

FAMILY MEETING RESOURCE KIT

HEY YOU AWESOME GIRL SCOUT LEADER!

Research shows that Troops are most successful when parents are involved in their daughters' Girl Scout experience, and responsibilities are shared! That's why we suggest you and your co-leader plan on holding family meetings three times a year: before the troop itself meets for the first time, mid-year before the start of Cookie Season, and as a celebration at the end of the program year.

To keep things simple, we've put together resources for your first family meeting. In this packet, you'll find the following:

For items in **green**, you'll want to print enough copies for each family in the troop.

1. Checklist for Preparing for Your First Family Meeting
2. Family Meeting Agenda
3. **Handout with Girl Scout Mission, Promise & Law**
4. **Ways to Help Checklist**
5. **Girl Activity** – *be sure to have an extra adult or some older Girl Scouts who can keep the girls busy during the meeting!*
6. **Troop Activities Year Round Permission Form, Product Program Permission Form, and Girl Scout Agreement.** *The most recent version of these forms can be found in the Forms and Documents Section of our website. This form is only valid through September 30, 2019.*
7. **Uniform & Book Checklist**

We've also added a customizable **new troop member e-mail** at the end of this packet. This isn't specifically for your parent meeting, but it covers some of the same information. As a leader, you automatically get an email notification when a new member joins your troop. The new parent though, does NOT automatically get your information, so we ask leaders to reach out asap and welcome the new member! We know new Girl Scout families often have tons of questions, so we put together a letter where you can cover the basics, as well as add details about what makes your troop so special!

Thanks for being a Girl Scout Superhero!

Beth Shelton

Beth Shelton
GSGI CEO
Leader, Troop 563

PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST FAMILY MEETING

CHOOSE A MEETING DAY AND LOCATION Make sure you select a time and location that will suit you and your families' needs. The meeting space should have enough room to accommodate families and their Girl Scout(s) and should ideally be where you plan to meet as a troop throughout the year. This will give girls and families some general familiarity with the location and how to get there.

INVITE TROOP FAMILIES Prepare and distribute an invitation to all troop families (parents/guardians) to attend. Include a link or a copy of the Troop Activities Year Round Permission Form, so you can collect those at the meeting. If you're getting ready for the Cookie Program or Fall Product Program, also include the Product Program Permission Form.

Here's a sample meeting invite!



Troop 12345 is excited to kick-off our Girl Scout activities for the year. Before we get going, we'd like to invite at least one parent/guardian, along with your Girl Scout, to our first family meeting of the year. We'll talk about what the girls want to do this year, as well as cover details like our schedule of meetings and activities this year, troop finances, permission forms, and how you can help support the troop. We'll look forward to seeing you at the meeting on [day/time] at [location]. If you are unable to attend, please reach out to me so I can cover all the important information with you at another time.

Thank you! - Troop Leader

CREATE A GIRL ACTIVITY Plan an activity that the girls can do during the meeting while you chat with the families. You can set aside a nearby area of the meeting space where girls can work on a quiet activity together with another adult volunteer while you meet with parents. You can also invite an older Girl Scout troop to do an activity with the girls!

Tip: One fun option is to provide girls with the "My Girl Scout Year" activity (on the next page) to find out what they want to do throughout the year!

GATHER UP ALL THE MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED FOR THE MEETING. THESE MIGHT INCLUDE:

- ☑ **MEETING AGENDA** – having things written out can help things go super smoothly! See the sample agenda to get started.
- ☑ **SIGN-IN SHEET AND NAMETAGS** Tip: on the sign-in sheet, ask parents to sign-up for a specific way they can help the troop, such as bringing snacks, leading a meeting, or donating supplies.
- ☑ **GIRL ACTIVITY & SUPPLIES** (coloring sheets, crayons, etc.)
- ☑ **FORMS** Bring extra copies of forms you'll need to collect, including the Troop Activities Year Round Permission Form, Product Program Permission Form, Girl Scout Agreement, and Ways to Help Checklist. These forms can be found on the GSGI Forms & Documents page of the website.
- ☑ **INFORMATION ON UNIFORMS AND BOOKS**
- ☑ **NOTEPAD** – you may get some questions that you don't know the answer to, and that's okay! Write them down so you can check later.

What I would like to do this Girl Scout Year...

