



# Overnights, Trips & Travel Training

**Updated October 2021**

This course is designed to assist volunteers in planning age-appropriate overnights, trips, and travel experiences for their groups. With this course, you will be certified for approximately three years to plan and facilitate day trips, overnights with indoor sleeping arrangements, and national and international travel opportunities with your group. You will also be certified for overnight tent camping outdoors in a registered volunteer's backyard.

You must stay abreast of any changes in policies, standards, and procedures. *Overnights, Trips & Travel Recertification* is required every three (3) years and is available online for your convenience.

Topics discussed in this course include: Safety, responsibilities in overnights and trips, how to evaluate if your group/troop is ready, how to involve your group/troop in planning, and guidelines, plus checklists and forms to review when preparing for an overnight activity.

Please note that you will need to attend *Fire Building* to build campfires and roast hotdogs and s'mores, *Fire Building and Basic Outdoor Cooking* to build campfires and cook more advanced outdoor meals, and *Troop Camp Training* to go camping anywhere other than an indoor facility (i.e. cabin or RV) or in your backyard.

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# Girl Scout Travel Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent travelers, including how to plan and organize trips. Because when girls take the lead, the possibilities are endless.

## LOCAL FIELD TRIPS

Get your travel feet wet! Walk to a nearby garden, or take a short ride to a firehouse or other local spot.

Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location.

## DAY TRIPS

Take an all-day trip! Keep it girl-led: girls choose the location and activity (perhaps working toward a badge) and make plans for lunch.

## OVERNIGHTS

Start with one night, maybe at a camp or museum. Progress to a weekend trip in a nearby city or state park. Keep it girl-led: girls plan the activity and meals, create travel games, and pack their own overnight bags.

## REGIONAL TRIPS

Spend three to four nights away somewhere a few hours from home. Keep it girl-led: girls plan key details of the trip, such as the activities, the budget, the route, and lodging. (Extended trip insurance required.)

## NATIONAL TRIPS

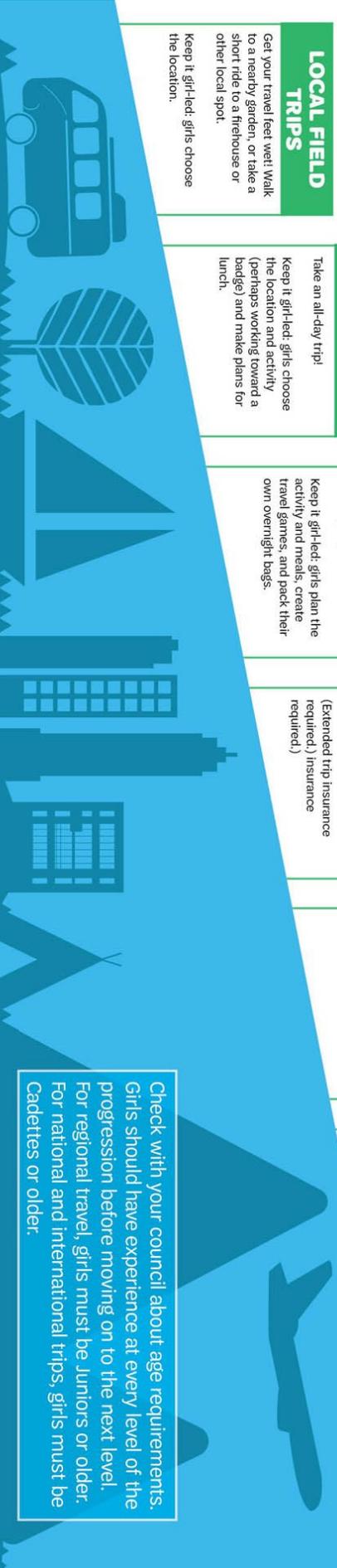
Travel the country! Trips often last a week or more. Girls should think beyond a typical vacation location and consider historical sites, museums, or national parks! Keep it girl-led: girls lead the entire planning process and might add a community service or Take Action project. (Extended trip insurance required.)

## INTERNATIONAL TRIPS

Travel the world! These life-changing trips usually take one to three years to prepare. Consider visiting a WAGGGS World Centre! Keep it girl-led: girls download the Global Travel Toolkit and plan their entire trip (including learning about the language, culture, passports and visas, exchange rates, etc.). (Extended trip insurance required.)

## INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Older girls with national or international travel experience can travel nationally or internationally independently through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program. Check with your council, or visit the Girl Scout Destinations website!



**When moving up to each level of the progression, consider girls' independence, flexibility, decision-making skills, group skills, and cross-cultural skills.**

Check with your council about age requirements. Girls should have experience at every level of the progression before moving on to the next level. For regional travel, girls must be Juniors or older. For national and international trips, girls must be Cadettes or older.

## Documents to Review

Some of the most memorable moments in a Girl Scout's life happen while taking trips. Travel offers a wealth of opportunities for girls to develop leadership, confidence, and practical life skills. This guide can help you and your girls prepare for local, regional, or international travel.

Review [GSSI Policies and Standards](#) that pertain to Travel located in the Policies and Standards Guide listed under [Resources](#) on GSSI's website, as well as, sections in the [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) that relate to your travel activity.

Review [COVID-19 Back-to-Troop Recommendations & Guidance](#), [GSSI COVID-19 Guidelines Chart](#), and [A Troop Leader's Guide to Permission Forms, 2020-2021](#) for specifics on Coronavirus updates and Permission Forms required.

## Traveling with Girls

Girl Scouts is a great place for girls to learn how to plan and take exciting trips, because travel is built on a progression of activities—one activity leads to the next. Daisies can begin with a discovery walk. As girls grow in their travel skills and can better manage the planning process, they progress to longer trips—even international ones!

For Daisies, this could mean a day trip to an arboretum as part of the Journey they are working on. For Seniors or Ambassadors, it might mean whitewater rafting in Costa Rica or exploring the Our Chalet World Center in Switzerland. Please see the [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#).

Although many troops decide to travel together, Girl Scouts might join a trip with other girls from around their council, or form a new troop with other girls who like to travel. Girl Scouts of the USA offers individual Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors the chance to travel independently and meet other Girl Scouts from across the country through the Destinations program.

**Local Field Trips (Daisies and older):** A walk to a nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to a firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies. Keep it girl-led: girls can choose the location!

**Day trip (Daisies and older):** An all-day visit to a point of historical or natural interest (bringing their own lunch) or a daylong trip to a nearby city (stopping at a restaurant for a meal) allows younger girls to select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home. Keep it girl-led: girls can choose the location and an activity (maybe a badge activity?) and help make plans for lunch.

**Note:** Full-day trips may be very challenging for Daisies, especially for kindergarteners who have not experienced short trips. Make sure girls take some short trips before they progress to a full day trip.

**Overnight & Weekend Trips (Daisies and older):** A trip of one—or possibly two—nights

away could start with one night camping or staying at a Girl Scout property and progress to a visit to a state or national park, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground— or even an overnight at a large museum! These short trips are just long enough to get girls excited about travel, but not long enough to generate homesickness. Keep it girl-led: girls plan the activity and meals, create travel games, and pack their own bags.

**Note:** A Daisy troop may participate in an overnight experience if the girls are ready. Brownie troops can participate up to two nights. For camp this differs: girls who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Girls who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights.

**Regional Trips (Juniors and older):** Three or four nights camping or staying in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls' home region take girls up to a few hours away from home. Keep it girl-led: girls plan key details of the trip such as activities, the budget, the route, and lodging.

**National trips (Cadettes and older):** Travel anywhere in the country can often last a week or more. Try to steer clear of ordinary recreational trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component—such as incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country. Perhaps the girls want to plan a trip to some national parks as part of the Girl Scout Ranger program. Keep it girl-led: girls lead the entire planning process and might plan to add a community service or Take Action project.

**International trips (Cadettes and older):** Travel around the world can require one to three years of preparation. Ensure passports, documentation, visas, and customs requirements are in order well in advance of your trip. International trips are available to Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors, but only to those who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight and extended trips within Girl Scouting. Keep it girl-led: girls download [the Global Travel Toolkit](#), and plan their entire trip – including learning about language, culture, passports & visas, exchange rates, etc.

**Independent Travel (Cadettes and older):** Older girls who already have national or international travel experience can travel independently through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program. For opportunities, check with your council and visit the [Destinations website](#).

When thinking about progression, consider things like girls':

- Ability to be away from parents and their homes
- Ability to adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and situations
- Ability to make decisions for themselves and the good of the group well and easily
- Ability to get along with each other and handle challenges
- Previous cross-cultural experiences, skills, interests, and language skills (where applicable)

**Non–Girl Scouts.** If you plan to include non–Girl Scouts on your trip, such as siblings, they should also be the same appropriate grade level in progression with travel experience. For example, an eight-year-old sibling of a Senior should not participate in an international trip. And remember, you will have to purchase **supplemental insurance** for nonmembers.

