

Recruitment Volunteer field book

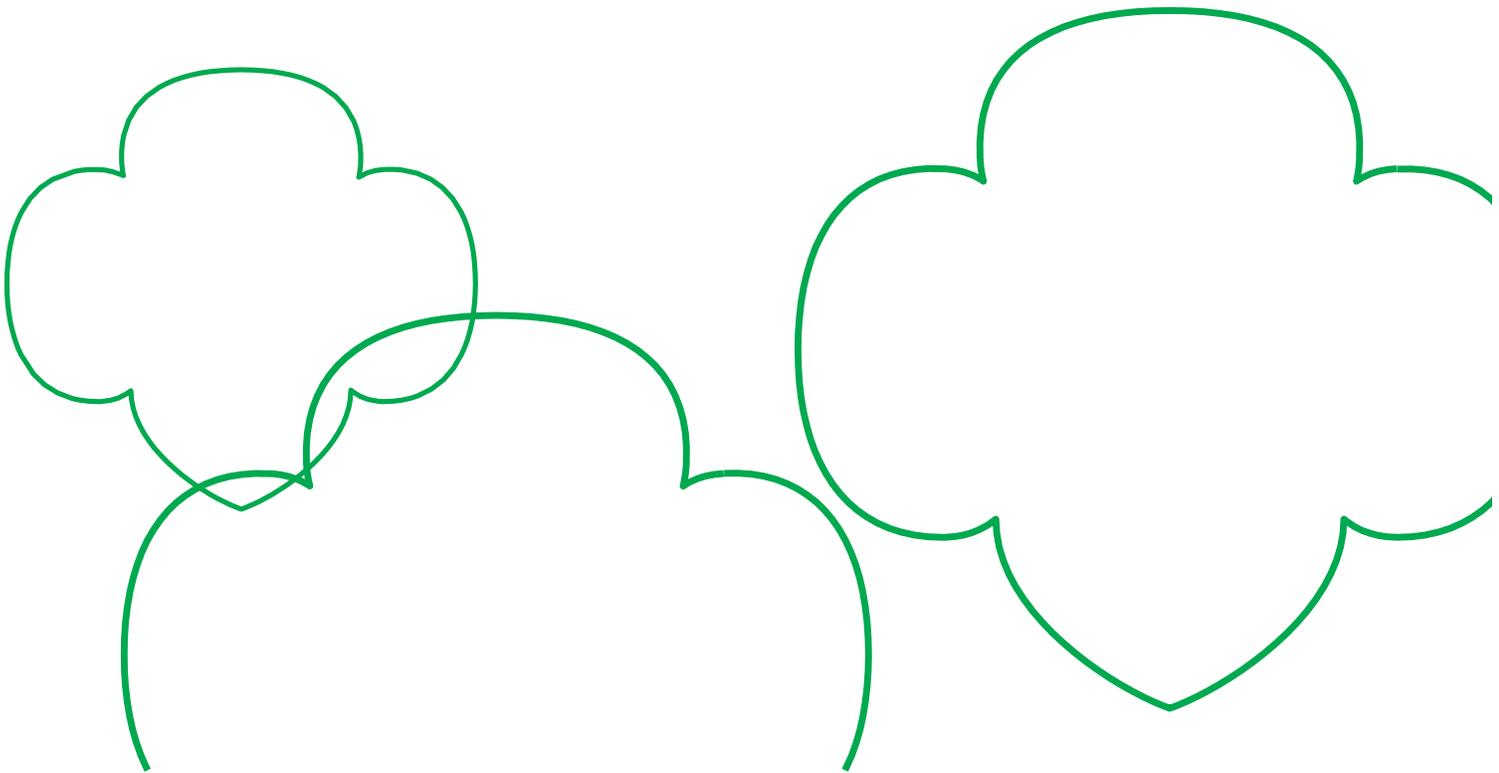


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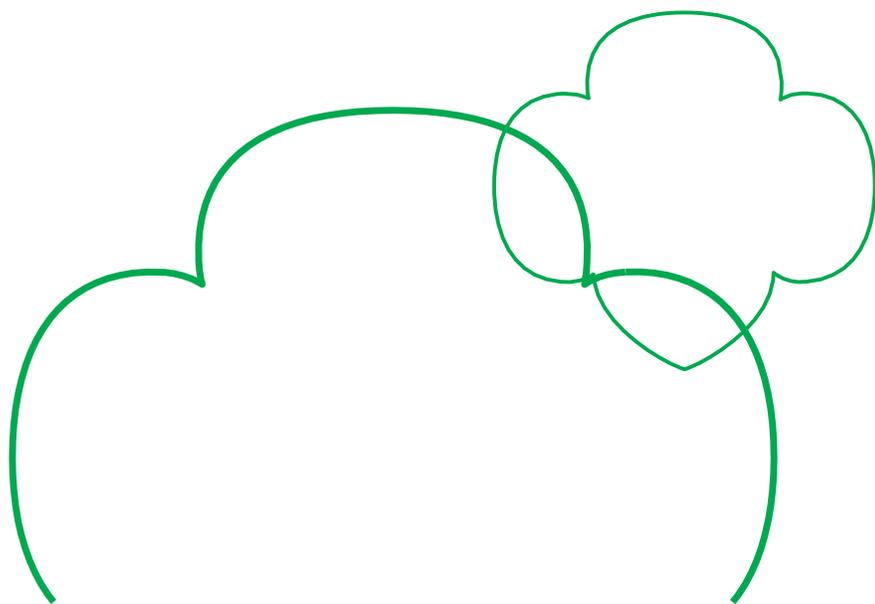
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Welcome to the Girl Scouts of Colorado Recruitment Team

We want to thank you for taking on a recruitment role within Girl Scouts of Colorado! As an Area Recruiter, YOU are a key player in our council. In your role you help inform the council staff about membership needs and allow us to market effectively to each unique area in your community.

There is a lot of flexibility regarding the specific tasks you will do, but the basics are being a responsive contact person for the Girl Scout Service Units, staff, and troop leaders in your area, and believing in and promoting Girl Scouting at every grade level.

These are exciting times for Girl Scouting. The expertise, interests, skills and life experiences of our volunteers are essential to shaping fun and enriching leadership experiences for girls and inspiring them to reach their personal best. As a Girl Scout recruitment volunteer, you will be bringing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to life for girls in your area and are critical to the program's success. Your commitment and passion to the Girl Scout Movement are indispensable. We value and celebrate your dedication and thank you for joining us as we embark on serving more girls in your community.



The Girl Scout Program

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout program is fun with purpose! It is based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law that generations of girls have followed. The Girl Scout program is based on the needs and interests of girls. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience, represented by three keys of leadership—Discover, Connect, and Take Action promotes the Girl Scout Mission:

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

What Do Girl Scouts Do?

Girl Scouts is a safe, no-limits place where she can be inspired, try new things, take on challenges, build community, and inspire others. She can earn badges, hike and camp, participate in the cookie program, and much more. They improve neighborhoods, protect the planet, design robots, and establish sports clinics... and much, much more. In Girl Scouting the opportunities are endless! Girls will with their troops to decide opportunities they want to explore together.

The Girl Scout program starts girls off on a Journey of their choice from the National Leadership Journeys series. They'll earn awards, have fun, and take on projects that change the world.

When girls participate in Girl Scouts, they benefit in 5 important ways:



STRONG SENSE OF SELF

Girls have confidence in themselves and their abilities, and form positive identities.



POSITIVE VALUES

Girls act ethically, honestly, and responsibly, and show concern for others.



CHALLENGE SEEKING

Girls take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from mistakes.



HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Girls develop and maintain healthy relationships by communicating their feelings directly and resolving conflicts constructively.



COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING

Girls desire to contribute to the world in purposeful and meaningful ways, learn how to identify problems in the community, and create “action plans” to solve them.