Draw a picture or write your answer.

Somewhere I would like to go:



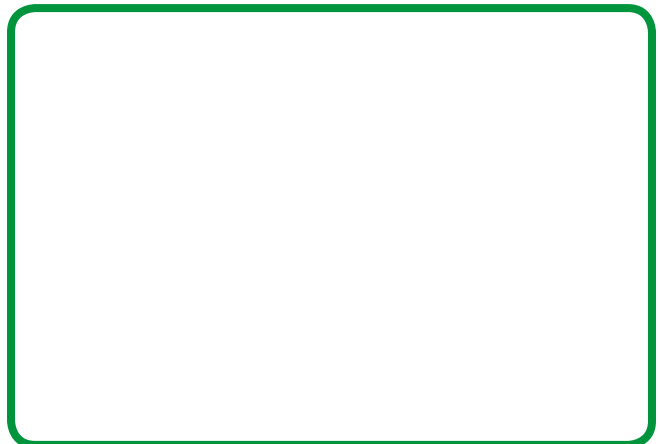
A badge I would like to earn:



Something I would like to do:



Something I would like to discover outside:



Something I would like to make:



What is the best thing about Girl Scouts?



SAMPLE FAMILY MEETING AGENDA

☑ **Welcome & Introductions**

GIRL ACTIVITY Guide the girls to the activity planned for them.

INTRODUCTIONS Have each adult share their name and what they hope their daughter will get out of Girl Scouting. Leader(s) also share what they hope the troop will gain from the year. If you do not yet have a second troop leader, explain to families the process of becoming a leader and that two leaders are required for each troop.

☑ **Brief Overview of Girl Scouts**

MISSION, PROMISE & LAW

COUNCIL INFO Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa is our local council.

GIRL-LED Communicate that troops are girl-led, meaning the girls collectively decide, along with your guidance, what they'd like to do as a troop. As they get older, they'll take on more leadership roles.

☑ **Troop Specifics**

MEETING TIME, DAY, FREQUENCY, AND LOCATION

There is no set requirement as to when or how frequently troops meet. In many cases, troops meet twice a month for one to two hours.

DUES Determine whether the troop will collect troop dues from each family. Explain that the \$25 annual membership fee is for the national membership in GSUSA. Troop dues are an option to help the troop with meeting supplies, badges and fun patches, and field trip expenses.

THE FALL PRODUCT AND COOKIE PROGRAMS

These programs help girls learn about financial literacy and other essential life skills, and also provide opportunities for troops to earn proceeds to fund their Girl Scout experience.

UNIFORMS Some leaders give parents a list of uniform components to purchase to get started, and some collect money from families and do all the uniform shopping at once—your choice! The girls also have a choice between vests and sashes (vests and tunics for Daisies), though some troops prefer all the girls have the same option. Don't forget, financial assistance is available for uniforms, books, and membership dues for qualifying families.

☑ **Family Involvement** - Parent and family support is essential for the success of a troop!

ASK FOR HELP transporting or chaperoning girls on trips, bringing snacks, sharing special talents, or attending troop meetings.

Remind parents and guardians that any adult who has regular contact with girls, handles money, or chaperones/drives on trips must be a registered Girl Scout member and complete a background check.

☆ **TROOP POSITIONS INCLUDE** Troop Leaders, Troop Support Volunteers (driver, chaperone, occasional help), Troop First-Aid/CPR Support, and Troop Product Manager (for Fall Product and/or Cookies).

PICK-UP ETIQUETTE Remind parents to please provide transportation to and from meetings in a timely manner.

TROOP COMMUNICATION Talk about how you plan to keep in touch with families about upcoming troop activities, dates, and reminders. Decide on a method of communication that will work best for parents (email, phone, social media page, text, etc.)

☆ Tip: If you are planning to set up a Facebook group for the troop, check with each parent about privacy settings and posting pictures.

☑ **Registration & Forms**

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION (\$25 annual membership dues) Be prepared to help parents complete membership registration for themselves or their girls! The quickest way to complete registration is online, using a laptop or mobile device.

COLLECT FORMS *Troop Activities Year-Round Permission Forms and Product Program Permission Forms.*

☑ **Closing**

Any final questions or ideas from parents?

Reminder of next troop meeting date

Thanks for coming!

