

## Chapter 2: Girl Scouting as a National Experience

Now that you're a Girl Scout volunteer, you belong to a network of more than 1 million adults who share an important commitment: preparing girls to lead successful lives. During your time as a volunteer, you'll have fun, meet new people, and learn by doing alongside girls at every step.

The Girl Scout program—what girls do in Girl Scouting—is based on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE), a national model that helps girls become leaders in their own lives and as they grow. No matter where girls live or what their age or background, as Girl Scouts they are part of a powerful, national experience. As they build leadership skills, they also develop lifelong friendships and earn meaningful awards, two of many treasured traditions in the sisterhood of Girl Scouting.

### What Girl Scouting Does for Girls

Girl Scouting guides girls to become leaders in their daily lives, their communities, and the world—helping them become the kind of person exemplified by the Girl Scout Law. When girls—as the Girl Scout Law states—are “honest and fair,” when they “use resources wisely,” and know how to be “courageous and strong,” they can be more successful in everything they do. It may start in school and on sports teams, but research shows that the courage, confidence, and character they develop as Girl Scouts follows them throughout their lives. Girl Scouting has a practical approach to helping girls become leaders:

- When girls lead in their own lives, they **Discover** their values and the confidence to do what's right. This helps girls act in ways that make us proud, no matter where they are.
- When girls lead in their communities, they **Connect** as they learn how to work with other people. This helps them get along better with others, resolve conflicts, and do better on group projects at school.
- When girls lead in the world, they **Take Action** to change the world for the better. Starting as young Girl Scouts, girls learn how to see problems—such as a food pantry in need of donations or an elderly neighbor who could use a hand—and come up with a solution.

In other words: **Discover + Connect + Take Action = leadership**. And everything you do with girls in Girl Scouting is aimed at giving them the benefits of these Three Keys to Leadership.

More details about the benefits (or outcomes) Girl Scouts offers girls can be found in *Transforming Leadership Continued*, available online at

[www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/gscoutcomes/transforming\\_leadership\\_continued.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/gscoutcomes/transforming_leadership_continued.asp).

### ToGetHerThere

Research tells us that today's girls are backing down from leadership opportunities and that many of those who **do** want to lead don't believe they have what it takes. But as Girl Scouts, girls find themselves practicing leadership and working toward goals in a supportive environment surrounded by people who want to see them succeed: you, the volunteers!

In 2012, its centennial year, Girl Scouts launched ToGetHerThere, the boldest advocacy and fundraising cause campaign dedicated to girls' leadership issues in the nation's history. This multi-year effort is helping break down social barriers that hinder girls from leading and achieving success in everything from technology and science to business and industry.

ToGetHerThere's goal is to create gender-balanced leadership in one generation. To do that, Girl Scouts is asking all adult members of society to help girls reach their leadership potential and place this urgent issue

front and center on the national agenda. We all have a role to play in helping girls achieve their full leadership potential because when girls succeed, so does society. Together, we can get her there.

For more about ToGetHerThere, including how to spread the word about the campaign, visit [www.ToGetHerThere.org](http://www.ToGetHerThere.org), [www.facebook.com/togetherthere](https://www.facebook.com/togetherthere), and <http://www.twitter.com/togetherthere>.

## Fun with Purpose

Girl Scouting isn't just about what we do; it's also about how we do it. Over time, we've noticed that girls will give almost any activity a try, as long as the adults guiding them take the right approach. Girl Scout activities ask adult volunteers to engage girls in three ways that make Girl Scouting unique from school and other extracurricular activities:

- **Girl-led:** Girls of every grade level take an active role in determining what, where, when, why, and how they'll structure activities. Of course, you'll provide guidance appropriate to the age of the girls. Plus, you'll encourage them to bring their ideas and imaginations into the experiences, make choices, and lead the way as much as they can.
- **Learning by doing:** This means that girls have active, hands-on experiences. It also means they have a chance to think and talk about what they are learning as a result of the activities. This kind of reflection is what helps girls gain self-awareness and confidence to dive into new challenges. So make sure girls always have a chance to talk with each other—and you—after an activity. It doesn't have to be formal, just get them talking and see what happens.
- **Cooperative learning:** Girls learn so much about themselves and each other when they team up on common goals. Plus, great teamwork helps girls in school now and on the job later. Look for ways to help each girl contribute her unique talents and ideas to the team, help all girls see how their differences are valuable to the team, and coach girls to resolve their conflicts productively.