WAGGGS World Centers or your Girl Scout council may have additional or different guidelines regarding age requirements for international travel.

### Learn More:

- [WAGGGS World Centers](#)
- [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#)
- [International events through Girl Scouts](#)
- Girl Scouts' [Destinations program](#)
- U.S. passports and international travel: [U.S. Department of State](#)
- Travelers' health (vaccines, medicine, advice): [Centers for Disease Control](#)
- [Girl Scout Global Travel Toolkit](#)

## Safety Activity Checkpoints

Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) found in the [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) ahead of time before taking girls out for this activity. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury to a girl or adult, missing girl, or sudden illness.

**Plan Transportation in Advance.** Keep in mind that 15-passenger model vans have historically been flagged as a safety concern by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and are not allowed. Prior council level approval is required to determine if the vehicle is statutorily permitted and meets safety criteria. Always consult your council for prior approval before opting to rent or lease these vehicles to transport girls. Commercially operated shuttles (as with an airport service) are permitted.

For chartered buses and vehicles, always verify safety credentials, commercial driving licenses, and the use of seatbelts. Make certain proper insurance is in place by requesting a certificate of insurance with a minimum of \$1 million in auto liability coverage. School buses require a minimum of \$5 million in auto liability.

**Choose accommodations wisely.** Girl Scout groups may stay in a variety of overnight accommodations. Evaluate all options with a view to safety, cost, amenities, distance to planned sights or transportation, parking, and insurance. Consider:

- Girl Scout [camps](#) and facilities, or [WAGGGS World Centers](#).
- National, state, or local campgrounds, many of which offer cabins to rent. Try

[reserveamerica.com](https://www.reserveamerica.com).

- Hostels. **HI USA** offers Girl Scout-ready hostels in the U.S.
- Hotels. Consider suites and adjoining rooms to enhance supervision.

**Airbnb, VRBO and HomeAway.** These are permitted; however, because these are privately owned properties, it can be difficult to qualify safety and credibility. For these reasons, additional steps for Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway are required. Confirm the following ahead of time:

- The rental is for exclusive use of the home. No other renters will have access to the home during the rental period.
- The space has smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers (these are noted as amenities on booking sites).
- The home and host have substantial, positive visitor reviews. Don't book places with negative, few or no reviews. Look for superhost status on Airbnb.
- The liability insurance from the host covers premises for commercial use, with a minimum of \$1,000,000 General Liability insurance.
- Check the host's profile or identity verification. You may be asked to do the same, as a renter.
- The local host or manager contact info is available for immediate needs. Share this information with an in-town contact (a person not on the trip).
- Check state laws to see if Airbnb, VRBO and Homeaway are mandated to meet hotel laws and standards so that you know there is an extra layer of protection.

**Check accommodations on arrival.** No matter what housing you book, inspect premises with the group immediately on arrival. Let the front desk or host know if you find any deficiencies.

Maintain a budget margin so that you can move to another location if you find a property unsafe. Here are several points to check upon arrival:

- All points of entry are secure and lockable.
- Stairs or fire escapes are identified and shown to girls
- Evacuation routes are clear and known to all.
- Basic safety systems are in place (as appropriate to the building and jurisdiction such as a fire extinguisher and smoke alarm).
- Location of local emergency services and how to reach them.
- Confirm any communication services (mobile carrier, wifi) are running and reliable.

## **Sleeping Arrangements.**

See *Safety Standards and Guidelines at the beginning of **Safety Activity Checkpoints.***

On trips where male volunteers are part of a group, it is not appropriate for them to sleep in the same space as girl members. Always support and maintain an all-girl atmosphere for sleeping quarters. Men may participate only when sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use.

Always avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. An exception is made for family members during events such as parent-daughter or family overnights where one family may sleep together in an area specifically designated to accommodate families. Also please note the following:

- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed.
- Girls and adult do not share a bed; however, exceptions can be made for mothers and daughters.
- If possible, men should have their own designated bathroom. If a unisex bathroom is used, the door must have a working lock, or a system for notifying others that the bathroom is in use. This system should be reviewed and understood by all girls and adults.
- In public venue overnights, such as museums or at malls, ask if there is a separate sleeping area and bathrooms for men. If no such area exists, designate an area out of the way or off to the side so that men are not sleeping alongside the girls.
- Men should not have to walk through the girls' sleeping area to get to the bathroom. When camping in tents or single room cabins, men must stay in a tent or a cabin that's separate from the girls or women.
- During family or "he and me" events (in which girls share sleeping accommodations with men), ensure the sleeping details are clearly explained in a parent/guardian permission slip. More than one family may use a tent or single-room cabin during these events only if both families agree.
- Review the appendices in this manual for sleeping arrangement guidelines for the following overnights: slumber parties, hotel stays, backyard camping, and cabin and RV stays.

**Try to make sure international permission slips are signed by both parents.** Discuss with your council about having both parents sign the permission slip and notarizing it. This is recommended by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection, and is strongly suggested as a best practice.

**Take the insurance.** When booking flights, consider cancellation insurance which

primarily covers the cost for airfare in the event a trip is cancelled due to illness. Discuss this option with your council as it could be costly.

For trips longer than two nights, inquire with your council about accident **activity insurance**. You must enroll and purchase a specific policy from Mutual of Omaha to cover trips longer than two nights; trips longer than two nights are *not covered* on the basic plan.

When planning to travel internationally, discuss liability insurance and accident activity insurance for it with your council. You'll want to ensure that your council's liability policy does not have any specific exceptions or exclusion for international travel. For accident activity insurance, you must enroll and purchase a specific policy from Mutual of Omaha to cover international trips; international trips are not covered on the basic plan.

### **Verify leader/instructor knowledge, experience, judgment, and maturity.**

Ensure that at least one adult is trained or possesses knowledge, skills, and experience in the following areas:

- First aid
- Travel progression and readiness, including homesickness
- Trip planning in a girl-led environment
- Safety management
- Program activities specific to the trip
- Group dynamics and management
- Supervision of girls and adults
- If the trip is international, leader must have international travel experience

**Prepare a pre-trip orientation.** Make sure girls have a detailed itinerary, but do not post the itinerary on a publicly accessible website where others may be able to see it. Ensure that girl and adult participants, and girls' parents, receive information about health, first-aid and emergency procedures, plans for transportation and any geographic detail such as the terrain or environment. Also share basic operational procedures (e.g. using the buddy system at all times) and behavior expectations. You may want to work with your girls to create a group behavior contract, and have girls sign it. Another suggestion is to create a personal emergency action plan that each girl can write out herself and keep with her.

Make sure to discuss topics like:

- Who her buddy is—and how the buddy system works
- What to do if she is separated from the group, whether by accident or due to a crime
- What to do if she loses something significant: money, passport, luggage
- What to do if emergency help is needed

- How to perform basic first-aid procedures
- How to deal with a large crowd, if applicable
- What positive behaviors are expected of her and the consequences to self or others by not living up to those behaviors

**International Travel.** International travel involves increased travel precautions and requirements compared to domestic travel. The following Safety Checkpoints apply to International Travel:

- Register your trip with the U.S. government's **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)** so that you will get updates about safety, and that the State Department knows where you are traveling.
- Read on the **Centers for Disease and Control Prevention** website about health concerns for the country. Make sure girls and parents/guardians review this information. Every participant travelling internationally should visit their doctor to discuss their travel health requirements and any vaccinations or medications necessary.
- Confirm the travel advisory level for the country via the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs. Note that the State Department now classifies travel advisories with travel alert levels as follows:
  - Level 1 - Exercise Normal Precautions
  - Level 2 - Exercise Increased Precautions
  - Level 3 - Reconsider Travel
  - Level 4 - Do Not Travel
- Confirm that both girls and their parents/guardians have the advisory information and are aware of the travel alert level in the region you plan to visit. This can be reflected on a permission slip if your council chooses to handle it that way.
- Read information about safety issues and concerns carefully. Pay attention to the in-country travel alerts for the particular region you are interested in. For example, a certain country may be classified as a Level 2, but a particular state or region within that Level 2 country may be categorized as Level 3.
- Check the travel alert status periodically in the months/weeks/days leading up to your trip for any changes. For situations where there is a travel alert Level 1 or Level 2, take normal safety precautions to safeguard girls.
- Travel Alert 4. When the travel alert Level is 4 ("do not travel"), girls are not to travel to a location under any circumstances.
- Travel Alert 3. For situations where the travel alert is a 3 ("reconsider travel"), there are several steps that should be taken before moving forward:
  - Strongly consider selecting a different location.

- If interest is high, have a conversation with your local safety or risk representative to fully understand the specific risk factors in play.
- Contact the host destination facility and ask if they're aware of the travel alert level and what extra security measures are in place, if any.
- Inform girls and parents/guardians and determine if there is still a compelling interest to travel to this location, considering the travel alert level.
- Get parents'/guardians' explicit approval to travel to the location, in light of specific risk, in writing.
- Have a conversation with your council and get approval from a legal perspective, from in-house legal or outside legal counsel.
- Confirm that you have senior management approval within your council prior to moving forward with your plans.