Ways to Participate in Girl Scouts

There are so many things to do with Girl Scouts! Every girl is welcome, and girls can join at any time in the year. Girl Scouts offers different, flexible ways to join and participate.

Join a Troop

Girls form strong bonds by meeting regularly to work on activities decided upon by the group. This is teamwork at its finest, and it's a strong focus in Girl Scouts. Our organization is committed to empowering girls to discover more about themselves as well as the world around them. Girl Scouts make a difference in their community and the world and have fun doing it!

Go to Camp

Camp programs encourage girls to develop independence, self-reliance, outdoor skills, problem solving, and community living skills. In an outdoor environment, under the supervision of supportive adults, girls take responsibility for their daily tasks, ranging from keeping a clean living area to preparing dinner in the outdoors. Camp programs build girls' self-confidence and teach them to overcome challenges. If girls are interested in having some amazing adventures in a fun and safe environment, camp is the place to be.

Attend an Event

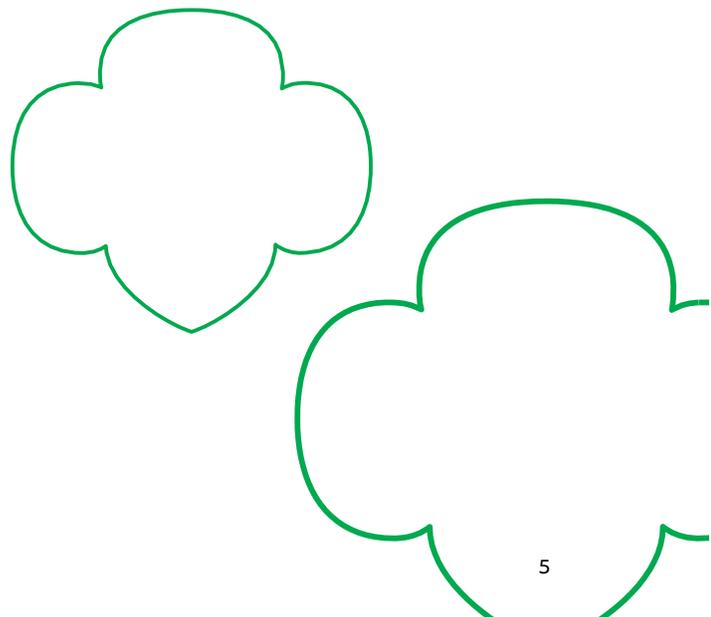
Everything is more fun when you're sharing it with others who have the same interests. Many Service Units put on events from dances, ice cream socials, camping, day camps... the list in which to participate in endless.

Travel

Pack your bags -- Girl Scouts are going places! Perhaps you want to explore the Grand Canyon? Discover Alaska? Try a service project in Costa Rica? Whether it's a trip across town or around the world, the adventure will stay with you forever. When girls see and experience new things, whether locally, nationally or internationally, they have life- changing experiences they won't soon forget.

Discover More

In addition to the Pathways above, Girl Scouts offers programs that any Girl Scout can participate in, including the Girl Scout Cookie Program; badge and patch programs; the Bronze, Silver, and Gold Leadership Awards; scholarships; and community events.



Step By Step: Recruitment Overview

Recruitment

Open houses or other large scale events at school are good opportunities to let parents and girls know about Girl Scouts. A better time to recruit girls and adults is during a Parent Information Night at an elementary school, or another public location. Determine if there are other places in the community where you could promote the registration night, or promote volunteer opportunities.