We call these three methods “processes.” You might be wondering how to put these processes into action with the girls in your group. These steps should help you get started:

1. After you help girls choose a National Leadership Journey (there's more information about those [later in this chapter](#)), make sure you get the adult guide that accompanies the Journey. As you read through that guide, look at how the activities, conversations, and choice-making options are set up using the three processes. Once you start practicing the processes, you'll probably find that they become second nature when you're with girls.
2. If you haven't already, watch [Girl Scouting 101](#), our online introduction to volunteering with Girl Scouts. (Contact your council for the password.) If you've already watched Girl Scouting 101, you may want to review its “What Girl Scouts Do” section to brush up on the processes.
3. Want more detail about the processes? Take a look at the examples in *Transforming Leadership Continued*, available online at [www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/gscoutcomes/transforming\\_leadership\\_continued.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/gscoutcomes/transforming_leadership_continued.asp).

One last tip about using the processes: The girls' time in Girl Scouting isn't a to-do list, so please don't ever feel that checking activities off a list is more important than tuning in to what interests and excites girls and sparks their imaginations. Projects don't have to come out perfectly, and girls don't have to fill their vests and sashes with badges: what matters most is the fun and learning that happens as girls make experiences their own.

# The National Program Portfolio

You'll use several books, awards, and online resources to bring the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to life with girls. We strongly recommend that each girl has her own books from the National Program Portfolio. These books—the Journeys and *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*—and national program awards—like badges and pins—are an important part of how Girl Scouting helps girls experience the power of millions of girls changing the world together.

As you use the National Program Portfolio with girls, keep in mind that Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) creates materials to serve our vast and diverse community of girls. To help bring topics off the page and into life, we sometimes provide girls and volunteers with suggestions about what people across the country and around the world are doing. We also sometimes make suggestions about movies, books, music, websites, and more that might spark girls' interests.

At GSUSA, we know that not every example or suggestion we provide will work for every girl, family, volunteer, or community. In partnership with those who assist you with your Girl Scout group—including parents, faith groups, schools, and community organizations—we trust you to choose real-life topic experts from your community as well as movies, books, music, websites, and other opportunities that are most appropriate for the girls in your area to enrich their Girl Scout activities.

We are proud to be the premier leadership organization for girls. While girls and their families may have questions or interest in programming relevant to other aspects of girls' lives, we are not always the organization best suited to offer such information. Your council can recommend local organizations or resources that are best suited to do so.

Also note that GSUSA continuously reviews national program content to guarantee that all our resources are relevant and age appropriate, and that their content doesn't include violence, sex, inappropriate language, or risky behavior. We value your input and hope that you will bring to your council's attention any content that concerns you.

## National Leadership Journeys

National Leadership Journeys help Girl Scouts learn and practice the Three Keys, aid their communities, and earn leadership awards, progressing up Girl Scouting's [Ladder of Leadership](#) as they do so. There are three series of Leadership Journeys, each about a different theme; the girls in your group can choose the theme that interests them most.

After the girls choose a Journey, spend an hour or two reading the companion adult guide. It'll give you a feel for how to bring the Journey to life, and you'll get ideas for the steps girls will take (with your support) to earn their leadership awards. Don't worry; you don't have to be any kind of expert to do a Leadership Journey with girls. You just need to be willing to dive in and enjoy the learning-by-doing experience with them.

Each Journey adult guide contains sample plans that you can customize to fit the needs of your group, whether you guide a troop, volunteer at a Girl Scout camp, mentor girls on a travel adventure, or engage with girls in a series or at an event. Each Journey also offers opportunities to enjoy the longstanding traditions of Girl Scouting, from ceremonies and songs to earning awards and skill badges.

## ***The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting and National Proficiency Badges***

In addition to the Leadership Journeys, girls at each Girl Scout grade level have their own edition of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*—a binder full of information about being a Girl Scout and how to earn certain badges, including ones about financial literacy and the Girl Scout Cookie Program. Girls who want to earn more badges can add a Skill Building Badge Set tied to the theme of the Journey they've chosen.

When a Girl Scout earns a badge, it shows that she's learned a new skill, such as how to make a healthy snack or take great digital photos. It may even spark an interest at school or plant the seed for a future career. Please remember that we don't expect you to be an expert in the badge topics; just have fun learning by doing with the girls!