**Try to make sure international permission slips are signed by both parents.** Discuss with your council about having both parents sign the permission slip and notarizing it. This is recommended by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection, and is strongly suggested as a best practice.

Finally, when travelling, be sure to follow the **Safety Activity Checkpoints** for specific activities you plan to do on your trip.

## Girl Scout Connections

It's easy to tie eye-opening travel opportunities into the leadership training and skill building your girls are doing in Girl Scouts! Your girls can use their creativity to connect any leadership **Journey** theme into an idea for travel. For example, girls learn where their food comes from in the *Sow What?* Journey. That would connect well with a trip focusing on sustainable agriculture and, naturally, sampling tasty food!

There are abundant opportunities to build real skills through earning **badges** too. The most obvious example is the Senior Traveler badge, but there are plenty more, such as Eco Camper, New Cuisines, Coding for Good, and, of course, all the financial badges that help girls budget and earn money for their trips.

Want to include Girl Scout traditions into your trip? Look no farther than **the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace** in Savannah, Georgia! Your girls also have the chance to deepen their connections to Girl Scouts around the world by visiting one of the WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) **World Centers**, which offer low-cost accommodations and special programs in five locations around the world.

And if your girls are looking to stay closer to home this year – ask about council-owned camps and other facilities that can be rented out.

As your girls excitedly plan their next trip, remember limit your role to facilitating the girls' brainstorming and planning, never doing the work for them. Share your ideas and insight, ask

tough questions when you have to, and support all their decisions with enthusiasm and encouragement!

## **Include Girls with Disabilities**

Communicate with girls with disabilities and/or their caregivers to assess any needs and accommodations. A great reference to learn more about travelling with disabilities is the Open Doors organization. Visit [Open Doors Organization](#).

## **Seeking Council Permission**

Before most trips, you and the girls will need to obtain council permission for travel outside the council or for any overnight trips. A [Special Activities Application](#) must be submitted four (4) weeks before sending permission forms home. In addition, if planning a trip of more than three (3) days and two (2) nights, an [Extended Trip Itinerary and Budget](#) must also be submitted. Both forms are on the council website [www.girlscouts-gssi.org](http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org). Any trip involving an overnight stay requires an adult with current *On the Go* certification. Remember that all adults traveling with girls must be background screened, and in most cases, must also be registered members.

Encourage the girls to submit much of the information themselves, including the following:

- A detailed itinerary, including specific activities involved, mode of travel, and all dates/times
- Location and type of premises to be used
- Numbers of girls who will be participating (parental permissions must be obtained)
- Names and contact information for the volunteers participating
- Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
- Participants' skill levels, if applicable (language skills, backpacking or camping experience, and so on)
- Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
- Required agreements or contracts (for example, hiring a bus, use of premises)

## **Involving Chaperones**

There are different adult supervision requirements for Girl Scout troop meetings as compared to events outside of the regular Girl Scout troop meeting such as outings, activities, camping and travel. Activities and travel outside of the regular troop meeting space require more adult supervision.

To determine how many volunteer chaperones the girls will need with them on the trip, reference the chart *Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need* in this manual. As you ask for chaperones, be sure to look for ones who are committed to:

- Being a positive role model

- Respecting all girls and adults equally, with no preferential treatment
- Creating a safe space for girls
- Prioritizing the safety of all girls
- Supporting and reinforcing a group agreement
- Handling pressure and stress by modeling flexibility and a sense of humor
- Creating an experience for and with girls

Be sure every chaperone reviews and follows the **12 Girl Scout Safety Guidelines**. For international trips, chaperones should have previous international travel experience.

**\*\*Only GSSI Council approved adults are eligible to be chaperones.\*\***

Must have eligible background screening on file at council. Chaperones must also be registered members to drive girls other than their own daughter, participate in overnight events, or be considered towards the girl-adult safety ratio.

## Knowing How Many Volunteers You Need

|                                     | Group Meetings   |  | Events, Travel, and Camping  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
|                                     | TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls: | ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls: | TWO unrelated volunteers (at least one of who is female) for up to this number of girls: | ONE additional volunteer to each additional number of girls: |
| <b>Daisies<br/>Grades K-1</b>       | 12   | 1-6  | 6  | 1-4  |
| <b>Brownies<br/>Grades 2-3</b>      | 20   | 1-8  | 12   | 1-6  |
| <b>Juniors<br/>Grades 4-5</b>       | 25   | 1-10   | 16   | 1-8  |
| <b>Cadettes<br/>Grades 6-8</b>      | 25   | 1-12   | 20   | 1-10   |
| <b>Seniors<br/>Grades 9-10</b>      | 30   | 1-15   | 24   | 1-12   |
| <b>Ambassadors<br/>Grades 11-12</b> | 30   | 1-15   | 24   | 1-12   |

## Transporting Girls

How parents decide to transport girls between their homes and Girl Scout meeting places is each parent's decision and responsibility. For planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities—outside the normal time and place—in which a group will be transported in private vehicles:

- Every driver must be a registered, background-checked member (approved volunteer) at least 21 years old, and have a good driving record (more specific, without driving restrictions), a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle.
- Girls never drive other girls during activities or field trips.
- If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers in the vehicle, one of whom is female.
- If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, the entire group must consist of at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers, one of whom is female.

## Plan for safe driving:

- Review and implement the standards in the Checklist for Drivers, below.
- Share the Checklist for Drivers with all drivers, in advance.
- Build possible delays into your schedule. Allowing time for traffic or other delays will help prevent urgency and stress, which can be dangerous when driving.
- Provide directions for each vehicle.
- For driving trips of more than a few hours, plan a stop where all cars can gather up. This will avoid having drivers follow too closely, or worry about being separated from the group.
- Anticipate stops every couple of hours, for drivers to rest and refresh. Let drivers know they can stop more often, if needed.
- Arrange for relief drivers if trips will last 6 hours or more.
- In each vehicle, there should be a first aid kit, and the permission and health history forms for each person in that car.

**When borrowing or renting vehicles**, drivers may rent cars or minivans in their own names, without council staff signature. Make sure the car is adequately insured; consult the driver's auto insurance company. Know who is responsible for damage to, or loss of, the vehicle. Be sure the vehicle is used only for Girl Scout purposes, as non-related use can compromise coverage.

Note, you must check with GSSI to determine specific rules about renting large vehicles. GSSI does not allow the use of 15-passenger vans to transport girls.

Check with council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation. This ensures that both you and GSSI are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident. Each driver of motorized private transportation must be at least **21** years old and hold a valid operator's license appropriate to the vehicle. In addition, state laws must be followed, even if they are more stringent than the guidelines here.

Please keep in mind the following non-negotiable points regarding private transportation:

- Even though written agreements are always required when renting or chartering, you are *not* authorized to sign an agreement or contract, except for rental car agreements, even if there is no cost associated with the rental. Such agreements must instead be signed by the person designated by GSSI.
- Check with the council to make sure you are following accepted practices when using private transportation. This ensures that both you and GSSI are protected by liability insurance in the event of an accident.
- If GSSI has given permission to use a rented car, read all rental agreements to be sure you comply with their terms and avoid surprises. For example, in many cases the minimum age of drivers is 25, and the maximum age is often under 70. In addition, make sure the car is adequately insured and you know who is responsible for damage

to, or loss of, the vehicle. Finally, ensure you have a good paper trail that shows the vehicle rental is Girl Scout–related.

**Chartered vehicles**—such as buses—are contracted, usually with the driver or operator, for a group’s exclusive use. Volunteers may not sign contracts for charters, even if there is no cost.

- Consideration must be given to the size of the bus. There must be a seat for every passenger.
- Insurance carried by the bus company must be verified.
- The bus company supplies the vehicle and the driver.
- Verification of the current safety inspection is required.
- An agreement or contract, signed by a person authorized by the board of directors, is required.

### **Procedure for Chartering a Bus**

Notify GSSI that you would like to hire a bus. You and GSSI will follow these procedures:

- Check on the safety and maintenance practices of the company.
- Check the current year's insurance information is on file for the company or owner.
- If the information is on file and current (*Certificate of Insurance* still valid and inspection time limit still valid), proceed with making final arrangements for the trip after council endorsement, if required.
- If there is no information on file, GSSI will contact the company.
- When the requested information arrives, GSSI will place it in the insurance file.
- GSSI will notify your group to proceed with final arrangements for the trip.
- Before boarding chartered transportation, the adult in charge must verify with the driver that the vehicle(s) were inspected on the day of departure.

### **School Buses**

- School bus use is allowed though certain guidelines must be met. Contact GSSI for assistance in identifying possible providers.
- Provider must have \$5,000,000 of liability insurance.
- Insurance carried by a school district does not always apply to the use of a bus by outside groups or for travel outside the school district.