☑ **Hooray, you did it!**

PARENT WELCOME LETTER

Leaders: each time you get an email letting you know that a new Girl Scout has joined your troop, please send your own welcome message to her parent or guardian. We put together a sample letter that you can copy, paste, and customize! Be sure to read through and edit details to make sense for your troop.

I am so excited to welcome [Girl's Name] to Troop [#####]! We are a [select: Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior, Ambassador, multi-level] troop with girls in grades [2 & 3, etc] from [schools].

Meeting times: We meet [Example: every other Thursday from 5:45-6:45 PM throughout the year], plus some special activities. Our regular meeting location is at [Example: Cornell Elementary School (entering through North Doors of building and meeting in cafeteria)], but we have exceptions to that with some of our adventures and field trips.

PICKUP/DROPOFF: Parents may either drop their daughter off at meetings, or are welcome to stay and watch/participate. If you plan to stay frequently, you will be asked to register as a Troop Support Volunteer, which means paying the \$25 Girl Scout membership dues and completing a background check. By doing that, you are welcome at all activities and covered under the program insurance.

Uniforms are highly encouraged and so fun! It's the place where your Girl Scout will place all of her patches and badges that we earn. They can be purchased online, or from a [Girl Scout shop](http://girlscoutsiowa.org/visitus) (girlscoutsiowa.org/visitus). I can also send you a Uniform & Book Checklist and/or help you get your order picked up from the shop.

FORMS: Attached to this email, you'll find the **Troop Activities Year Round Permission Form**. As the troop leader, I keep these on hand throughout the year, so I've got all the important details. Please print and return these to me as soon as possible – at your first troop meeting is fine. Please also fill out the **Ways to Help Checklist** – we'd love to get the whole family involved in the troop!

TROOP COMMUNICATION: We send out regular emails to keep parents informed of upcoming events and meetings. Email is the primary way we communicate [Leader, you can also add in options like Facebook or texting]. Deadlines for events are communicated ahead of time, and reminders are sent 1-2 days ahead of time as well. Your Girl Scout is also welcome to attend events hosted by Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa, even if our troop isn't signed up together. You can find those activities at girlscoutsiowa.org under the events tab.

We know girls and families are pulled many directions and we have a flexible attendance policy but do appreciate an email or text from you if your daughter will not be attending a meeting. This helps us in planning when we purchase supplies/badges/snacks, etc.

[Optional Sections: Troop Dues, Snack Assistance, Intro details about the Leaders]

Welcome again to our Troop! We look forward to seeing your daughter soon!

[Leader, phone #, email address]

[Leader, phone #, email address]

WAYS TO HELP CHECKLIST

Complete and return to Troop Leader. This form does not need to be submitted to Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa.

Please indicate how you/your family can help support the troop this year. This form is to indicate your interest/availability only. Your leader will follow-up with you to confirm plans.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Girl Name _____ Adult Name(s) _____

Phone Number _____ Email address _____

TROOP MEETING/ACTIVITIES

- I am willing to register (\$25 dues and complete background check) as a Troop Support Volunteer, so that I can chaperone and/or drive for meetings and field trips.
- I'm not sure about this, but I'd like more information and we can talk about it!
- I can help at some meetings, but will not attend regularly.

Note to parents/leaders: each meeting/activity must have a minimum of 2 registered volunteers. Adults who have not registered and completed a background check do not count in the required ratio of volunteers-to-girls.

PRODUCT PROGRAMS (FALL AND COOKIES)

- I am willing to register (\$25 dues and complete background check) as the Troop Fall Product Program Manager, take the fall product training, and be the lead in our fall product sales.
- I'm not sure about this, but I'd like more information and we can talk about it!
- I am willing to register (\$25 dues and complete background check) as the troop Cookie Program Manager, take the Cookie Program training, and be the lead in our Cookie sales.
- I'm not sure about this, but I'd like more information and we can talk about it!