While you're having fun, keep in mind: Badges are for educating girls, not for decorating their sashes and vests. The quality of a girl's experience—and the skills and pride she gains from earning leadership awards and skill-building badges—far outweigh the quantity of badges she earns.

If you're working with Girl Scout Daisies, please note that they earn Petals and Leaves (which form a flower) instead of badges.

There are several ways to supplement the National Program Portfolio and enhance girls' time as Girl Scouts—and have fun while you're doing it! A few of them are outlined below.

### ***Digital programming***

The [For Girls section](#) of [girlscouts.org](http://girlscouts.org) features a variety of videos, games, blogs, and other fun ways to enrich the GSLE. Girls will find opportunities to post their ideas for public service announcements on topics that matter to them and get inspired by watching short videos that tell the stories of women from all walks of life. If you work with Girl Scout Daisies and Brownies, you might like the site's print-and-play coloring and game pages—great for having on hand when energetic girls get together! Both girls and volunteers will have fun with Badge Explorer, an overview of all of the badges girls can earn. For Girls is updated frequently, so check back often—and invite girls to do the same!

### ***Make Your Own Badge***

Girls are welcome to develop and complete activities to make their own badge—a great way to explore a topic of personal interest. (In addition, girls who make their own badge will learn *how* to learn, which is an important skill to have in school, on the job, and in life!) Once girls check the Awards Log in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* to make sure there's not already a badge on the topic they want to explore, they'll follow steps outlined in that handbook to complete the requirements for their very own badge. Even better, they can go online to design and purchase a badge that later arrives in the mail! For more information, check out the [Make Your Own Badge website](#).

### ***My Promise, My Faith Pin***

The Girl Scout Law includes many of the principles and values common to most faiths. And even though Girl Scouts is a secular organization, we've always encouraged girls to explore spirituality via their own faiths. Girls of all grade levels can now earn the My Promise, My Faith pin. By carefully examining the Girl Scout Law and directly tying it to tenets of her faith, a girl can earn the pin once each year she participates in Girl Scouting. You can find more about the requirements for this pin in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.

## ***The Girl Scout Cookie Program***

In addition to giving girls an opportunity to earn money to fund their Girl Scouting goals, taking part in the Girl Scout Cookie Program teaches girls five important skills that serve them throughout their lives: goal setting, money management, people skills, decision making, and business ethics. For more on everything involved in the Girl Scout Cookie Program, flip to the [“Managing Group Finances”](#) chapter of this handbook

## ***Outdoor adventures***

Being outside is a great way for girls to explore leadership, build skills, and develop a deep appreciation for nature. Whether they spend an afternoon exploring a local hiking trail or a week at camp, being outside gives girls an opportunity to grow, explore, and have fun in a whole new environment. For more information, visit [www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/camping](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics/camping).

## ***Spanish-language resources***

Two of the Journey series—*It’s Your World—Change It!* and *It’s Your Planet—Love It!*—are available in Spanish, as are two new supporting books for Spanish-speaking volunteers to use with Spanish-speaking and bilingual Girl Scout Brownies and Juniors :*¡Las Girl Scouts Brownies Cambian El Mundo! (Girl Scout Brownies Change the World!)* and *¡Las Girl Scouts Juniors Apuntan a las Estrellas! (Girl Scout Juniors Reach for the Stars!)*. The books, which introduce the Girl Scout movement to these girls and their families, provide everything you need for a fun-filled year in Girl Scouting. For more information on these resources, contact your council.

## **Putting It All Together**

All of this may seem overwhelming, but don’t worry. The next few pages give you an idea of what’s involved when you use the National Program Portfolio with girls at each Girl Scout grade level.