- Additional primary insurance may need to be purchased to cover a bus used by Girl Scouts.
- The driver must be experienced, have worker's compensation, and be properly licensed.
- The bus must meet state and federal safety standards.
- There may be no real cost savings over a charter bus.

**Taxis and ride-sharing services**, including Uber and Lyft, may be used with these guidelines:

- An adult rides in each vehicle with girls when multiple vehicles are being used.
- Wait for your ride in a safe place. For taxis, when possible, call (or ask your hotel to call), rather than hailing from the street. Use a taxi stand at airports. Stand away from traffic while waiting.
- For taxis: Check that the taxi is appropriately marked.
- For ride-sharing services:
  - Check that the vehicle's license plate, make and model match what is shown in the app.
  - Compare the app's photo with the driver. Ask for their name and be sure it matches the app.
  - Ask, "who are you here to pick up?" They should have your first name, but not other info about you.
- If you feel uncomfortable for any reason, do not get in the vehicle. If you become uncomfortable, end the ride. Report your experience to the taxi service or ride-sharing app.
- Send your in-town contact the name of the driver and your destination. Most apps have a sharing feature for this purpose.
- Don't share information about the group or where you are staying to any stranger.
- Each passenger must wear a seat belt. Enter and exit curbside.
- In foreign countries, consult a local expert about how to best call for taxis or rides. Reputable practices vary.

**Recreational vehicles, campers, and trailers.** Whether privately-owned or rented--may be used if the driver has the appropriate training and license for the vehicle. Passengers must use seat belts when the vehicle is in motion, and may not ride in a trailer or in the bed of a truck.

**Commercial and common-carrier transportation** is available to the general public. They include buses, trains, airlines, ferries, and similar modes of transportation. In the United States, these are regulated and can be considered safe. Girls can compare fares and schedules and make decisions with adult support.

**When traveling internationally**, consider the transportation options available in the host country and determine safety and accessibility specific to the location.

### **Checklist for Drivers**

When driving a car, RV, or camper, take the following precautions and ask all other drivers to do the same:

- Ensure all drivers are adults at least 21 years old.
- Girls should not be transporting other girls.
- Never transport girls in flatbed or panel trucks, in the bed of a pickup, or in a camper-trailer.
- Keep directions and a road map in the car, along with a first-aid kit, a flashlight, and emergency contact numbers
- Check your lights, signals, tires, windshield wipers, horns, and fluid levels before each trip and recheck them periodically on long trips.
- Load gear appropriately. Heavy objects and luggage can affect vehicle stability and handling. Avoid overloading, especially on the top or back of vehicles.
- Keep all necessary papers up to date including, but not limited to: your driver's license, vehicle registration, any state or local inspections, and insurance coverage.
- Wear your seat belt at all times, and insist that all passengers do the same. Girls under 12 must ride in the back seats.
- Girl under 12 must ride in the back seats. Use car seats and boosters as required in your state.
- Follow all the established rules of the road in your state including the speed limit. Some additional guidelines include:
  - Keep at least a two-car-length distance between you and the car ahead of you
  - Do not talk or text on a cell phone or other device
  - Do not use ear buds or headphones
  - Turn your lights on when your windshield wipers are on.
- Know what to do in case of breakdown or accident. It's smart to have reflectors, a flashlight, a few tools, and a good spare tire.

- Take time to familiarize yourself with any new or rented vehicle.
- Take a break when you need it. The volunteer in charge of your trip will plan occasional stops, but it's okay to pull over to a safe place whenever you are too tired to continue. Relief drivers are planned for long drives.
- Do NOT drive when you are tired or taking medication that makes you drowsy.
- All drivers should complete GSSI's **Vehicle Information Form** and adhere to the "Safe Driver Pledge".

## Checklist for Girls

Girls need to adhere to the following checklist when being transported. You may decide to create a contract listing the following items, which girls sign before leaving on any trip. Girls will:

- Follow all rules and instructions for this trip.
- Assist with reading signs and maps, when asked.
- Keep seat belts fastened at all times.
- Refrain from arguing, yelling, and throwing things.
- Play games or listen to music quietly with other passengers, being considerate of the driver and other passengers.
- Stay with the group during stops.
- Alert your driver and an adult volunteer about a missing buddy, an obstacle, or an open door or trunk.

## Tips for Girls Traveling Alone

If a Girl Scout Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador will be traveling alone during any part of a trip, use the opportunity to help her feel comfortable with and capable of being on her own. Always talk first with her parents to assess her maturity and ability to handle herself, and have them complete an emergency form. If she is flying, discuss the possibility of booking a nonstop flight to make her trip less stressful, and ask parents to consider contacting the airline, which can make special arrangements for any unaccompanied minor. With the girl herself, develop a trip plan, discuss security and safety, and talk about avoiding excess communication with strangers, **not** wearing a nametag, and avoiding exposing money or other items (such as smartphones or iPads) that are attractive to pickpockets.

## Travel Security and Safety Tips

Share these safety tips with girls before you leave on any trip that involves a stay at a hotel, motel, hostel, or dormitory:

- Always lock the door behind you, using the deadbolt and the chain or anchor.

- Do not open the door for strangers; if hotel staff claims to be at the door, call the front desk to confirm.
- Don't mention or display your room number when in the presence of strangers.
- Never leave jewelry, cameras, electronics, cash, or credit cards in your room.
- Never leave luggage unattended in the hotel lobby (or in an airport or train or bus station).
- When arriving at the hotel, locate emergency exits.
- Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag with your room key, wallet, passport, and cell phone. Take the flashlight and bag with you if you have to leave the room in an emergency.
- If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible. Don't stop to pack your suitcase.
- Before leaving your room, feel the door: If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. Call the hotel operator immediately. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter.
- Contact the front desk to make sure girls' rooms are cleared of any minibars or refrigerators. Also be sure the hotel doesn't provide access to inappropriate movies on TVs and does not allow long-distance calls. Alert the hotel management that underage girls are staying in the hotel, and ask them to contact you if any girls are seen out of their rooms after bedtime.

## Financing Your Trip

Refer to Money-Earning Basics in [GSSI's New Leader Guide 2020-2021](#) for more information on financing your trip. Remember to complete a [Money Earning Project Application](#) for earning money and to include and [Extended Trip Itinerary and Budget](#) when completing your [Special Activities Application](#) all found on our website [www.girlscouts-gssi.org](http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org).

## In the event of an emergency:

- Call for appropriate help (911, police, fire or medical). Always notify police about motor vehicle accidents, serious accidents, or fatalities.
- Administer first aid.
- During business hours, Mon-Fri, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm CST, call 812-421-4970. After business hours, call 812-484-6806.
- Move non-injured persons away from the scene as appropriate. Keep other girls safe and occupied.
- Assign a responsible adult to remain at the scene.
- Permit no one to disturb victim or surroundings until appropriate authority assumes responsibility.

- Do not share information about the accident with anyone but the police, your council, and authorities.
- Media: Do not notify or make statements to them. Refer all inquiries to Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana council.
- Submit an **Incident Report** form according to the instructions on the form to GSSI within 24 hours.

## Appendix A – Resources & Paperwork Requirements

The safety and security of your troop/group should be considered before undertaking any activity. Girl Scout safety/security information can be found in the Girl Scouts' [Volunteer Essentials](#) and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#). Both handbooks are available on the council website, [www.girlscouts-gssi.org](http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org). **Be sure to read all pertinent sections of your Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials when planning your activity!** Sections include, but are not limited to the following:

- [Volunteer Essentials](#)
  - Safety in Girl Scouting, pages 52 – 54
  - Girl Scouts of Southwest Indiana Interim COVID-19 Recommendations and Guidance for Volunteers, pages 55 – 62
  
- [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
  - Have an Emergency Action Plan, pages 7 – 13
    - Includes details for extra activity insurance for travel, permission slips, and preparing for overnight trips
  - Transporting Girls, pages 22 – 25
  - Travel/Trips, pages 201-208

A **Special Activity Application MUST be submitted** to council 4 weeks prior to permission forms being sent with girls for the following activities:

- any day or overnight trips outside of council geographical area,
- any activity involving overnight stays, or
- any activity with unusual risk.

