



A time for Girl Scout courage



Girl Scouting is a place where girls face their fears to find their courage, find friendship in a million little things, and learn-by-doing. This steadily becomes solid, powerful knowledge that steers them toward success, and the heartfelt values in the Girl Scout Promise and Law are the springboard to greatness and goodness that change the world every single day.

These things unite us, give us strength, and help me believe that something wonderful is always about to happen.

Believing in goodness and learning to find joy and positivity in the most challenging situations is what Girl Scouting brings me. The current environment has presented all of us with an opportunity to shine, adapt, and thrive. I have seen it emerge in the Girl Scouts around me.

I'd like to share some greatness that has emerged. It's inspiring when:

- Leaders share their pride in hosting their first virtual meeting
- Girls shriek with joy, wave frantically and send virtual hugs to their Girl Scout sisters when they first see them on the screen
- Staff work tirelessly to find new ways to offer program online
- Troops are thinking of ways they can help others like donating cookies to a hospital or making masks

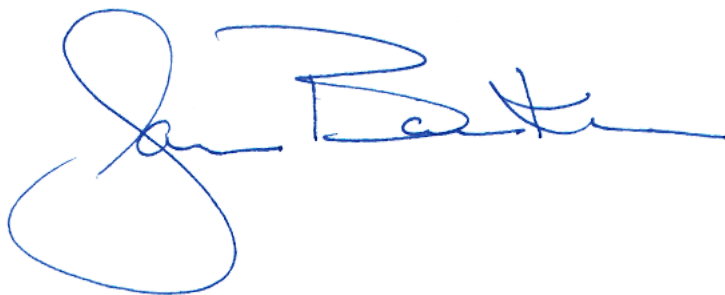
What drives us at Girl Scouts is helping leaders find easier and better ways to work with their troops, girls, and families, to share the values and build the skills that give girls a unique advantage on their life path. Along with this, we constantly invite girls and volunteers to join Girl Scouts and stick with it, for the good it brings. At this time, the mission and tasks are the same; we just have to find a fresh delivery system and ways to stay in touch. We've been working to put programs online, share virtual meeting tips and resources, find ways to share that Girl Scouts rise to just this kind of challenge, and help girls meet their goals by showing them that challenges don't mean we must stop. Instead, challenges mean we must reevaluate and find a new way to move forward.

Plans are still in place to open camps and invite even more girls and families to celebrate the exhilaration the outdoors can bring you. Staff are cleaning with a spit spot diligence, chopping wood, grading roads, staining and painting...all to provide a safe and attractive environment for our girls to learn to love the out of doors. Girls can participate in Digital Cookie through their online stores, and cookies will be available for goal getters, booths, and Cookies to Camp when it is safe to do so. Please stay current reading your Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan Newsletter for rescheduled deadlines and resumptions.

People are discovering that although distanced geographically, they are closer in heart and spirit by working together across our beautiful state via phone, conference calls, texts, webinars, and emails galore. We're offering virtual meetings, sing-alongs, dynamic programming, and uniquely creative options I think you and your girls will really enjoy. For information on how you can plug into this positivity, be sure to like us on [Facebook](#) and keep your eye on our [website](#).

I'm hoping you can find inspiring discoveries while finding new ways to confront the virus that has made its way into our lives. Let us hear your inspiring ideas, laughable quotes from girls, your girls' progress towards their Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards...oh, by the way, the deadline has been extended to December 31, 2020.....and other Girl Scout spirit that says "we're bold and won't let a virus define our attitude."

Yours in Girl Scouting,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jan Barker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jan Barker, Chief Executive Officer
Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan



It's here... Virtual Girl Scouts!

We have been working hard to create and share resources for every girl to be able to experience Girl Scouting during this socially distanced time. Every weekday at 3:00 PM, check out our [Facebook page](#) for a new activity. All resources are also being uploaded to the [Virtual Involvement page of our website](#).

[Follow along with us on Facebook! »](#)

Product Program Updates



Eat. Share. Care.

In light of the cookie program being interrupted across the nation, Girl Scouts of the USA has launched a social media and marketing campaign today to promote the purchase of cookies nationally through the Digital Cookie site. All purchases made through this Girl Scouts of the USA program, "Eat, Share, Show Communities We Care" will support Hometown Heroes in our local communities and direct financial assistance to our girls and families. Direct help to girls is going to be very critical as we have heard many of our families will need extra financial support during this time. Girl Scouting needs to be available to all girls regardless of financial burdens. The GSHOM financial assistance funds requested by families can be used for camp fees, program and event fees, and girl and adult membership costs. Unfortunately, we anticipate a larger demand for financial assistance and this initiative will allow us to provide much needed support.

Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan is strongly committed to our girl-led cookie program and wants to assure you, our valuable members, that your Girl Scouts can still participate through Digital Cookie until May 1 to reach their amazing goals.