In this guide you will find suggestions on how to plan recruitment efforts in your community, and how to make events more meaningful. You will also find tools to make your recruitment event a success. The following steps can help ensure a successful recruitment event:

Step 1: Research

Step 2: Define Event

Step 3: Find Location

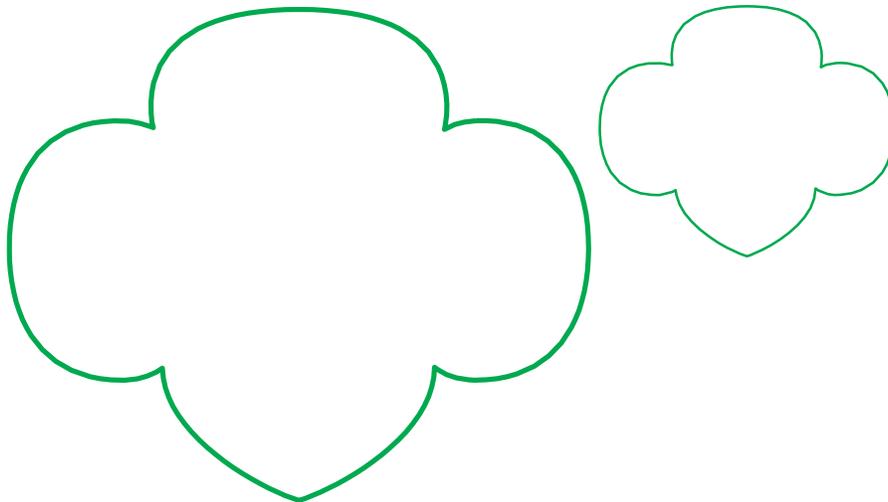
Step 4: Promotion and flier distribution

Step 5: Day of event

Step 6: Follow up

Before you begin....

Consider building a team to help with recruitment efforts. Your team could include your Service Unit Team Members, Troop Leaders/Co-leaders, parents, and Council Staff in your area. The size of a team can vary based on the need of the person in charge of recruitment.