And must include: (Note: Encourage the girls to prepare much of the information themselves):

- A detailed itinerary, including specific activities involved, mode of travel, and all dates and times
- Location and type of premises to be used
- Numbers of girls who will be participating (parental permissions must be obtained)
- Names and contact information for the adults participating
- Any other groups, organizations, consultants, or resource people who will be involved
- Participants' skill levels, if applicable (language skills, backpacking or camping experience, and so on)
- Any specialized equipment that will be used, if applicable
- Required agreements or contracts (for example, hiring a bus, use of premises)

Most forms are available on the council website: [www.girlscouts-gssi.org](http://www.girlscouts-gssi.org)

- ❖ Special Activities Application
  - [Special Activities Application – Online Form](#)
  - [Special Activities Application – Printable Form](#)
  - Includes Checklist for planning your activity
    - Start reviewing it as soon as you think you might want to do an overnigher.
    - Not all parts will be applicable but read through all of them.
  - Due four weeks in advance of the event to council.
  - Fill out the certifications grid based on what activities you will be doing. If it is an overnigher, you must have at least one adult with *Overnights, Trips & Travel Certification*. You may also need adults with other certifications such as First Aid/CPR or lifeguard certification based on the activities, location, and emergency response time. Check *Volunteer Essentials* and the “GSSI Guidelines to Certifications and Forms Required” grid to determine what certifications you will need.
  
- ❖ [Extended Trip Itinerary and Budget](#)
  - Must be completed and submitted to council if your trip will last more than 2 nights.
  
- ❖ [Overnights/Extended Trip Permission Form](#)
  - Once council has approved the event, prepare and send home the Overnights/Extended Trip Permission forms for the girls. Have parents update the Annual Permission form, if needed.
  
- ❖ [Activity Roster](#)
  - Follow instructions at top of form indicating how many copies are needed, for whom and when. Be sure that none of the emergency contacts listed are accompanying the group on the event.
  
- ❖ [Vehicle Information Form](#)
  - To be completed by any registered adult who intends to transport girls other than his/her own girl on a planned Girl Scout activity. Complete form and submit to the adult in charge of the activity.
  
- ❖ [Medication Administration and Emergency Treatment Release](#)
  - To be filled out and signed by parent/guardian before the trip and turned into the designated first aider along with any medicine in original containers.
  
- ❖ [Adult Emergency and Medical Information Form](#)
  - All adults accompanying the troop/group should fill out and turn in a form to the trip first aider. Keep in sealed envelopes, if desired.
  
- ❖ [Emergency Procedures Card and Incident Instructions](#)
  - Includes an Emergency Action Plan and established council procedures for obtaining medical assistance and immediately reporting an emergency.
  
- ❖ [Incident Report Form](#)

- Used to report and document any incident (incl. accidents with injury to persons or property, breach of safety or security, etc).

- ❖ [Additional Accident Insurance Request](#)

- Used to request supplemental insurance for any non-registered people accompanying the group or when your trip will be longer than 2 nights.

## Appendix B - Checklist for Day Trips and Overnights

1. Brainstorm ideas with girls on where/what/why/when
2. Confirm girls' readiness for activity
  - a. [Girl Scout Travel Progression Chart](#)
  - b. [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#) includes readiness assessments for girls, parents/guardians, and leaders
3. Initial planning with girls – activities, location, dates, supervision
  - a. [Girl Scout Guide to U.S. Travel](#) includes a Travel Planning Worksheet
4. Review *Safety Activity Checkpoints & Volunteer Essentials*, and the following safety guidelines
  - a. There is a written emergency plan for storm, fire, illness, and accident. It is understood and practiced by participants. Develop an alert signal that is known to all.
  - b. There is a plan for dealing with strangers and develop an alert signal that is known to all.
  - c. All adults know the search and rescue procedures for missing persons.
  - d. The adults in charge know to whom a child may be released and supervise the pick-up process.
  - e. The presence of a First Aider (current certification in First Aid and CPR) is always recommended and may be required based on *Safety Activity Checkpoint*, location, and other factors. Group should have a first aid kit. For more information, review *Volunteer Essentials*
  - f. Alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, and weapons are not allowed.
  - g. Smoking is not permitted in front of girls. If necessary, smoking is allowed ONLY when girls are not present and cannot observe the activity:
    - i. If outdoors in nature- at fire circles or outside buildings, (not in tents or woods.).
    - ii. If at hotel, only in designated area (never a hotel room) or outdoors.
  - h. Observe public restroom safety
    - i. Girl should never enter a public restroom without a buddy.
    - ii. Adults should not enter a restroom alone with a girl other than their own child.
    - iii. An adult should be near the entrance/exit to the restroom when girls are inside.
  - i. Buddy system and permission from an adult to leave group are in effect at all times.
  - j. If fires are planned, fire safety equipment is always on hand and easily accessible. Girls have been instructed in and practiced fire safety. An adult certified in Basic Outdoor Skills must be present if fires are being used.
  - k. Specific *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are observed as applicable, such as for horseback riding, sports, swimming, boating/canoeing, bicycling, archery, and

activities with unusual risk. This list is NOT all-inclusive. Please check *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for full listing

5. Review latest editions of appropriate manual (*Fire Building and Basic Outdoor Cooking; Overnights, Trips & Travel*)
6. Confirm supervision required
  - a. Adult/Girl ratio is met or exceeded. Girls are always to be supervised by adults 18 or older.
  - b. Leader is currently certified in appropriate council-led training.
  - c. All adults accompanying the troop on an overnight trip MUST have an approved background check on file.
7. Submit “Special Activities Application” to GSSI (at least 4 weeks prior to permission forms going home)
  - a. [Special Activities Application – Online Form](#)
  - b. [Special Activities Application – Printable Form](#)
8. Finalize plans with girls and confirm details (schedule, budget, reservations, equipment & supplies needed, packing lists, etc.)
9. Confirm everyone attending is a member, or purchase extra insurance
10. Parents review Annual Permission Form and turn in signed [Permission for Overnights or Extended Trips](#), if applicable
11. Adult in charge has the following forms and emergency supplies:
  - a. For each girl – [Annual Permission Form](#), [COVID-19 Release and Waiver](#), [Medication Administration Form](#) (if needed) Medication is collected from girls and adults, and dispensed by first aider. It is kept locked up and written records are kept.
  - b. For each adult- [Adult Emergency and Medical Information Form](#)
  - c. For the group - [Activity Roster](#) (complete lists of participants with their names, addresses, phone numbers, and emergency numbers) are left with an emergency contact person not attending activity. Emergency contact person and phone number is known to all parents. Each adult chaperone should also have a copy.
  - d. [Vehicle Information Form](#) (if applicable)
  - e. [Emergency Procedures Card and Incident Instructions](#)
  - f. [Incident Report Form](#)
  - g. Cell phone, charger
  - h. First aid kit, flashlight
  - i. Extras of .... clothing, feminine hygiene products (if applicable), water, snacks, sunscreen (if applicable)
  - j. Plastic bags (small for each vehicle; large for trash)
  - k. Plus ....

Important note regarding Men at Overnights:

Men are allowed and encouraged to accompany the troop/group on overnights to help with supervision. Be sure to plan for the girls' privacy as well as his. Men must also have a separate bathroom and sleeping area reserved specifically for them.

## Appendix C - Program Idea Worksheet

Troop: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of overnigher: \_\_\_\_\_

List three active activities that will help the troop accomplish its goal.

- 
- 
- 

List three quiet activities that will help the troop accomplish its goal.

- 
- 
- 

List three night activities that will help the troop accomplish its goal.

- 
- 
- 

Review each list and add an alternative activity or an adaptation that could be done in case of inclement weather.

List three "hip-pocket" program ideas that could also be done if time allowed. Try to relate them to the stated purpose.

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- 
-

## **Appendix D – Slumber Parties**

### Home Safety

1. Only homes of registered and approved volunteers are allowed to be used for slumber parties.
2. Homeowner must have appropriate insurance.
3. Review suitability if homeowner smokes or has pets.
4. Choose an area of the house large enough to accommodate all girls participating. Males are never permitted to share a sleeping room with girls other than their own children.
5. You must have written parental permission for girls to share a bed with another girl.
6. Girls should be in groups of two or more whenever they are out of sight/hearing range of the adults in charge.
7. Smoking is not permitted in front of girls. This includes residents of the house.
8. Doors to the outside should be locked at nighttime.
9. A certified lifeguard must be present for girls to use private pool.
10. Locate the nearest smoke detector and identify escape routes upon arrival and make sure all girls and adults are aware of the emergency procedures; take a small flashlight for each room.
11. Check with home owner to ensure that inappropriate videos are not accessible.
12. Check with home owner that alcohol and firearms are not accessible.
13. If males will be in the house, make arrangements for everyone to have privacy for using the restroom and changing clothes.

### Home Manners

- Remind girls that they are guests and should respect the owner's property.
- Ensure that trash is placed in appropriate bins and all belongings are removed upon departure.
- Ensure that girls are in appropriate attire at all times.
- Girls should refrain from using the home phones without owner's permission.
- Girls should offer to clean the areas of the house they used before they depart. They should thank the host family.

## DO'S AND DON'TS of

### SLUMBER PARTIES

- DO complete a *Special Activities Application* and turn it into the council office for approval 4 weeks prior to sending out activity information to families.
- DO have an emergency plan for your troop which includes procedures for medical and weather emergencies, phone numbers for emergency use, phone locations, a home contact person, an available vehicle, and the responsibilities of each adult and girl.
- DO bring signed Annual Permission and Overnight Permission forms, plus Medication Administration forms (if applicable) for each girl.
- DO have an Emergency Card and Incident Report with you.
- DO have completed *Adult Emergency and Medical Information* forms for adults with your group.
- DO be courteous to the host family. Rooms should be left in good condition and tidy.
  
