Girl Scout community so you and your girls feel connected.

**Volunteer Essentials:** Covers all of GSHOM's policies regarding Troop Management, Finances, Engaging Girl Scouts by Level, Girl Scout Product Programs, and Additional Resources.

**Safety Activity Check Points:** Standard safety guidelines for Girl Scouts of the United States of America and Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan's approved activities.



# Keeping Members Safe

Girl Scouts takes safety seriously because every girl deserves a secure, positive experience. Whenever your troop meets:

- ✓ At least two fully onboarded Girl Scout Troop Leaders must be present.
- ✓ One of those Leaders must be female.
- ✓ The two Leaders cannot be related or live in the same household (so not siblings, spouses, partners, parents, or anyone considered family).

No exceptions. This standard protects girls and volunteers alike and ensures every meeting is safe and fun.



# Keeping Members Safe (cont)

## Understanding How Many Volunteers You Need

From camping weekends to cookie booths, adult volunteers must always be present to ensure their girls have fun and stay safe, no matter their grade level. Not sure just how many adults you'll need for your activity? The chart below breaks down the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls.

Volunteer-to-girl ratio chart	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two Unrelated Troop Leaders (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of this many girls:	Two Unrelated Troop Leaders (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional volunteer for each additional number of this many girls:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	1-6	6	1-4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	1-8	12	1-6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	1-10	16	1-8

## Planning Safe Activities

When preparing for any activity with girls, use our Girl Scouts' Safety Activity Checkpoints for required guidelines on where to do the activity, how to include girls with disabilities, where to find both basic and specialized gear for the activity, and the specific steps to follow on the day of the activity. Safety Activity Checkpoints will also note if a first-aider is required.

If a Safety Activity Checkpoint doesn't exist for an activity you and your girls are interested in, contact Help Desk at [helpdesk@gshom.org](mailto:helpdesk@gshom.org) before making any definite plans.



### Required paperwork to keep on you at all times while with troop members:

Troop Roster of all Troop Members (Girl & Adult)

Health History forms

Information share on your troop tri application if on a field trip.

**Pro Tip**  
Keep all this together in a binder so it is safe, protected, and easily available.

## What to do in an Emergency

Although we all hope the worst never happens, you should know and follow Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan procedures for handling emergency incidents. Remember, at the scene of an incident, safety is your first priority. Call 911 if warranted, provide care for the injured person and/or obtain medical assistance, then immediately report the emergency to the GSHOM Emergency Line at [989-399-7299](tel:989-399-7299). Save this number on your phone just in case.

Any time that an incident or accident occurs, the Incident/Accident form must be completed and turned in to the nearest Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan regional center.



## Make sure a first aid kit is available for your troop meetings and can accompany your troop on any activity.

The Red Cross offers a list of potential items in its Anatomy of a First Aid kit.

You can purchase a commercial kit with troop funds, or you and the girls can assemble a kit yourselves.



Scan here to see the list



# Before You Meet Your Troop, Plan Ahead!

Connect with your co-leader or second volunteer to make key decisions about your troop. Then, during your parent/caregiver meeting, you'll share these plans and invite families to be part of the adventure.

## Decisions:

### Meeting Logistics:

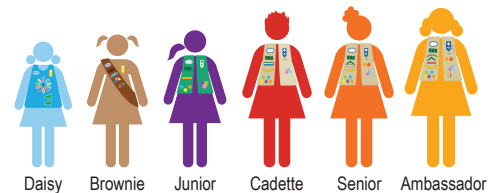
- When and where will your troop meet?
- How often and how long will meetings be?

### Troop Activities:

- How often will you meet beyond regular meetings?  
(Think GSHOM programs, camping at council properties, Service Unit events, field trips, and more!)

### Troop Composition:

- What grade levels will your troop include?
- If you're starting with one level, will you welcome girls from one, two, or three grades within that level?  
(Remember: Your troop will "grade up" together!)



### Troop Volunteers:

- What help will you need from parents and caregivers?
- Who can assist with snacks, activities, or outings?

### Your Own Girl Scout(s):

- How will you manage your own child during troop activities so everyone gets a great experience?

### Rallyhood Communication:

- Who will share updates and info with caregivers through your troop's Rallyhood page?

Rallyhood is our communication platform where you'll communicate with your troop and get important updates from your staff partners.