Tips for your online cookie store:

- Share your video and pictures on your Digital Cookie Site
- Update your wording and share your story for your cookie goal
- Talk about Hometown Heroes - our cookies are being donated to food banks and hospitals right now.
- Check out this [Digital Marketing Tips for Cookies Guide!](#)

Thank you for your commitment to model and teach our girls those five key skills through the Girl Scout Cookie Program.

Yours in Girl Scouting,
Your GSHOM Product Program Team

Girl Scouts Changing the World... Right now.

We want to give a shout out to some troops doing amazing things! Is your troop working to change the world right now? Send a photo to Marketing@gshom.org to be featured!

TROOP 40687



"What my troop did was challenged online and asked for people to pay \$20 to supply 4 boxes of cookies to our local food bank. Strictly through online sales we donated 54 boxes to Bountiful Harvest in Brighton. A different troop actually did the same and donated our cookies with hers in order to limit the donation drop off interaction (distancing). I also know another troop from Brighton did this. The three Brighton troops were 40364, 41057 and 40672. I know the three together donated over 110 boxes to Bountiful Harvest."

- Angie H.



"Troop 40400 still needed 800 to reach our 175 per girl average (because we are a troop of 20). I posted on Facebook and asked friends and family for \$5 donations. Any cookies donated would be donated to hospitals, restaurants, grocery stores. Anywhere where people were helping the rest of us in some way or another. In just over a week, we've donated over 100 boxes to 4 area hospitals and I've almost got 2 more cases for another donation! We still have about 700 boxes to go to meet our goal but we're hoping through sharing on Facebook that more people will be willing to donate!" -Katie C.



Bronze, Silver, Gold Award Deadline Extended

The deadline for girls earning their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award has been extended through December 31, 2020 in order to accommodate Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who may run into challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will keep you posted if this is extended further.

How to Cope: Advice from a Clinical Therapist



This portion of the newsletter was compiled by Rebecca VanderHoek, L.M.S.W., Clinical Therapist with HRA Psychological Services. Thank you, Rebecca!

Coping with change can be very unsettling for many children and teenagers. Our girls' lives have been flipped around quite a bit in the last couple of weeks, and it is absolutely expected for many of them (and us) to be experiencing some anxieties and stress. The key to managing big emotions is being proactive and acting in

ways that prevent a "blow up." We usually need to take steps every day to release stress.

Here are some tips and tricks for how to cope on a daily basis:

1. **Get in a routine!** Your girl is used to a daily routine no matter what it looked like before COVID-19 was part of their day-to-day worry. Be sure to have them get up at a healthy time and get their day started like usual with some good personal hygiene and a great breakfast. Then plan out the day! Make room for the things that need to be done and some relaxation or fun time. Then ensure that they are eating healthy meals regularly and getting to sleep on time. This makes a big difference when maintaining health all around.
2. **Get your bodies moving!** Our muscles are amazing things. They can actually be tools to help our bodies produce happy chemicals, and they can give us good input about how we are doing. YouTube yoga stations, dance parties to your favorite playlist, walks outside, walking the pet(s), or a good scavenger hunt are all good ways to move. Get creative and find things your child already loves, and encourage movement in a fun way. Many gyms or fitness companies are also offering online free living classes right now.
3. **Get messy and create!** Art is an amazing way to release emotions. Get out the craft supplies and do some creating. Painting, play dough, cardboard boxes, color by numbers, chalk, or simple tools like crayons and markers are all you need. You can even paint positive messages on rocks and leave them places in the neighborhood to encourage others as you walk!
4. **Try some deep breathing or meditations and mindfulness!** Often we simply need to slow down and get our bodies back in check. Breathing is the one function that is automatic that is also something we can control. Breathing also activates our vagus nerve, which is responsible for helping our brains switch to "rest mode" when we are operating in crisis mode. Deep breathing, guided imagery exercise, progressive muscle relaxation, and mindful practices are great things to teach our girls. There are several free phone apps that make it simple: Insight Timer, Calm, or Headspace.

No matter what you try, encourage your girl(s) to talk about how they are feeling, and remind them that it is healthy and normal to experience and manage stress. We are all in this together. If your child or teen is experiencing intense emotions, and you feel that they are not coping well, remember that many therapists right now are offering Telehealth services where clients can be seen from their homes using video conferencing. Any therapist in Michigan who is offering Telehealth can support your girl right now; however, you may wish to look at someone local to you if you feel they could benefit from a sustained relationship with this person. You or your child don't have to be in this alone! Reach out if you need support.

You can find a local therapist who is covered by your insurance by either contacting the behavioral health services number on the back of your insurance card, contacting your local community mental health and referral agency, or searching [Psychology Today's website](#).

If you wish to contact our agency or learn more about our services, you can call (616)458-0692 or visit our [website](#). You can find my personal therapy profile [here](#).



Make new friends, but keep the old...

Are you hosting virtual troop meetings? Challenge your girls to invite a new friend to come see what it's like to be a Girl Scout in your troop! Girls need Girl Scouts now more than ever, and you can make their world a better place by inviting them along!



Have a question? Don't be shy!

Contact us for more information.



girl scouts
heart of michigan