OTHER OPTIONS

- I am certified in First Aid/CPR, and I'd be willing to attend meetings/activities as our troop First Aider.
- I am an experienced camper/outdoors-person, and I'd love to help with troop outdoor activities! Note that this may require additional outdoor training provided by Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa, as well as registration (\$25 dues and complete background check) as a Troop Support Volunteer.
- I can manage or help with the troop bank account. Note that to be listed on the account requires registration (\$25 dues and complete background check) as a Troop Support Volunteer.
- I have a super cool job, skill, or hobby that I'd love to show the girls! List details (e.g. making model airplanes, baking bread, coding...) _____

Additional ways I can help, or someone else in the family can: _____

Businesses/Organizations I am connected with, that may be interested in hosting the troop for an activity or a Cookie Booth. Please list any, and your leader may follow-up with you to connect with these places:



Girl Name _____

YEAR: _____

Troop Activities Year-Round Permission Form

This form should be submitted to your troop leader, who will keep it on file throughout the year. This form does not need to be submitted to Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa.

The purpose of this form is for parents/guardians to provide overall permission for troop activities throughout the school year, including day trips and short trips (1-2 nights). This form is also for troop leaders so they can keep girls safe and healthy during Girl Scout activities.

Separate *Permission Forms* will be required for: trips lasting 3 or more nights, horseback riding, water activities or swimming at a location without staff lifeguards, as well as the *Product Program Permission Form* for participation in the Cookie and Fall Product Programs.

Consent:

I/We give consent for (girl name) _____ to participate with Girl Scout Troop # _____, effective on this date _____ for regular troop meetings and additional troop activities.

I/We understand that in addition to the regular troop meetings, the troop may plan additional activities throughout the year. I/We understand that we will be notified as activities are planned, and by sending (girl name) _____ to such activities, we consent to her participation.

I/We give consent for (girl name) _____ to travel in personal vehicles for troop activities, with the understanding that all troop volunteers are registered Girl Scout volunteers with a background check on file with Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa.

Contact Information:

Girl's Full Name: _____ Girl's Date of Birth: _____

Girl's Address: _____

School/Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian #1 Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency Contact Information:

Additional contact if neither parent/guardian can be reached in the event of an emergency (include contact name/contact phone/relationship to Girl Scout):

Continue to next page

Girl Name _____

YEAR: _____

Please list any allergies or medical conditions (such as diabetes or asthma) that the troop leaders should be aware of, as well as any relevant accommodations (such as carrying an inhaler or EpiPen):

Please list any dietary restrictions or food allergies that the troop leaders should be aware of:

The following non-prescription medications may be stocked in a first-aid kit, and are used on an as needed basis in case of illness/injury. Please check if the participant has permission to take the following as needed:

- Tylenol/Acetaminophen
- Ibuprofen
- Aspirin
- Cough Drops
- Imodium (anti-diarrheal)
- Skin Ointments
- Other _____

Other health needs, concerns, or restrictions:

Photo Permissions:

When girls register as Girl Scout members, parents/guardians can either sign or opt-out of a photo release, allowing Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa and/or Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to publish photos. That release does not cover posting of photos by troop leaders.

Troop leaders/volunteers are encouraged to promote their troop activities via social media platforms or other mediums, provided that girl safety is a top priority.

- Opt-in: I/we give consent for photos of (girl name) _____ to be shared in volunteers' posts about our troop activities.
- Opt-out: I/we wish to exclude (girl name) _____ from posted photos.

Parent/Guardian #1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Signature (if applicable): _____ Date: _____

GIRL SCOUT SHOPPING LIST

OPTIONAL: Leaders, share this shopping list with parents in your troop, so they know what to pick up in the shop (or online).

Put a ✓ in the “Need it” column for everything you need to pick up then come visit us in one of our retail shops (or online!). Contact us at info@gsiowa.org for assistance.

Troop _____ Girl _____

GETTING STARTED	Need it	Got it!
Sash (not available for Daisies) \$7.00		
Vest \$19.50		
Tunic (Daisies only) \$16.50		
Insignia Tab \$3.00		
USA Flag \$2.25		
Council ID Set \$5.50		
Troop Numbers \$1.75/each _____		
Troop Crest \$2.00 _____		
Membership Pin \$2.00		
World Pin (WAGGS) \$2.50		
BOOKS, BADGES, AND AWARDS		
Girl’s Guide \$19.50 _____		
Journey Book \$7.00		
Badge Activity Set \$4.00 - \$5.00		

Each girl who spends \$30 on qualifying uniform pieces and books will receive a FREE drawstring bag (in-store only).