- DO NOT leave your girls unsupervised by an adult (18 years old or older).
- DO NOT allow your girls to run freely throughout the house or neighborhood.
- DO NOT leave any garbage behind. Dispose of it in proper receptacles or take it home with you.
  
- DO NOT use alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or weapons of any kind. (This applies to all adults who may be accompanying your troop including the host family.)

## Planning for Emergencies – Slumber Parties

### Key questions to answer before you go:

- What information, phone numbers, supplies and equipment do you need to have with you?
- What will you do if there is a fire or severe storm?
- What will you do if someone is missing from your group?
- What will you do if someone you do not recognize is following you or observing your group too closely?
- What will you do to make your sleeping area as safe as possible?
- Who else will be in the house during the slumber party?

### Everyone's role:

- An emergency plan is not very effective unless all participants know their role. Be sure to identify what parts the girls need to know and plan for how the girls will learn and practice their part.
- Adults should be assigned to specific jobs and a chain of command should be clearly defined.

### When you arrive:

- Note all house entrances and exits. Note area surrounding house.
- Identify exits from room. Be sure all adults and girls know the route.
- Locate smoke alarm and fire extinguisher.
- Verify with the homeowner that any alcohol, medications, or firearms are locked up or not within reach of the girls.

### **Packing List for a Slumber Party**

It is a good idea to prepare the following list for each one of your girls. As she packs she can check off each item. If she takes her list on the trip with her she can use it again as she repacks to return home.

- pillow, sleeping bag
- 1 pair of pajamas
- change of underwear for each day
- change of clothes for each day, appropriate for the weather and activity
- socks (1 pair per day, plus 1 extra)
- jacket (coat, hat, mittens – if winter)
- appropriate shoes for planned activities plus an extra pair
- raincoat or poncho and boots
- hat or visor (if expecting to be in sun)
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- comb or brush, shampoo
- soap/toiletries
- deodorant
- tissue
- non-aerosol insect repellent, sunscreen
- flashlight and extra batteries (in case of power outage at hotel)
- camera, if desired
- medication (to be turned into first aider in original container with written permission from parent)

Cell phones and electronics are to be allowed and used only at the discretion of the troop/group leader.

It is important to take enough gear to live comfortably, but excess baggage is more work and the home may not have lots of extra space in the room.

Put your name on everything!

## Appendix E – Hotel Stays

### Hotel Safety

1. Two approved female volunteers should be in every room/suite. However, they may only share a bed with their own child. Males are never permitted to share a room with girls other than their own children.
2. Adjoining rooms are preferred whenever possible.
3. Don't mention or display your room number when in the presence of strangers.
4. You must have written guardian permission for girls to share a bed with another girl.
5. Girls should be in groups of four or more whenever they are out of sight/hearing range of the adults in charge. In settings with greater potential for risk, girls should never be without an adult.
6. Door should be locked at all times. Use deadbolt and chain or anchor.
7. Smoking is not permitted in front of girls.
8. A certified lifeguard must be present for girls to use hotel pool.
9. Never leave luggage unattended; if possible lock luggage if you are leaving it in the room during a day outing. Never leave jewelry, cameras, electronics, cash, or credit cards in your room.
10. Locate the nearest fire alarm and escape routes upon arrival and make sure all girls and adults are aware of the emergency procedures; take a small flashlight for each room, some fire alarm systems may cause power failures.
11. Keep a small flashlight on your bedside table, along with a small bag with your room key, wallet, passport, and cell phone. Take the flashlight and bag with you if you have to leave the room in an emergency.
12. If a fire alarm goes off, get out as quickly as possible. Don't stop to pack your suitcase.
13. Before leaving your room, feel the door: If it is warm, do not open it. Stay in your room and stuff towels around the door. Call the hotel operator immediately. If the door is cool, proceed slowly out the door, looking for flames or smoke. Repeat these instructions for any door you encounter.
14. Check with hotel management to ensure that inappropriate videos are not accessible through the TVs in rooms.
15. Girls should refrain from using the room phones without adult permission.

### Hotel Manners

- Remind girls that there are other guests in the hotel and they should refrain from talking too loudly or playing the TV too loudly.
- Girls should also refrain from running, doing gymnastics, and jumping on the beds.
- Ensure that hotel property remains in the hotel, including hotel towels and pillows.
- Ensure that trash is placed in appropriate bins and all belongings are removed upon departure.
- Ensure that girls are in appropriate attire in hotel public areas.

DO'S AND DON'TS of  
HOTEL OVERNIGHTS

- DO complete a *Special Activities Application* and turn it into the council office for approval 4 weeks prior to sending out activity information to families.
- DO have an emergency plan for your troop which includes procedures for medical and weather emergencies, phone numbers for emergency use, phone locations, a home contact person, an available vehicle, and the responsibilities of each adult and girl.
- DO bring signed Annual Permission and Overnight Permission forms, plus Medication Administration forms (if applicable) for each girl.
- DO have an Emergency Card and Incident Report with you.
- DO have completed Adult Emergency and Medical Information forms for adults with your group.
- DO be courteous to others staying at the hotel. Rooms and public areas should be left in good condition and tidy.
- DO dispose of garbage in proper receptacles.
  
- DO NOT leave your girls unsupervised by an adult (18 years old or older).
- DO NOT allow your girls to run freely throughout the hotel.
- DO NOT bring alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or weapons of any kind on the trip. (This applies to all adults who may be accompanying your troop.)

## Planning for Emergencies – Hotel

### Key questions to answer before you go:

- What information, phone numbers, supplies and equipment do you need to take with you?
- What will you do if there is a fire or severe storm?
- What will you do if someone is missing from your group?
- What will you do if someone you do not recognize is following you or observing your group too closely?
- What will you do to make your hotel room as secure as possible?
- Who will have hotel room keys?

### Everyone's role:

- An emergency plan is not very effective unless all participants know their role. Be sure to identify what parts the girls need to know and plan for how the girls will learn and practice their part.
- Adults should be assigned to specific jobs and a chain of command should be clearly defined.

### When you arrive:

- Note all hotel entrances and exits. Note area surrounding facility. If you are uncomfortable with the safety or security arrangements, notify hotel management. If necessary, switch to a different hotel and notify your emergency contact person and council.
- Identify emergency exits from hotel room. Most hotels have a map on the back of the door in case of evacuation. Be sure all adults and girls know the route.
- Examine door closure and locks, as well as window access. Be sure to use all locks when you are in the room.
- Locate smoke alarm in room. If you cannot locate one or cannot determine if it is active, contact hotel management.

### **Packing List for an Overnight Hotel Stay**

It is a good idea to prepare the following list for each one of your girls. As she packs she can check off each item. If she takes her list on the trip with her she can use it again as she repacks to return home.

- pillow, extra blanket (if desired for use in vehicle or for comfort during trip)
- 1 pair of pajamas
- change of underwear for each day
- change of clothes for each day, appropriate for the weather and activity
- socks (1 pair per day, plus 1 extra)
- jacket (coat, hat, mittens – if winter)
- bathing suit, if planning on using hotel pool
- clothes for program or nice dinner
- appropriate shoes for planned activities plus an extra pair
- raincoat or poncho and boots
- hat or visor (if expecting to be in sun)
- toiletries (toothbrush and toothpaste, comb or brush, shampoo, deodorant)
- kleenex
- non-aerosol insect repellent, sunscreen
- reusable water bottle
- flashlight and extra batteries (in case of power outage at hotel)
- camera, if desired
- medication (to be turned into first aider in original container with written permission from parent)

Cell phones and electronics are to be allowed and used at the discretion of the troop/group leader.

It is important to take enough gear to live comfortably, but excess baggage is more work and hotels typically don't have lots of extra space in the room.

Put your name on everything!

## Appendix F – Backyard Camping

### Backyard Tent Site

1. Only the backyards of registered and approved volunteers are used.
2. Methods of communication with sources of emergency care are known, understood, and arranged for in advance (doctors, hospital, police, fire, ambulance, etc.) Adults know location of nearest phone and all appropriate numbers.
3. Gates/doors are locked or monitored.
4. Adults' sleeping quarters are arranged for maximum supervision, but do not share a tent or close quarters with girls. Adult sleeping areas are identified and visible after dark.
5. If younger girls require adults present with them for a positive outdoor experience, registered female adults are permitted to share tents with girls under the following conditions:
  - a. Two unrelated female adults are present in the tent, each sleeping on an outside wall, and the adults must sleep next to their daughter/Girl Scout.
  - b. Everyone sleeping in the shared tent must be in separate sleeping bags.