### Troop Finances:

- Which GSHOM-approved bank will you use?
- Who will serve as **Treasurer**?
- Which **two approved adults** (one must be a troop leader) will be on the troop bank account?
- Will you have **dues** or a **start-up fee**?

### Uniforms:

- Beyond the Membership Pin, what uniform pieces will your troop require?
- Will leaders coordinate uniform purchases, or will caregivers buy directly from GSHOM?
- When should girls have their uniforms ready?

The Troop will meet at \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Location Start time End time  
Meetings will be held \_\_\_\_\_. Our grade level(s) will be \_\_\_\_\_.  
Frequency  
\_\_\_\_\_. The bank we'll use is \_\_\_\_\_, and  
Grade Level(s) Bank Name  
our Treasurer is \_\_\_\_\_.

# Your First Troop Meeting & The Caregiver Meeting

This meeting is a game-changer. It ensures everyone knows the plan: when and where the troop meets, how often, and what those meetings will look like. It sets clear expectations, builds a team, and gets families excited about the Girl Scout experience. When parents and caregivers are involved, leaders have support, the troop has a plan, and girls thrive!

## Spread the Word!

Work with your Membership Specialist to advertise your meeting. Flyers can go out through schools and be posted in community spaces like libraries, coffee shops, and more.

Other ideas:

- Share in your applicable community Facebook groups.
- Distribute flyers physically and digitally.
- Use the GSHOM Volunteer Digital Toolkit to spread the word about your new troop.



## Important Reminder

### Any adult who:

- Attends troop meetings regularly (more than once).
- Joins an overnight activity.
- Handles Girl Scout money or assumes care of girls.

### Must be:

- A registered adult member of GSUSA.
- A GSHOM-approved volunteer (background check + any applicable onboarding required for volunteer role).

**Troop meetings are for registered Girl Scout members only.**

## Outline for a Successful Meeting

### 1. Get Parents/Caregivers Involved

You want your Girl Scouts to have fun, take risks, and discover their world—that's why you're here! Parents want the same for their girls, but sometimes they don't know how to help. This meeting makes it easy.

### 2. Keep It Quick and Simple

Review the different volunteer roles the troop needs. It takes a village and volunteers helping to managing snack schedules or carpools will create a strong Girl Scout Troop! If someone a special skill set or interest, maybe they can lead a badge activity or help with an event.

### 3. Discover Talents

Start with what people love to do. Event planning? Social media? Managing money? Matching tasks to interests makes volunteering fun and sustainable.

### 4. Make the Ask

Parents aren't mind readers! Be clear about what you need. If someone says no today, ask again later—availability changes, and every helper counts.

### 5. Explain the "Why"

Helping isn't just for the troop—it strengthens the bond between girls and their caregivers. Girls feel proud when their family plays an active role.



# Prep Like a Pro: Plan for the Troop's First Meeting

## Cover the Basics

Make sure your Girl Scout Heart of Michigan Membership Specialist knows the troop's first meeting details as they will share meeting details with prospective members on interest lists. New Troop Leaders are responsible for making sure that the first troop meeting details are sent to currently registered members. Be sure that caregivers know the when, where, and how often Troop Meetings will occur and what, if any beyond-the-meeting events are planned. Clear communication sets everyone up for success!

## Get Ready

Log in to the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) via myGS to confirm your troop roster and send a friendly email to parents. This is a great time to inform them about:

- Information about the Troop Leaders
- First Troop Meeting details
- Anything current planned for the troop
- The Troop Composition
- Troops will collect any Troop dues and how often the Troop Treasurer will collect
- That required paperwork will be distributed at the meeting
- Inform them of needed volunteer roles within the troop

## Know Your Agenda

Check out the 6 Elements of a Great Troop Meeting and review your meeting plan (found on the next page).

## Practice Makes Confident

Run through your agenda ahead of time. You'll feel calm, prepared, and ready to adjust if needed.

## Prepare for Fun!

When girls and caregivers see that you're organized and excited, they'll follow your lead. A little prep goes a long way toward creating a meeting that feels welcoming and energizing!



# Six Elements of a Great Troop Meeting

# 1

## Ramp up

Plan activities for the girls on arrival so that they have something to do until the meeting begins. This could be as simple as providing coloring pages, journaling, or talking with one another.

*(5 minutes)*

# 4

## Let the fun begin

Use the meeting plans found in the Volunteer Toolkit! Activities are already designed to fit easily into this part of your meeting as you help your troop earn badges and complete Journeys.