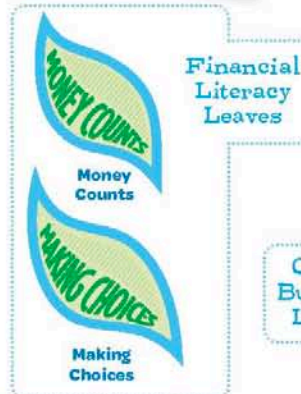
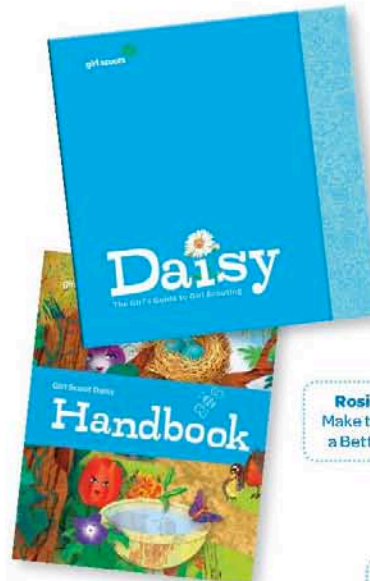
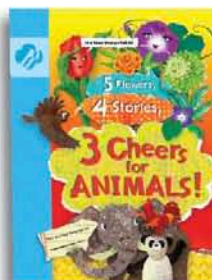
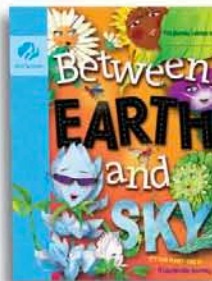
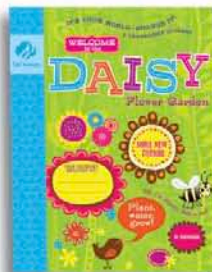
NATIONAL PROGRAM

# What Daisies Do\*

KINDERGARTEN - 1ST GRADE

Choose a Journey

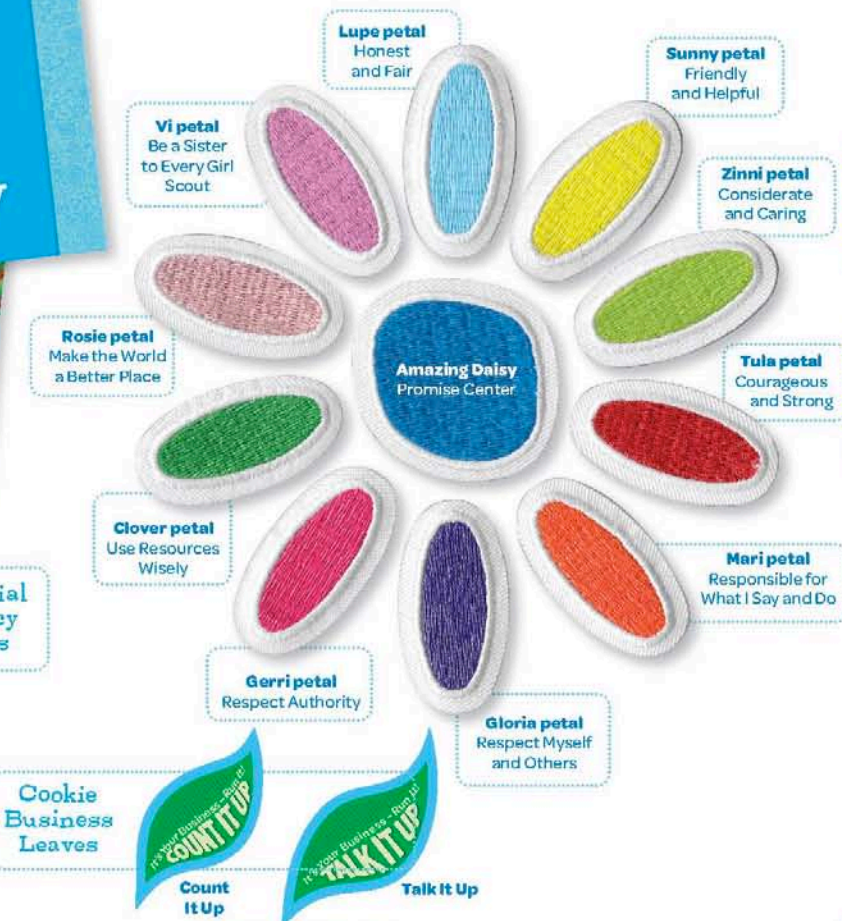
Use The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting



Financial Literacy Leaves

Money Counts

Making Choices



**Lupe petal**  
Honest and Fair

**Sunny petal**  
Friendly and Helpful

**Zinni petal**  
Considerate and Caring

**Tula petal**  
Courageous and Strong

**Mari petal**  
Responsible for What I Say and Do

**Gloria petal**  
Respect Myself and Others

**Gerri petal**  
Respect Authority

**Rosie petal**  
Make the World a Better Place

**Vi petal**  
Be a Sister to Every Girl Scout

**Clover petal**  
Use Resources Wisely

**Cookie Business Leaves**

Count It Up

Talk It Up

\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.