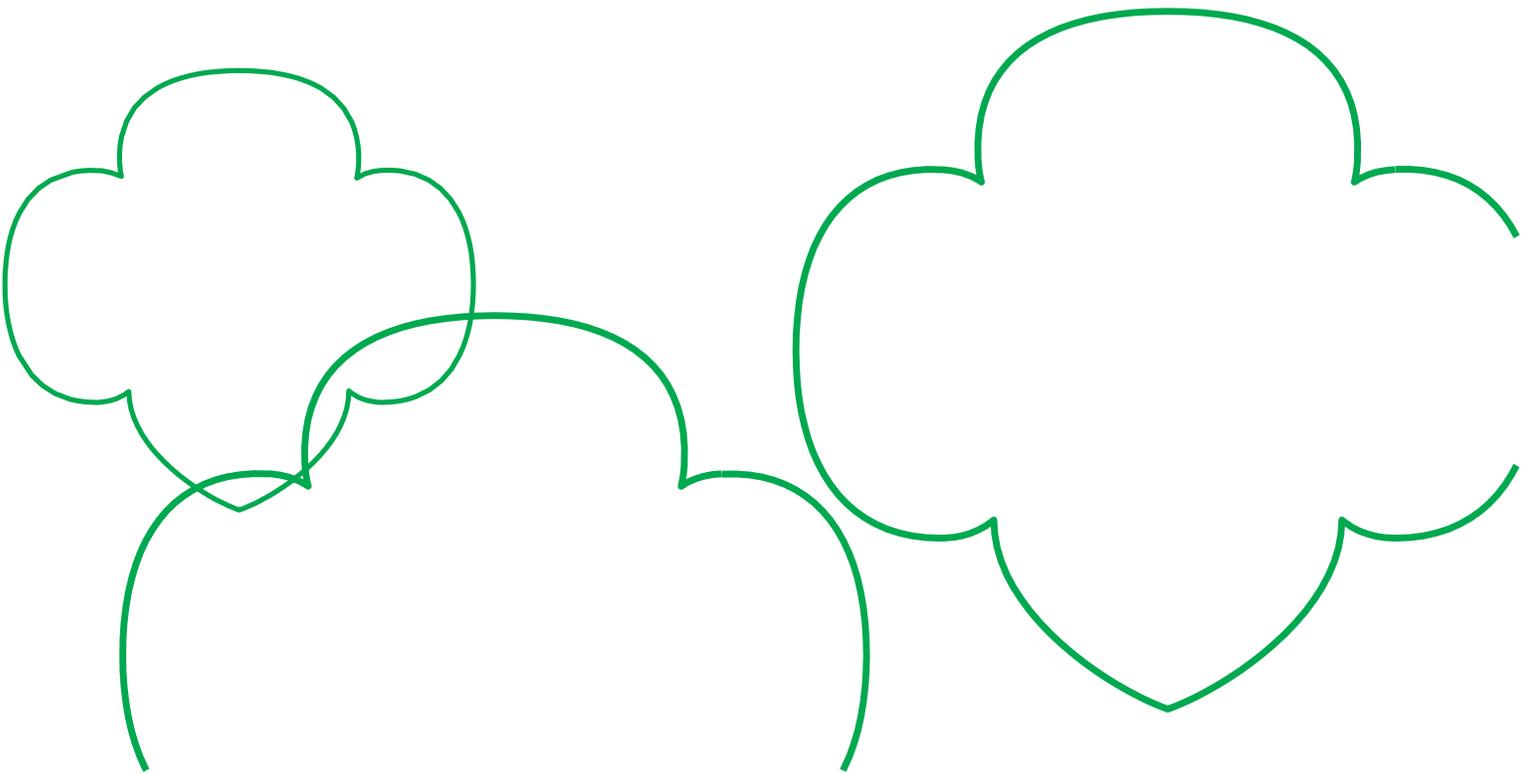
Step 1: Research

Questions to ask your Service Unit Team and Council Staff

- What is the history of previous recruitment efforts?
- How many attended recruitment events?
- How was it set up?
- Was it themed/party style or just informational?
- Were there any suggestions for future events?
- Who else will be available to attend?

Examine the current state of Girl Scouts in your community by talking with your Service Unit Manager or Council Staff

- What schools are in your Service Unit?
- In which schools are there troops?
- Are there gaps in troop leadership?
- Are there gaps in grade levels?
- Which troops are returning?
- Is the school administration supportive and aware of the Girl Scout troops?



Step 2: Define Event

You know your community best. Spend some time researching opportunities for a recruitment event.

Types of Events

There are many types of recruitment events.

- Parent Information Night
- Recruitment Booth/Open House
- Parades

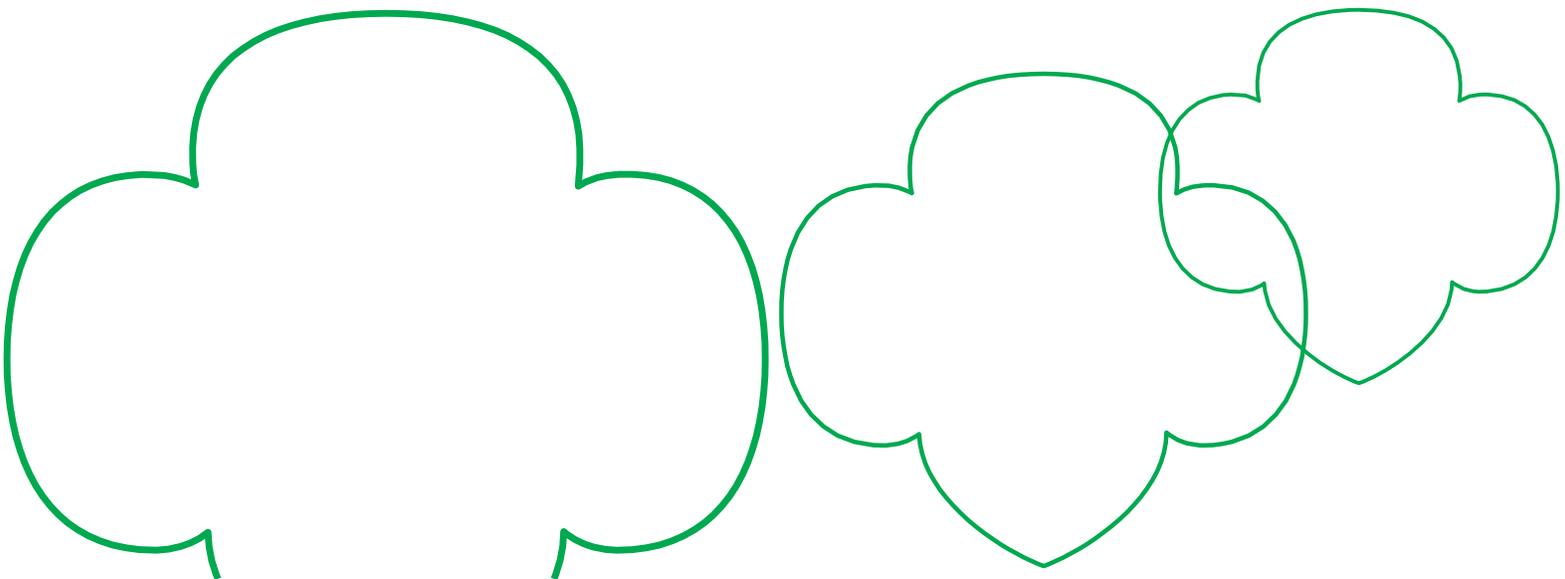
We have created a Recruitment Toolkit that can help you when conducting conversations with adults during recruitment events.