*(30–45 minutes)*

# 2

## Open

Each troop decides how to open its meetings—most begin with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, a simple flag ceremony, song, game, story, or other activity designed by the girls.

*(5–10 minutes)*

# 5

## Clean up

Because Girl Scouts should always leave a place cleaner than they found it!

*(5 minutes)*

# 3

## Conduct troop business

Collect dues and make announcements, or plan an upcoming event or trip while families are present.

*(5 minutes)*

# 6

## Close

Just like the opening, each troop can decide how to close—with a song, game, story, or pretty much anything else!

*(5–10 minutes)*

# Girl Scout Product Programs

The Girl Scout Product Program is an integral part of your troop's Girl Scout experience. The Girl Scout Product Program is made up of two sister programs that work hand in hand to provide your Girl Scouts with an exceptional experience.

The most important aspect of the Product Program is that it is a one-of-a-kind learning experience for your Girl Scouts. No other fundraiser allows children to take the lead, decide how they want to use their proceeds, and run their own business (with the help of their troop volunteers, of course!) Think of yourself and your team of volunteers as the executive assistants to our Cookie CEOs!

Troop Product Managers will have opportunities to take yearly training on both gsLearn and specialized live virtual trainings.

## Girls develop five business and leadership skills



### Fall Product Program

The Fall Product Program happens during the beginning of the Membership Year and features a variety of products, like delicious nuts, candies, and trail mixes, as well as merchandise and magazines. This program is the easiest way for new troops to earn funds quickly, that can then be used to fuel a year of Girl Scout fun!

### The Cookie Program

Of course, you've heard of Girl Scout Cookies, but did you know that the Girl Scout Cookie Program is the largest girl-led business in the world? How cool!

Our world famous program will be one of your girls' favorite part of Girl Scouting.

Troops participate in the Cookie Program in many different ways! Troops can do any or all of the following:

- Take pre-orders from family & friends - ensuring customers get their favorite variety.
- Hold Cookie Booths in their communities - most troops recommend holding at least 4 cookie booths a season.
- Members share their Troop Digital Cookie link to take Home Town Hero donations.
- So much more - all shared in year Cookie Program Training.



#### Pro Tips for a great Product Program

Find other volunteers to support you! Our research has shown that Troops that have a Troop Product Manager in addition to two Troop Leaders have the best experience.

# Girl Scout Product Programs (cont.)

## Entrepreneurship Badges & Pins

When girls sell Girl Scout Cookies, they practice-goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics—as they learn to think like an entrepreneur. Girls can earn badges and pins each year they run their own Girl Scout Cookie business. Then explore their own business idea by earning an Entrepreneur badge.

	Cookie Business		Financial Literacy		Cookie Entrepreneur Family	Entrepreneur		
Daisy	 My First Cookie Business	 Cookie Goal Setter	 Money Explorer	 My Money Choices	 Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Toy Business Designer		
Brownie	 My Cookie Customers	 Cookie Decision Maker	 Budget Builder	 My Own Budget	 Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Budding Entrepreneur		
Junior	 My Cookie Team	 Cookie Collaborator	 Budget Maker	 My Money Plan	 Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Business Jumpstart		
Cadette	 My Cookie Venture	 Cookie Market Researcher	 Cookie Innovator	 Budget Manager	 My Money Habits	 My Dream Budget	 Year 1, 2, and 3 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Business Creator
Senior	 My Cookie Network	 Cookie Boss	 Savvy Saver	 My Financial Power	 Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Business Startup		
Ambassador	 My Cookie Business Resume	 Cookie Influencer	 Financial Planner	 My Financial Independence	 Year 1 and 2 Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pins	 Entrepreneur Accelerator		

# Funding the Fun

## How You'll Fuel Your Adventure

Your girls probably have some big ideas about what they want to do in Girl Scouts—and that's awesome! As a troop leader, you'll coach them as they learn to earn and manage troop funds. But where do you start? Troop activities are powered in two main ways:

**Money-earning activities.** Fall product and cookie programs are the primary money earning activities for a troop—and they're a hands-on way for girls to learn money management skills that will serve them for the rest of their lives. You'll learn the ins-and-outs of these programs in a separate training.

**Troop dues.** Many troops decide to collect troop dues to help provide startup funds for troop activities and supplies. These could range from a few dollars per meeting to a lump sum for the entire school year. It's completely up to each troop to decide what works best for them to support the activities they want to do.