# What Brownies Do\*

2ND - 3RD GRADE

Choose a Journey  
and earn the awards



\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.

Want to earn  
more Badges? Add  
the Badge sets

## Brownie Quest



## WOW! Wonders of Water



## A World of Girls



Use them all with  
The Girl's Guide to  
Girl Scouting





# What Juniors Do\*

4TH - 5TH GRADE

**Choose a Journey  
and earn the awards**



\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.

**Want to earn  
more Badges? Add  
the Badge sets**

## Agent of Change

Digital Photographer Staying Fit



## GET MOVING!

Jeweler Gardener



## aMUSE

Geocacher Animal Habitats



Playing the Past Product Designer Social Butterfly

**Use them all with  
The Girl's Guide to  
Girl Scouting**



## Financial Literacy



## Cookie Business

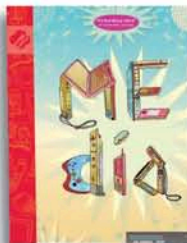
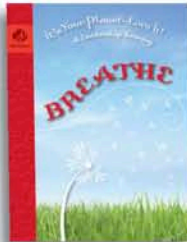
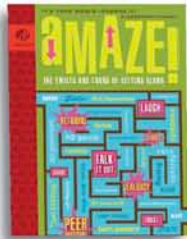




# What Cadettes Do\*

6TH - 8TH GRADE

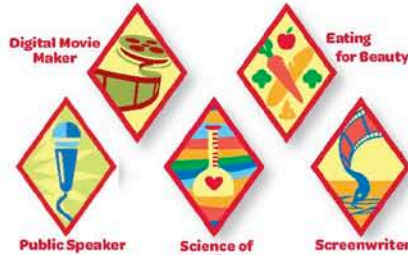
Choose a Journey  
and earn the awards



\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.

Want to earn  
more Badges? Add  
the Badge sets

## aMAZE!



## Breathe



## MEdia



Use them all with  
The Girl's Guide to  
Girl Scouting



## Comic Artist



## Budgeting

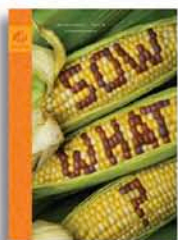




# What Seniors Do\*

9TH - 10TH GRADE

Choose a Journey  
and earn the awards



\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.

Want to earn  
more Badges? Add  
the Badge sets

## GIRLtopia



Website Designer



Women's Health



Troupe Performer



Science of Style



Novelist

## Sow What?



Textile Artist



Room Makeover



Truth Seeker



Adventurer



Car Care

## MISSION: SISTERHOOD!



Traveler



Voice for Animals



Game Visionary

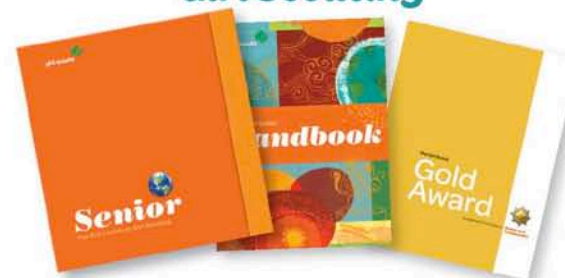


Social Innovator



Business Etiquette

Use them all with  
The Girl's Guide to  
Girl Scouting



Collage



Cross-Training



Behind the Ballot



Locavore



Senior First Aid



Senior Girl Scout Way



Sky

## Financial Literacy



Financing My Future



Buying Power

## Cookie Business



My Portfolio



Customer Loyalty

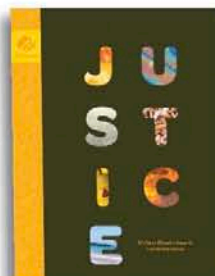
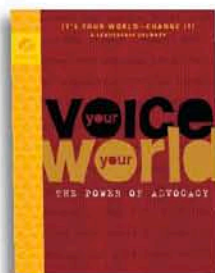


# What Ambassadors Do\*

11TH - 12TH GRADE

*Choose a Journey*

*Use The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*



\* Remember to add in trips, outdoor adventures, the cookie sale and more! See ideas in all the girl's books.



Photographer



Coaching



Public Policy



Dinner Party



Ambassador  
First Aid



Ambassador  
Girl Scout Way



Water

**Financial Literacy**



On My Own



Good Credit

**Cookie Business**



Research &  
Development



P&L



## Emblems and Patches

In addition to the leadership awards tied to the Journeys and the National Proficiency badges, girls can show they belong by adding emblems to the front of their vests or sashes and participation patches on the back.