Recruitment Booth/Open House

A recruitment booth/open house is when you set a time frame (for example, 1-4 hours) of which you will be at a back to school or community event. Parents/guardians may come at any time during the hours set and pick up information about Girl Scouts or register themselves and their daughters.

Other Important Questions to Ask Yourself

- What type of support will I need from my Service Unit Team and council staff for the event?
- What is the registration process for the event?
- Will I need to check out supplies from council?
- Does the event conflict with other Girl Scouts of Colorado or community events?
- How far in advance do we need to advertise?



Ideas for Recruitment Events

If your schools won't allow you to attend a back-to-school night or hold a parent information night on their property, you may decide to put on a special recruitment event. The following are just a few ideas for events that can help girls understand how fun and exciting Girl Scouts can be. Your team may be able to come up with many more.

Daisy Events

- Daisy Low Storyteller—Tell the Juliette Low story, perhaps in costume character.
- Giant Show and Tell—Daisy scrapbooks and crafts, with Daisy girls in their tunics or vests.
- Teddy Bear Picnic—Have girls bring their teddy bear and have a tea party! Teach simple first aid using the teddy bear as a “patient”, teach songs, make a hat for the animal, etc. Do an activity related to a Journey.

Have parents meet separately to learn about Girl Scouts and leadership.

Brownie Events

- Try it and Take it—Do an activity from or related to a Journey or Badge with items to take home.
- Juliette Low Birthday Party—Provide cupcakes and party games for all in a school multipurpose room. Hand out information on how to get into Girl Scouting.
- Make New Friends Event—Teach girls a song and make multi-cultural wooden friendship doll sticks.
- Brownie Dessert or Ice-Cream Social—Serve a variety of brownies/ice cream and present information on Girl Scouts.

Have parents meet separately to learn about Girl Scouts and leadership.

Junior Events

- Tent Talk—Set up a variety of tents with Junior, Cadette, Senior and/or Ambassador Girl Scouts sharing stories, songs and showing what they've done in Girl Scouts.
- “Girl Scouts” clubhouse—Use big appliance boxes to build a clubhouse with photo displays, posters, etc. inside.
- Begin-A-Journey—Do one or more activities related to a Journey and provide a snack.
- Act Locally—Set an entry fee of cans, cake mix, pet food, baby food, books, toys, and use the event as a service project; you can even have people help sort and pack up. Give out Girl Scout information to new people who participate.

All Grade-Levels

- Bring-A-Friend Events
- Summer Fun Days
- Community Fair Booths
- Marching in Summer Parades
- Girl Scouts in the Park Day

A Few More Ideas for Promoting Girl Scouts to Girls and Parents

It will always help your cause if parents are already aware and excited about Girl Scouts by the time they get the flier. To do that you can:

- Increase Girl Scouts visibility by encouraging or arranging for girls to do flag ceremonies for school assemblies and community events!
- Ask troops/groups to make posters of their activities or bulletin boards to put up at their school!
- Invite the public to a Thinking Day or a Girl Scout Birthday Celebration!
- Hand out membership information with every box of cookies!
- Have a service unit-sponsored “Bring-A-Friend” skating party or other fun event!