We know you have more questions about troop finances, and we've got answers! Check out the troop finances portion in the Volunteer Toolkit and in Volunteer Essentials for the details you'll need to keep troop business running smoothly.



### Money FAQs

Our two most frequently asked-about troop finance topics:

**1. How do Troops open a Bank**

**Account?** New troops will need to set up a bank account to collect dues, pay for troop supplies and activities, and collect product program revenue. Volunteer Essentials breaks down the process for you. See details at Troop Finances.

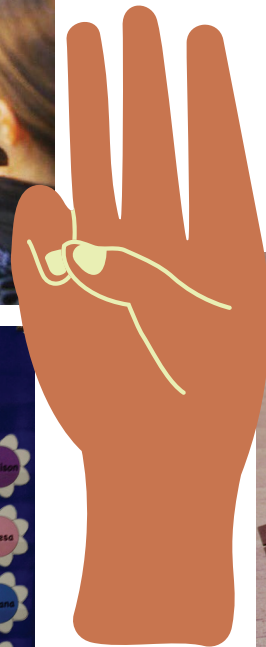
**2. Does Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan offer financial assistance?**

Finances shouldn't stand in the way of a Girl Scout's participation. Any prospective or returning member can request to apply for financial assistance during the check-out portion of the online registration. Other financial assistance is available for uniform components, programs, camps, and trainings by reaching out to Help Desk at [helpdesk@gshom.org](mailto:helpdesk@gshom.org)

# Girl Scout Traditions

**Everything in Girl Scouting is based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law, which include many principles and values that are common across religions.**

Because we understand that religious instruction is at the center of many families and communities, we invite Girl Scouts to take spiritual journeys via their faith's religious recognitions. Girl Scouts is welcoming and inclusive to members of all faiths. The My Promise, My Faith pin invites Girl Scouts to experience a faith journey by exploring the connections between the Girl Scout Law and teachings from their faith.



## Girl Scout Tradition Glossary

### Girl Scout Sign

Raise three fingers of the right hand with the thumb holding down the pinky. The 3 fingers represent the 3 parts of the Promise.

### Girl Scout Handshake

Shaking hands with the left hand and make the GS sign with the right hand. The left hand is nearest to the heart and signifies friendship.

### Friendship Circle

The unbroken chain of friendship. Girl Scouts stand in a circle crossing their right arms over their left, and clasping hands with their friends on both sides.

### SWAPS

Small tokens of friendship that girls often make and take to events or while traveling to swap with other Girl Scouts – “Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere”.

### Kaper Charts

A chart dividing up troop responsibilities. Indicates all the jobs available and who is responsible during a meeting or a camp-out.



# Girl Scout Awards



**The Highest Awards in Girl Scouting, the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award prove that girls have what it takes to build a better today—and tomorrow.**

Girls shine brightest when they're making the world a better place. That's why Girl Scouts can earn three separate awards—the Girl Scout Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards—as they dream of a better tomorrow and take action in big ways today.

Daisies and Brownies learn the basics of what it means to be a good neighbor and how they can be helpful to others. This gives them the foundation they will need to earn the Bronze Award as a Junior.



**Juniors earn the Bronze Award** by teaming up with other girls to make a difference in their towns.



**Cadettes earn the Silver Award** by researching an issue, making a plan to address it, and then taking action to improve their communities.



**Seniors and Ambassadors earn the Gold Award**—the highest award in Girl Scouting—by developing and carrying out lasting solutions to issues in their neighborhoods and beyond. Gold Award Girl Scouts truly are the world changers, rock stars, role models, and real-life heroes we all look up to. Plus, they're amazing candidates for colleges, scholarships, competitive internship programs, and exciting careers.

They're amazing candidates for colleges, scholarships, competitive internship programs, and exciting careers.

Your girls have a vision for a better world. We're here to empower them to create lasting change every step of the way—and can't wait to see all that they're going to accomplish.

## Daisy/Brownie/Junior Global Action Awards

Girl Scout badges created to help you thrive in a rapidly changing world. You'll build an entrepreneurial mindset, strengthen your STEM skills through outdoor exploration, and learn to use technology in ways that are safe, responsible, and supportive of others.