- **Emblems** show membership in Girl Scouts, a particular council, a particular troop, or in some other Girl Scout group. These can be worn on the front of a sash or vest (see the diagram in the handbook section of *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* to see where these are placed).
- **Participation patches** represent activities girls have tried and are fun ways for girls to remember special events they've attended. Since these patches and pins aren't tied to skill-building activities, they are worn on the back of a girl's sash or vest.



You can purchase emblems and patches—along with badges and leadership awards— at any GSGLA shop location or online at <http://shop.girlscoutsla.org>. There, you'll find a cool list of the earned awards for each grade level. Look in each Girl Guide to show you exactly where girls can place their emblems, awards, badges, pins, and patches on their vests and sashes.

### Shop Locations:

#### Arcadia Service Center Shop

101 E. Wheeler Ave.  
Arcadia, CA 91006  
P: (626) 677-2210

#### Palmdale Service Center Shop

41307 12th St. West, Suite 105  
Palmdale, CA 93551  
P: (661) 723-1230

#### Montclair Service Center Shop

9525 Monte Vista Ave.  
Montclair, CA 91763  
P: (909) 399-0808 x2291

#### Santa Clarita Service Center Shop

21515 Soledad Canyon Road #118  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350  
P: (661) 287-1985

#### Long Beach Service Center Shop

4040 N. Bellflower Blvd.  
Long Beach, CA 90808  
P: (562) 421-8456 x2287

#### Woodland Hills Service Center Shop

20931 Burbank Blvd.  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367  
P: (818) 886-1801 x2305

#### Marina del Ray Service Center Shop

4551 Glencoe Ave., Suite 140  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292  
P: (310) 450-3720

#### All Shop Hours

Mon., Tues., & Fri: 10:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
Wed. & Thurs: 10:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

1st Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.\*

\*Closed on Saturdays in July, Aug., & Holiday weekends.

GSGLA offices and retail shops are **closed on the second and fourth Mondays of the month.**

**Please remember that local purchases support local programs.**

## Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards

The Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards are Girl Scouting's highest awards. These awards offer girls relevant, grade-level-appropriate challenges related to teamwork, goal setting, and community networking and leadership. They also engage girls in building networks that not only support them in their award projects, but in new educational and career opportunities.

Like everything girls do in Girl Scouting, the steps to earning these awards are rooted in the GSLE. This is why, to earn each of these awards, girls first complete a grade-level Journey (two Journeys for the Gold Award or a Silver Award and one Journey). With Journeys, girls experience the keys to leadership and learn to identify community needs, work in partnership with their communities, and carry out Take Action projects that make a lasting difference. They can then use the skills they developed during a Journey to develop and execute projects for their Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards. Girl Scouts has just introduced a web app that takes girls step-by-step through the Gold Award requirements. Visit [www.girlscouts.org/MyGoldAward](http://www.girlscouts.org/MyGoldAward) to take a peek.

Did you know that a Girl Scout who has earned her Gold Award immediately rises one rank in all four branches of the U.S. Military? A number of college-scholarship opportunities also await Gold Award designees. A girl does not, however, have to earn a Bronze or Silver Award before earning the Girl Scout Gold Award. She is eligible to earn any recognition at the grade level in which she is registered.

As a Girl Scout volunteer, encourage girls to go for it by earning these awards at the Junior through Ambassador levels. Check out some of the award projects girls in your council are doing and talk to a few past recipients of the Girl Scout Gold Award. You'll be inspired when you see and hear what girls can accomplish as leaders—and by the confidence, values, and team-building expertise they gain while doing so. And imagine the impact girls have on their communities, country, and even the world as they identify problems they care about, team with others, and act to make change happen!

All this, of course, starts with you—a Girl Scout volunteer! Encourage girls to go after Girl Scouting's highest awards—information on the awards and guidelines for you to use when helping girls earn their awards are also available [online](#).

## A Tradition of Honoring Girls

From the beginning of Girl Scouts, one prestigious award has recognized the girls who make a difference in their communities and in their own lives. The first of these awards, in 1916, was the Golden Eagle of Merit. In 1919, the name changed to The Golden Eaglet, and in 1920, the requirements for The Golden Eaglet were updated. The First Class Award existed for only two years, from 1938–1940, and was replaced in 1940 with The Curved Bar Award, the requirements for which were updated in 1947. In 1963, GSUSA re-introduced the First Class Award, for a girl who was an “all-around” person, with skills in many fields and a proficiency in one. Today's highest award, the Girl Scout Gold Award, was introduced in 1980.