### DO'S AND DON'TS OF BACKYARD CAMPING

- DO complete a *Special Activities Application* and turn it into the council office for approval 4 weeks prior to sending out activity information to families.
- DO have an emergency plan for your troop which includes procedures for medical and weather emergencies, phone numbers for emergency use, phone locations, a home contact person, an available vehicle, and the responsibilities of each adult and girl.
- DO bring signed Annual Permission and Overnight Permission forms, plus Medication Administration forms (if applicable) for each girl.
- DO have an Emergency Card and Incident Report with you.
- DO leave your site cleaner than you found it (a checklist with your girls will be helpful). Be respectful of the owner's property.
- DO take care of your camping equipment: CARE for your tents properly; TREAT all tools with care and respect; INFORM person in charge if you're returning anything that is broken, torn, or has missing parts.
- DO NOT leave your girls unsupervised by an adult (at least 18 years old).
- DO NOT allow your girls to run freely throughout the neighborhood.
- DO NOT leave any garbage behind. Dispose of it in proper receptacles or take it home with you.
- DO NOT use alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or weapons of any kind. (This applies to all adults who may be accompanying your troop including host family.)

## Planning for Emergencies – Backyard Camping

### Key questions to answer before you go:

- What information, phone numbers, supplies, and equipment do you need to take with you?
- What will you do if there is a fire or severe storm?
- What will you do if someone is missing from your group?
- What will you do if someone you do not recognize is following you or observing your group too closely?
- What will you do if one of the girls needs to use the restroom at night?

### Everyone's role:

- An emergency plan is not very effective unless all participants know their role. Be sure to identify what parts the girls need to know and plan for how the girls will learn and practice their part.
- Adults should be assigned to specific jobs and a chain of command should be clearly defined.

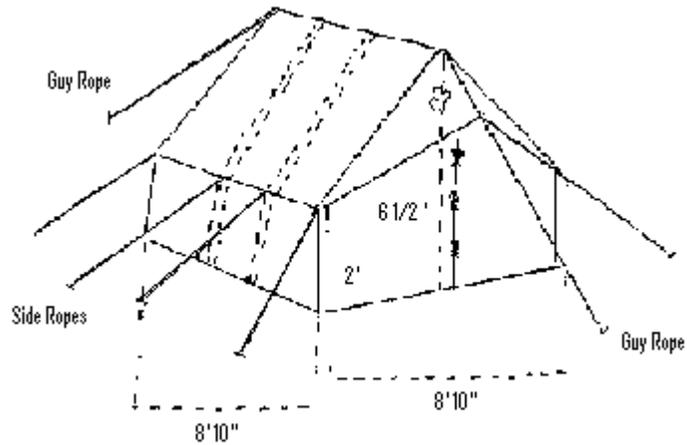
### When you arrive:

- Familiarize yourself with the general layout of the house and yard. Have owner identify any known hazards on the property.
- Locate working smoke alarm in house.
- Determine if homeowner has weather radio and what procedure will be used in case of severe weather threat.

# HOW TO PITCH AND STRIKE A ROUNDUP TENT

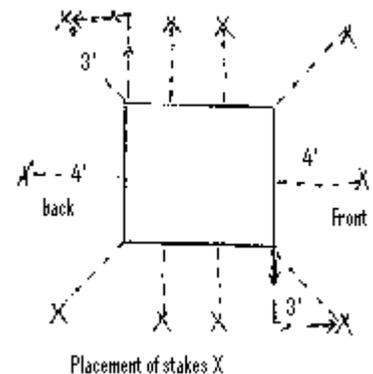
## TENT BAG CONTENTS

- 1 tent with 8 side ropes attached.
- 2 upright poles (3 sections each)
- 1 bag of 10 stakes and 8 staples
- 2 guy ropes



## PITCHING THE ROUNDUP TENT

1. Pre-determine the area in which you will pitch the tent (approximately 14'10" x 16'10" overall is needed).
2. Check that all side ropes are attached to tent with a bowline and a taunt line hitch at the other end for slipping over the tent stake.
3. Check to see if the end flaps of the tent are tied shut.
4. Peg down four corners with staples.
5. Drive all stakes according to the diagram.
6. Loop all side ropes loosely over tent stakes.
7. Assemble upright poles and insert upright pin through grommet at each end of tent. Attach end guy ropes loosely.
8. Raise upright. (One camper on each upright.)
9. Adjust ridge guy ropes to square up tent.
10. Adjust corner and side ropes to square up tent. Loosen ropes in wet weather because rope shrinks, putting great strain on the tent fabric.



## STRIKING THE ROUNDUP TENT

1. Tie shut end flaps.
2. Loosen all side ropes.
3. Loosen front and back guy lines.
4. Lower uprights. Remove guy rope from pin.
5. Pull all stakes and clean.
6. Pull all staples and clean.
7. Count all stakes, staples, and guy ropes and put in bag.
8. Lay doubled tent out flat. Brush clean.
9. Wipe sod cloth clean and fold in.
10. Fold door flaps to center of tent.
11. Fold eave line a third towards ridge of tent. Tuck in all ropes.
12. Bring ridge to eave line.
13. Disjoint uprights.
14. Space sections of uprights on the stake bag on tent and roll them up in the tent. Put in tent bag.

## CARE OF TENTS

Tents will last longer if we all do our part in caring for them.

### ARRANGE FOR REGULAR TENT INSPECTION TO BE SURE CAMPERS...

- Loosen guy ropes in the rain – when wet, they tighten and put undue strain on canvas.
- Never hang anything on guy ropes or tie tapes – looks untidy and pulls tent out of line.
- Roll side walls and door flaps up toward the inside of the tent – so they can be let down from the inside, and also prevent water from catching in the roll.
- Never roll side walls or door flaps unless completely dry – damp canvas will mildew rapidly when not open to the air.
- Drop side walls periodically – mice sometimes nest in rolls.
- Never touch tents from the inside during a rain – capillary attraction will bring water in. (Breaks air pockets and makes tents leak.)
- Never permit aerosol spray to contact walls or roof of tent – the chemicals dissolve the water repellent treatment.
- Do not pin anything to the wall of a tent – causes tears and leaking.
- Tie tapes in a half bow so they can be untied when wet – nothing like a wet, tight knot to encourage the cutting or tearing of tapes.
- Report all small tears, missing ropes, tapes, etc., at once – this keeps repairs minor.
- Keep mirrors under cover – sunlight reflected in a mirror can be hot enough to burn a tent.
- Hang clothing on forked sticks lashed to upright poles or on dowels or smooth sticks lashed to hang parallel to the ridge pole – nails or hooks splinter and split tent poles.
- When preparing to store a tent, canvas should be completely dry! Be sure that canvas is brushed well, folded with a minimum of wrinkles, and that all staples and stakes are enclosed in separate bag.

## ITEMS TO TAKE BACKYARD CAMPING FOR EACH GIRL

It is a good idea to prepare the following list for each one of your girls. As she packs she can check off each item. If she takes her list to camp with her she can use it again as she repacks to come home.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pillow, sleeping bag or blanket and sheet                                | <input type="checkbox"/> comb or brush   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flannel shirt or sweatshirt  | <input type="checkbox"/> deodorant   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> jacket (coat, hat, mittens – if winter)                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> tissues   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair of pajamas  | <input type="checkbox"/> non-aerosol insect repellent, sunscreen   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> change of underwear for each day   | <input type="checkbox"/> flashlight and extra batteries  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> change of clothes for each day, appropriate for the weather and activity | <input type="checkbox"/> pocketknife (optional)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> socks (1 pair per day, plus 1 extra)                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> mess kit or knife, fork, spoon, plate, bowl, and cup (unbreakable and washable) in dunk bag with clip clothespin. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 pair of jeans or long pants  | <input type="checkbox"/> reusable water bottle   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate shoes for planned activities plus an extra pair              | <input type="checkbox"/> waterproof ground cloth, if sleeping on the ground.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> raincoat or poncho and boots   | <input type="checkbox"/> camera, if desired  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bandana or hat   | <input type="checkbox"/> medication (to be turned into first aider in original container with written permission from parent)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> washcloth, 1 or 2 towels, soap in container                              |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> toothbrush and toothpaste  |  |

Cell phones and electronics are to be allowed and used at the discretion of the troop/group leader.

Put your name on everything!

## Appendix G – Cabin (& RV Stays)

### Cabin Safety

1. Council-approved site is used or approval obtained.
2. Permission to use the site/facility is obtained in writing.
3. Methods of communication with sources of emergency care are known, understood, and arranged for in advance (doctors, hospital, police, fire, park rangers, ambulance, etc.) Adults know location of nearest phone and all appropriate numbers.
4. Gates/doors are locked or monitored.
5. Only approved volunteers are allowed to be in the cabin/RV overnight.
6. Two adults should be in every cabin with girls. However, they may only share a bed with their own child. Males are permitted to share a cabin with girls as long as they are in separate bedrooms and have their own bathroom. There must be a female approved volunteer present with the girls.
7. You must have written guardian permission for girls to share a bed with another girl.
8. Sleeping quarters for adults are arranged for maximum supervision. Female adult sleeping areas are identified and visible after dark.