Step 3: Find Location

Let us know!

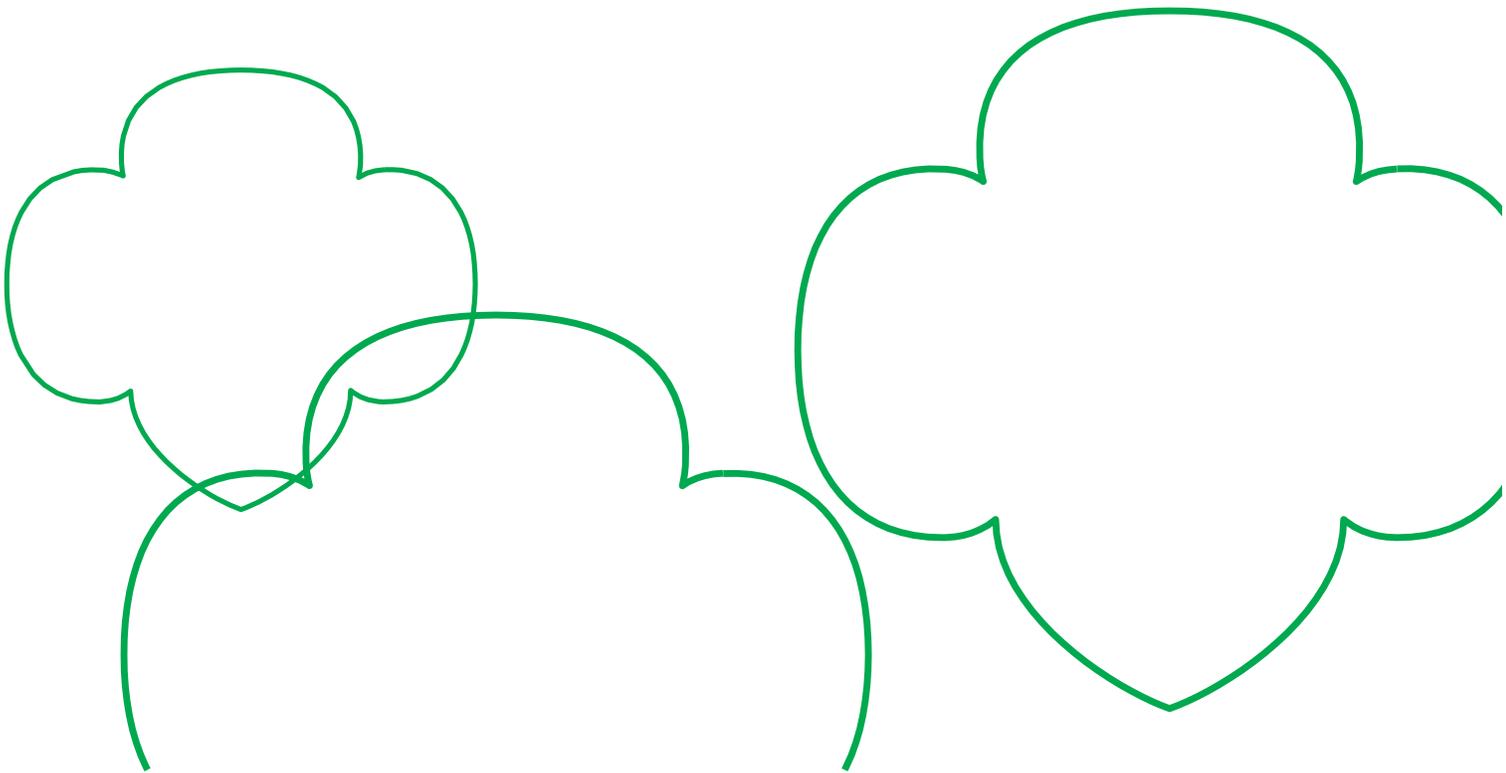
- Reach out to your Service Unit Team, Volunteer Support Specialist and Recruitment Specialist. These people can provide resources and recruitment materials.