## Other Initiatives and Opportunities

Other exciting initiatives and opportunities exist to support the GSLE. In the past, these have covered topics like the environment, robotics, and space exploration. You can find out how to engage your group

in opportunities like these by contacting your council or by visiting [www.girlscouts.org/program/basics](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/basics) and clicking on “Program Basics” on the left side of the screen. Note that councils may offer different experiences, based on availability of resources and partners in your area.



#### [GSLA Program Calendar](http://www.girlscoutsla.org/pages/events/calendar.html)

<http://www.girlscoutsla.org/pages/events/calendar.html>

## Girl Scout Traditions and Celebrations

Throughout the long history of Girl Scouts, certain traditions remain meaningful and important and are still practiced today. This section gives you an overview of annual celebrations in the Girl Scout year, as well as other revered Girl Scout traditions. Be sure to look in *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* and Leadership Journeys for more information on songs, historical anecdotes, traditions, and ceremonies.

### Girl Scout Calendar

Girl Scouts celebrate several special days each year, which you're encouraged to include in your group planning.

- **February 22:** World Thinking Day (the birthday of both Lord Baden-Powell and Lady Olave Baden-Powell, the originators of Boy Scouts and the Scouting Movement worldwide).
- **March 12:** The birthday of Girl Scouting in the USA. The first troop meeting was held in Savannah, Georgia, on this date in 1912. Note that Girl Scout Week begins the Sunday before March 12 (a day known as “Girl Scout Sunday”) and extends through the Saturday following March 12 (a day known as “Girl Scout Sabbath”).
- **Third week in April:** Volunteer Appreciation Week centers on the long-standing National Girl Scout Leaders' Day (April 22), but expands the definition of volunteers beyond troop leaders to include all the volunteers who work in so many ways on behalf of girls in Girl Scouting.
- **October 31:** Founder's Day (Juliette Gordon Low's birthday).

### World Thinking Day: February 22

World Thinking Day, first created in 1926, offers a special day for Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from around the world to “think” of each other and give thanks and appreciation to their sister Girl Scouts. February 22 is the mutual birthday of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout movement, and his wife, Olave, who served as World Chief Guide.

Today, girls honor World Thinking Day by earning the [World Thinking Day award](#), which focuses on an annual theme selected by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. They also show their appreciation and friendship on World Thinking Day not only by extending warm wishes but also by contributing to the [Juliette Low World Friendship Fund](#), which helps offer Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting to more girls and young women worldwide.

### Time-Honored Ceremonies

Ceremonies play an important part in Girl Scouts and are used not only to celebrate accomplishments, experience time-honored traditions, and reinforce the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law, but also to encourage girls to take a short pause in their busy lives and connect with their fellow Girl Scouts in



fun and meaningful ways. Many examples of ceremonies—for awards, meeting openings and closings, and so on—are sewn right into the Journeys, including ideas for new ceremonies girls can create.

Girls use ceremonies for all sorts of reasons. Here’s a brief list, in alphabetical order, so that you can become familiar with the most common Girl Scout ceremonies:

- **Bridging** ceremonies mark a girl’s move from one grade level of Girl Scouting to another, such as from Junior to Cadette. (Note that **Fly-Up** is a special bridging ceremony for Girl Scout Brownies who are bridging to Juniors.)
- **Closing** ceremonies finalize the meeting, with expectations for the next. A closing ceremony may be as simple as a hand squeeze while standing in a circle.
- **Court of Awards** is a time to recognize girls who have accomplished something spectacular during the Girl Scout year.
- **Flag** ceremonies can be part of any activity that honors the American flag.
- **Girl Scout Bronze (or Silver or Gold) Award** ceremonies honor Girl Scout Juniors who have earned the Girl Scout Bronze Award (Cadettes who have earned the Silver Award; Seniors or Ambassadors who have earned the Gold Award), and are usually held for a group and combined with council recognition.
- **Girl Scouts’ Own** is a girl-led program that allows girls to explore their feelings and beliefs around a topic (such as the importance of friendship or the personal meaning they get from the Girl Scout Promise and Law) using the spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other methods of expression. It is never a religious ceremony.
- **Investiture** welcomes new members, girls or adults, into the Girl Scout family for the first time. Girls receive their Girl Scout, Brownie Girl Scout, or Daisy Girl Scout pin at this time.
- **Opening** ceremonies start troop meetings and can also begin other group meetings.
- **Pinning** ceremonies help celebrate when girls receive grade-level Girl Scout pins.
- **Rededication** ceremonies are opportunities for girls and adults to renew their commitment to the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