### Council-Approved Sites

Sites and facilities directly affect program. They should provide a safe, healthy environment and potential for a wide variety of outdoor activities, and be appropriate to the level of certification of the adults taking the troop/group.

Sites currently approved by GSSI include:

1. Council owned/leased facilities – Camp Koch, other councils' properties
2. State and National Parks and Forests.
3. County parks, i.e. – Burdette, Pride's Creek, Boggs Creek
4. Commercial campgrounds for public use, i.e. – Holiday World

Other sites are subject to approval. Standards are listed in detail in *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. When choosing a location for any outdoor activity, the following should be considered:

1. Water – is it approved for drinking?
2. Restrooms – on the site or arrangements can be made?
3. Security – is there access to a phone? Is it a safe area? Privacy (public intrusion)?
4. Safety – do buildings have fire extinguishers and fire exits? Are they in good repair? Is there access for emergency vehicles? Is the terrain appropriate for the activity and age of the girls?
5. Facilities and rules of the site – What activities are allowed on the site? Is shelter available?

### DO'S AND DON'TS of CABIN OVERNIGHT STAYS

- DO complete a *Special Activities Application* and turn it into the council office for approval 4 weeks prior to sending out activity information to families.
- DO have an emergency plan for your troop which includes procedures for medical and weather emergencies, phone numbers for emergency use, phone locations, a home

contact person, an available vehicle, and the responsibilities of each adult and girl.

- DO bring signed Annual Permission and Overnight Permission forms, plus Medication Administration forms (if applicable) for each girl.
- DO have an Emergency Card and Incident Report with you.
- DO have completed Adult Emergency and Medical Information forms for adults with your group.
- DO be courteous to others sharing your site, noise and litter are pollution. Leave your site cleaner than you found it (a checklist with your girls will be helpful).
- DO take care of your equipment: TREAT all tools with care and respect; INFORM person in charge if you're returning anything that is broken, torn, or has missing parts.
  
- DO NOT leave your girls unsupervised by an adult (at least 18 years old ).
- DO NOT allow your girls to run freely throughout the cabin area.
- DO NOT leave any garbage behind. Dispose of it in proper receptacles or take it home with you. Cigarette butts are garbage!
- DO NOT bring alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or weapons of any kind onto camp property. (This applies to all adults who may be accompanying your troop.)

## Planning for Emergencies – Cabin Stays

### Key questions to answer before you go:

- What information, phone numbers, supplies and equipment do you need to take with you?
- What will you do if there is a fire or severe storm?
- What will you do if someone is missing from your group?
- What will you do if someone you do not recognize is following you or observing your group too closely?
- What will you do to make your cabin site as secure as possible?
- Who will have cabin keys?

### Everyone's role:

- An emergency plan is not very effective unless all participants know their role. Be sure to identify what parts the girls need to know and plan for how the girls will learn and practice their part.
- Adults should be assigned to specific jobs and a chain of command should be clearly defined.

### When you arrive:

- Note all park/site entrances and exits. Note area surrounding facility. If you are uncomfortable with the safety or security arrangements, notify site management.
- Identify emergency exits from cabin. Be sure all adults and girls know the route.
- Examine door closure and locks, as well as window access. Be sure to use all locks when you are in the cabin.
- Locate smoke alarm in cabin. If you cannot locate one or cannot determine if it is active, contact site management. Locate fire extinguisher and check that it is properly maintained.
- Determine if site has weather radio, and what their policies are for severe weather.

## Environmental Ethics – Consumer Attitudes

In addition to very specific actions that we should or should not do, we need to develop an awareness of the impact of our consumer choices upon the environment. Waste disposal (bulk) and chemical contamination from waste are two major issues in the world today.

The following are things that you can do:

1. Do not use disposable paper or plastic products, such as, paper plates and plastic utensils.
2. Do not use Styrofoam cups, plates, and bowls.
3. Buy bulk products rather than individual servings.
4. Look for packaging that is biodegradable.
5. Recycle as much as possible – especially plastic, glass, aluminum, and paper products.
6. Use 1-ply toilet paper and paper towels.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

When large numbers of people use an area consistently, over a long period of time, the environment will react to this usage and change. The following lists are designed to help you teach your girls ways to “protect and improve the world” around them.

### Trees and Plants

- Do not pick, dig, or collect seeds, flowers, mosses, etc. Identify, admire, draw, or photograph, but leave it there.
- Do not cut live trees or carve their bark.

### All Creatures Great and Small

- Do not feed or leave food out for wild animals.
- Where you find it, is its home. Identify, admire, draw, or photograph, but leave it there.
- Insects, snakes, and spiders are a vital part of the food chain. It is seldom necessary to kill them. Remove them if necessary, otherwise, go the other way.
- Painting or carving turtles’ shells can cause them to die. Lizards do not grow new tails. Leave them where you find them.
- Chewing gum dropped on the ground can harm chipmunks, squirrels, and other small animals.

### Water

- Use only the amount of water necessary for the task.
- Make sure all faucets are completely off when you are finished.
- Dispose of waste water in drains or scatter away from fresh water sources, trails, and campsites.
- Use products that are designed for minimum impact on the environment

### Soil/Habitat

- Stay on paths.
- Make sure your trash is disposed of properly.
- Any time you see litter pick it up.
- Clear leaves and undergrowth from fire areas only. Clearing away leaves in other areas destroys habitat and bares soil to erosion.
- Park vehicles only in designated areas.

## HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR LATRINE

Latrines/bathrooms should be cleaned upon arrival, daily, and before departure. Nothing but human waste and toilet tissue should go into the “toilet”. (Sanitary supplies, garbage, and trash stop up toilets and the hose used to pump a pit latrine.) Keep toilet lids down and doors closed.

### Cleaning Procedure

- Use broom, long handled brush, and bucket identified for latrine cleaning (usually painted yellow or marked “latrine”).
- Sweep down cob webs from ceiling and walls. Sweep floor. (Put in trash to prevent small pieces of paper from accumulating on the ground.)
- Mix ¼ bucket of water with 1 cap of chlorine bleach or other sanitizing solution. (Be sure the product has bacteria destroying properties. Avoid non-chlorine bleaches.)
- Clean the sinks or catch basins.
- Scrub the seats with the long handled brush.
- Use the remainder of the water and broom to sweep the floor around the seats. Any water left should be poured in the waste water drain. (Bleach kills the bacterial decomposition process in a pit latrine.)
- Empty trash cans.
- Restock toilet paper and paper bags for sanitary product disposal. Remove upon departure from camp.
- Air dry the broom and brush. Turn bucket upside down to dry.
- Wash hands when finished.

NOTE: Troops supply toilet paper, paper bags for sanitary napkins, and bleach or other disinfectant. Please remove bags and toilet paper when you leave as little animals like to chew it up.

### Hand washing Procedures

- Hand wash facilities should be located near the food preparation area and near the restroom facilities. If these are not close together, set up two hand wash stations. Girls should be reminded to wash hands before preparing food.
- Hand wash stations should include running water for washing (tap or jug), sink or catch basin, drain or bucket for waste water.
- Anti-bacterial soap should be provided. Use liquid soap or attach bar soap with a piece of twine or in mesh bag (like onion bag) so that it cannot be dropped on the ground.
- Dispose of waste water the same method as dish wash water. Strain if there are particles present.
- Wash the sink or catch basin with bleach water once a day.

### ITEMS TO TAKE CABIN CAMPING FOR EACH GIRL

It is a good idea to prepare the following list for each one of your girls. As she packs she can check off each item. If she takes her list to camp with her she can use it again as she repacks to come home.

- pillow, sleeping bag or sheet and blanket.
- Check with cabin site manager as to whether bed linens are provided.
- flannel shirt or sweatshirt
- jacket (coat, hat, mittens – if winter)
- 1 pair of pajamas
- change of underwear for each day
- change of clothes for each day, appropriate for the weather and activity
- socks (1 pair per day, plus 1 extra)
- 1 pair of jeans or long pants
- appropriate shoes for planned activities (no sandals) plus an extra pair
- raincoat or poncho and boots
- bandana or hat
- washcloth and 1 or 2 towels (check with

- cabin site manager), soap – in container
- toothbrush and toothpaste
- comb or brush
- deodorant
- tissues
- non-aerosol insect repellent
- flashlight and extra batteries
- pocketknife (optional)
- mess kit or knife, fork, spoon, plate, bowl, and cup (unbreakable and washable) in dunk bag with clip clothespin.
- reusable water bottle
- camera, if desired
- medication (to be turned into first aider in original container with written permission from parent)

Cell phones and electronics are to be allowed and used at the discretion of the troop/group leader.

Put your name on everything!