LEADER SHOPPING LIST

OPTIONAL: Leaders, bring this chart to a family meeting and ask parents to fill in the appropriate sizes and selections for their girl. Then, bring your list to one of our retail shops (or online) and we'll help you find everything you need. This chart includes the full range of uniform and book options, but there are more options listed than any girl or troop will need all at once! Just select the items that your troop is shopping for right now. Pro-tip: If you are having parents purchase some items on their own, be sure to give them the [Girl Scout Shopping List](#) so they know what to look for.

Troop Members	Suzy S.																			Total
Sash \$7.00	M	\$7.00																		
Vest \$19.50																				
Tunic (Daisies only) \$16.50																				
Insignia Tab \$3.00		\$3.00																		
USA Flag \$2.25		\$2.25																		
Council ID Set \$5.50		\$5.50																		
Troop Numbers \$1.75/each		\$5.25																		
Troop Crest \$2.00		\$2.00																		
Membership Pin \$2.00		\$2.00																		
World Pin \$2.50		\$2.50																		
Star \$1.50																				
Disc \$0.07																				
Bridging Award Badge \$2.50																				
Bridging Wings \$1.00																				
Girls Guide \$19.50		\$19.50																		
Journey Book \$7.00																				
Badge Activity Set \$4.00 - \$5.00		\$4.00																		
My Promise, My Faith \$4.00		\$4.00																		
Safety Award \$4.00																				
Summit Award \$3.50		\$3.50																		
Badge Requirements \$2.50 - \$5.00																				
Total Due		\$66.50																		
Paid																				

Need-based financial assistance is available for uniforms and books. If a girl has been approved for financial assistance, leaders can pick up those items from the shop along with the rest of their order.

Girl Scout Agreement

All volunteers, parents/guardians and girls are expected to follow the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Girls agree to:

- Help others and show patience.
- Demonstrate integrity and honor commitments.
- Stand up for what is right.
- Find solutions for disagreements.

If a girl's behavior is disruptive to the other troop members, or is not in alignment with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, the troop leader may ask the girl to behave, request parent/guardian assistance, and/or request parent/guardian assistance at future meetings and trips

Parents/Guardians agree to:

- Be timely for pick-up and dropoff.
- Attend family meetings and special gatherings.
- Communicate regularly and provide important information to the leaders.
- Be cooperative, honest, and respectful.
- Submit forms and monies due on time.
- Support your Girl Scout in her experience! Be excited and ask her about her activities.

Leaders agree to:

- Follow Girl Scout Safety Guidelines.
- Communicate regularly and provide important information to families.
- Organize fun, interactive, girl-led activities.
- Be accepting, inclusive, and supportive.
- Manage funds and paperwork.
- Be kind and respectful.

Girl Scout Agreement

All volunteers, parents/guardians and girls are expected to follow the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Girls agree to:

- Help others and show patience.
- Demonstrate integrity and honor commitments.
- Stand up for what is right.
- Find solutions for disagreements.

If a girl's behavior is disruptive to the other troop members, or is not in alignment with the Girl Scout Promise and Law, the troop leader may ask the girl to behave, request parent/guardian assistance, and/or request parent/guardian assistance at future meetings and trips

Parents/Guardians agree to:

- Be timely for pick-up and dropoff.
- Attend family meetings and special gatherings.
- Communicate regularly and provide important information to the leaders.
- Be cooperative, honest, and respectful.
- Submit forms and monies due on time.
- Support your Girl Scout in her experience! Be excited and ask her about her activities.

Leaders agree to:

- Follow Girl Scout Safety Guidelines.
- Communicate regularly and provide important information to families.
- Organize fun, interactive, girl-led activities.
- Be accepting, inclusive, and supportive.
- Manage funds and paperwork.
- Be kind and respectful.

Parents, please sign this document, pledging that you will continue to help build a positive and encouraging environment for every girl.

Turn in one copy to your Troop Leader, and keep the other copy for your family.

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.

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.

We agree to accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law and follow the guidelines set for participating in this troop.

Girl Name _____

Girl Signature _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____ Troop # _____

Parents, please sign this document, pledging that you will continue to help build a positive and encouraging environment for every girl.

Turn in one copy to your Troop Leader, and keep the other copy for your family.

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.

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.

We agree to accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law and follow the guidelines set for participating in this troop.

Girl Name _____

Girl Signature _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____ Troop # _____