Daisy Year 1



Daisy Year 2



Brownie Year 1



Brownie Year 2



Junior Year 1



Junior Year 2



Cadette Year 1



Cadette Year 2



Cadette Year 3



Senior Year 1



Senior Year 2



Ambassador Year 1



Ambassador Year 2

## Junior, Cadette, Senior, Ambassador Leadership Awards:

The new Leadership Awards focus on developing practical skills that create real impact—and building the confidence to turn your ideas into action. Whether you're discovering your personal leadership style, collaborating with a team, guiding a group, or rising to meet a challenge, these awards are designed to help you define leadership on your own terms.



**Personal Leadership Awards**  
For Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors.



**Peer Leadership Awards**  
For Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors.



**Teaching Leadership Awards**  
For Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors.



**Community Advocacy Awards**  
For Girl Scout Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors.

# Volunteer Resources

Tear me out!

## The Volunteer Toolkit

This fully customizable digital planning tool provides you with Girl Scout program content, award requirements, and other resources, so that you can keep your Girl Scout year running smoothly. Accessible from any computer, tablet, or mobile device, the Volunteer Toolkit lets troop leaders:

Scan for the  
Volunteer  
Toolkit



Explore meeting topics and program activities with their girls

Print step-by-step activity guides and shopping lists

Manage girl attendance and track achievements

Add local events to your Troop calendar



Track and share financial information

Message and share meeting activities with troop families



...plus so much more!

Learn more and access the Volunteer Toolkit by logging into myGS at [www.gshom.org](http://www.gshom.org)



### Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting

What does it mean to be a go-getting Girl Scout? These grade level-specific guides will help you break it down for your girls. Its part handbook, part badge book, and 100% fun!



### Volunteer Essentials

With key information, policies, and procedures that support the safe and consistent delivery of Girl Scout programming to girls across the council, Volunteer Essentials is just that—essential. By agreeing to be a Girl Scout volunteer, you agree to follow the guidance outlined in this resource. Volunteer Essentials is updated annually, and the latest version can always be found on our website.



### Rallyhood

This is our place to connect, share resources, and get inspired with Girl Scout families, volunteers, and Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan staff. Rallyhood has worked with Girl Scout volunteers and council staff around the country for years and has designed specific functionality for Girl Scout councils, service units, and troops that will eliminate the inefficiency of using fragmented apps and create a more consistent way for us to stay organized and engaged online.



### Tips for Troop Leaders

When you're looking for real-world advice from fellow troop leaders who've been there, this volunteer-to-volunteer resource on the Girl Scouts of the USA website has the tips you need for a successful troop year.



### Safety Activity Checkpoints

This guide has everything you need to prepare for and keep your girls safe during a range of activities outside the normal Girl Scout troop meeting.



### Girl Scouts at Home

Meeting virtually? Girl Scouts at Home is where you'll find family friendly activities, virtual meeting resources, and a virtual events calendar with engaging sessions everyone can do from home! Find it at [girlscouts.org/athome](http://girlscouts.org/athome). Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan also offers virtual programming suite.

# Volunteer Resources (cont.)

Tear me out!



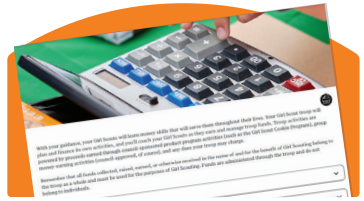
## New Leader Resources



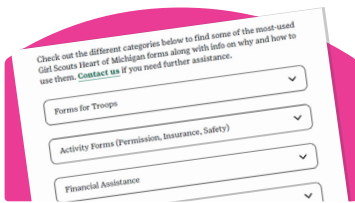
## Volunteer Essentials



## Troop Management



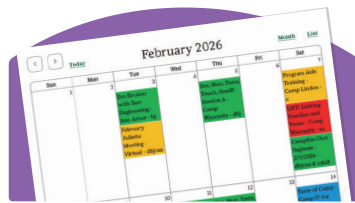
## Troop Finances



## Forms and Documents



## Product Program



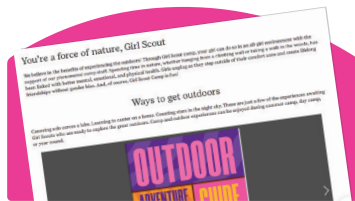
## Event Calendar



## Girl Scout Traditions



## Badge Explorer



## Reserve GSHOM Property



## How to invite new members







## Travel



# Your Girl Scout Year at a Glance

The Girl Scout year runs from **October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>**

Members can join at any time. Stay connected with your Service Unit for monthly events hosted in your local community.

Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Fall Product Program Season</b>			
<p>Earn this Patch</p> 	<p><b>Membership Year Begins (Oct 1)</b> Welcome new and returning Girl Scouts!</p> <p><b>Founder's Day / Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday (Oct 31)</b>. Celebrate our founder with a fun troop party or service project. Pro Tip: Stand on your head like Juliette did—it's tradition!</p> <p><b>Attend Spooky Science and/or Harvest Festival.</b></p> <p><b>Hold an Investure Ceremony.</b></p>	<p><b>Fall Product Program Wrap-Up.</b> Great time to teach entrepreneurship basics.</p> <p><b>Thanksgiving Service Project.</b> Encourage girls to give back to their community.</p> <p><b>Native American Heritage Month Celebration.</b> Plan a project to earn a patch.</p> <p>Earn this Patch</p> 	<p><b>Troop Holiday Celebration.</b> Inclusive crafts, games, and giving projects.</p> <p><b>Cookie Program Prep.</b> Attend training and set troop goals.</p> <p><b>Attend Girl Scout Heart of Michigan Cookie Rally!</b></p>
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
<b>Cookie Program Season</b>			
<p><b>Cookie Program Begins</b> Girls learn the 5 Skills: goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics.</p> <p><b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day.</b> Plan a service project honoring his legacy.</p>	<p><b>World Thinking Day (Feb 22).</b> Celebrate global sisterhood with activities about other cultures and international Girl Guides.</p> <p><b>Black History Month.</b> Plan a project to earn a patch.</p> <p><b>Cookie Booths Begin!</b></p> <p>Earn this Patch</p> 	<p><b>Girl Scout Week (Starts with Girl Scout Sunday).</b></p> <p><b>Girl Scouts' Birthday (Mar 12).</b> Host a troop party or community event.</p> <p><b>Girl Scout Sabbath (Mar 15).</b> Connect with faith partners if your troop chooses.</p>	<p><b>Inform troop members of Spring Renewal Opportunities .</b></p> <p><b>Girl Scout Leader's Day (Apr 22).</b> Celebrate YOU and your co-leaders!</p> <p><b>Spring Outdoor Adventures.</b> Perfect time for hikes, picnics, or camping.</p> <p><b>Prepare for bridging members!</b></p> <p><b>Camp Open House.</b></p>
May	Jun	Jul	Aug
<p><b>Attend Plan for Success with your Service Unit.</b></p> <p><b>Bridging &amp; Court of Awards.</b> Recognize achievements and celebrate moving up to the next level.</p> <p><b>End-of-Year Celebration.</b> Invite families and make it memorable!</p> <p>Earn this Patch</p> 	<b>Summer</b>		
	<p>Earn this Patch</p> 	<p><b>Troop Finance Reports due July 15.</b></p> <p><b>Attend a GSHOM summer camp.</b></p>	<p><b>Update your troop info for the new membership year ahead.</b></p> <p><b>Plan Ahead – Renew memberships and dream big for next year!</b></p>
<b>Optional Troop Fun.</b> Ice cream socials, park days, or council camps.			

# GSHOM Contact Information

girl scouts   
heart of michigan  
**gshom.org**



## Help Desk

We have a dedicated team of professionals, called the Help Desk, that is here to help you with anything you might need and answer any questions you may have.

Don't hesitate to reach out to our team if you have any questions!  
You can call us at 1-800-497-2688 or email [helpdesk@gshom.org](mailto:helpdesk@gshom.org).

**Office Hours:**  
**Monday-Friday, 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

[www.youtube.com/@gshom](https://www.youtube.com/@gshom)

[www.facebook.com/gshom](https://www.facebook.com/gshom)

[www.instagram.com/gshom](https://www.instagram.com/gshom)

[www.pinterest.com/girlscoutsgshom](https://www.pinterest.com/girlscoutsgshom)

[www.tiktok.com/@gshom](https://www.tiktok.com/@gshom)

[www.linkedin.com/company/girl-scout-heart-of-michigan/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/girl-scout-heart-of-michigan/)

## Five Regional Centers to Serve You!

**Ann Arbor  
Regional Center**  
7050 Jomar Dr  
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189  
734-714-5140

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

**Kalamazoo  
Regional Center**  
601 W Maple St  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008  
269-343-1516

**Lansing Regional Center  
at Camp Wacousta**  
13287 Wacousta Rd  
Grand Ledge, MI 48837  
517-699-9400

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