## Hosting a Girl-Led Event

If you’re working with girls who want to host an event—large or small—be sure girls are leading the event-planning, instead of sitting by passively while you or another adult plans the event. To get girls started, ask them to think about the following questions:



- What sort of event do we have in mind?
- Who is our intended audience?
- Does the audience have to be invited, or can anyone come?
- What's our main topic or focus?
- What's our objective—what do we hope to accomplish at the end of the day?
- Will one or more speakers need to be invited? If so, who? How do we find speakers?
- Where will the event take place?
- Is there a charge for this venue?
- Is the venue large enough to accommodate the audience?
- Do we have to obtain permission to use this venue? If so, from whom?
- Are there adequate facilities for the audience? If not, how much will extra portable toilets cost, and how many do we need?
- Is there adequate parking or a drop-off point for girls?
- Do we need tables? chairs? podiums? microphones? speakers?
- What sort of entertainment will we provide?
- Will we provide or sell refreshments? If so, what kinds?
- How many chaperones will we need? Who will we ask?
- What emergency care do we need to plan for? Is the event large enough that local police and fire departments need to be notified?
- Do we need to purchase additional insurance for non-Girl Scouts?
- How will we advertise the event?
- What decorations will we use?
- Will we give away any keepsakes?
- Will we charge for the event?
- Who will set up the event?
- Who will clean up after the event?
- How will we determine whether the event was a success?

Ideas for girl-led events with family, friends, and community experts are also available in the Leadership Journey adult guides!



Troops/groups wanting to host an event will need to submit a [Special Event Application](#) and [Special Event Final Report](#). If the event is a money-earning activity, a [Troop/Group Money Earning Application form](#) will also be required.

These forms are available on the council web site [HERE](#) or visit:  
[http://girlscoutsla.org/pages/for\\_volunteers/form\\_search\\_results.html](http://girlscoutsla.org/pages/for_volunteers/form_search_results.html)

## Signs, Songs, Handshake, and More!

Over time, any organization is going to develop a few common signals that everyone understands. Such is the case with Girl Scouts, which has developed a few unique ways to greet, acknowledge, and communicate, some of which are listed here.

## Girl Scout Sign



The idea of the sign came from the days of chivalry, when armed knights greeted friendly knights by raising the right hand, palm open, as a sign of friendship. To give the sign, raise the three middle fingers of the right hand palm forward and shoulder high (the three extended fingers represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise). Girls give the sign when they:

- Say the Promise or Law.
- Are welcomed into Girl Scouts at an investiture ceremony that welcomes new members.
- Receive an award, patch, pin, or other recognition.
- Greet other Girl Scouts and Girl Guides.

## Girl Scout Handshake



The handshake is a more formal way of greeting other Girl Scouts, and is also an appropriate way to receive an award. Shake left hands and give the Girl Scout Sign with your right hand.

## Quiet Sign



The quiet sign can be extremely useful to you as a volunteer, so teach it to girls during your first meeting. Raise your right hand high with an open palm. As girls in the group see the sign, they stop talking and also raise their hands. Once everyone is silent, the meeting can begin.

## Girl Scout Slogan and Motto

The Girl Scout slogan is, “Do a good turn daily.” The Girl Scout motto is, “Be prepared.”

## Songs

Whether singing around a campfire or joining a chorus of voices on the Mall in Washington, D.C., Girl Scouts have always enjoyed the fun and fellowship of music. In fact, the first *Girl Scout Song Book*, a collection of songs put together by girl members, was published in 1925.

Songs can be used to open or close meetings, enhance ceremonies, lighten a load while hiking, or share a special moment with other Girl Scouts. For tips on choosing and leading songs, go to



[http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs\\_central/activity\\_ideas/songleading.asp](http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gs_central/activity_ideas/songleading.asp). A variety of songbooks are also available for purchase. Check out your council shop or visit the [GSUSA online](#)



[shop.](#)

A variety of songbooks & CDs are also available for purchase at GSGLA's council shops.