Pick a date, time and place

- Make sure it's an appropriate meeting time and does not conflict with other events such as parent-teacher conferences or Girl Scout traditions.

Location of Recruitment Event

- Suggestions: school gym or library, public library, church, large subdivision or apartment complex building, community center, fire department, YMCA (Try to find a space that is free to use.)
- Determine meeting space based on location, space, cost, hours of operation
- Connect with school administrators or person in charge of event location to determine a good time to schedule a Girl Scout recruitment event.
- Reserve a space for a one-hour long recruitment event (ask to set up 30 minutes prior and clean up 30 minutes after)
- Recruit other leaders in the school to assist that night—they can collect registrations for their own troops, help set up displays showing off their troop's activities or bring uniforms and Journey books from their own grade levels, etc.
- An experienced leader or two could also help address any questions that may arise at the recruitment



Step 4: Promotion & Flier Preparation

The recruitment specialist for your area works closely with school districts and will be a great first contact on flier distribution rules in your area.

Contact School or Event Location

- Call as soon as possible before recruitment event
- Ask who to drop fliers off to
- How many fliers are needed?
- If permission for flier is needed, get fax or email information
- If at a school, contact school district for flier authorization (if necessary)
- If at a school, start with secretary, then work up
- If at a school, inquire if fliers can be dispersed to all girls; clarify grades
- If at a school, would they like them separated by classroom or in bundles?
- If at a school, let them know when you will be dropping them off
- If at a school, ask if they have a newsletter that can advertise the event? What is procedure to get information in a newsletter?

Prepare For Events with Fliers

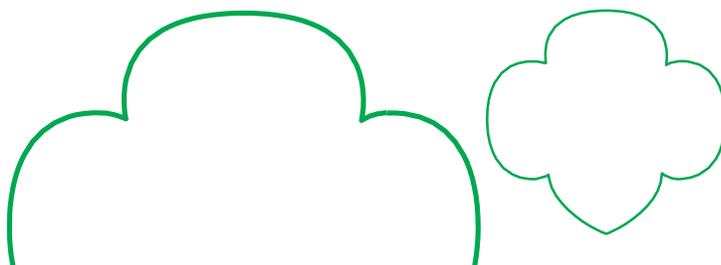
- Contact the staff recruitment specialist, they can provide you with templates or print fliers for you.
- Fill out the flier order form at gscoblog.org/recruitment-resources – please allow 2 weeks to guarantee flier production
- Be sure to provide 10-20 extra fliers (depending on school or event size).
- Provide contact information should parents and girls not be able to attend the recruitment event.

Disperse

- Provide fliers to the person at the school or event location who is in charge of distribution.
- If the school has an electronic newsletter, ask if information on your event can be included.

Advertise More

- Order additional marketing materials needed to promote your event on the form at gscoblog.org/recruitment-resources. Posters, yard signs, tablecloths, ... can be used to attract attention to your event and giveaways can be made available to attract visitors to your table at open house-type events.
- While in the area, distribute extra fliers to as many community places as possible! If at a school, sometimes the fliers never make it home. Possible locations include (work with council staff on all possible locations):
 - Library
 - Banks
 - Coffee shop
 - Dance/Gymnastics/Cheerleading studios
 - Day cares with After-School care
 - Department of Motor Vehicles
 - Churches
 - Grocery stores
 - Gyms/YMCA
 - Fast Food Restaurants
 - Doctor offices
- Encourage leaders to call or email friends, neighbors, etc. who may want to attend
- Talk to your Service Unit and/or council staff to see if there are any girls in your area who have not found a troop and should be invited to the event
- If you are a member of a local social media group such as Next Door or have a Facebook account, share the information with others who might be interested.



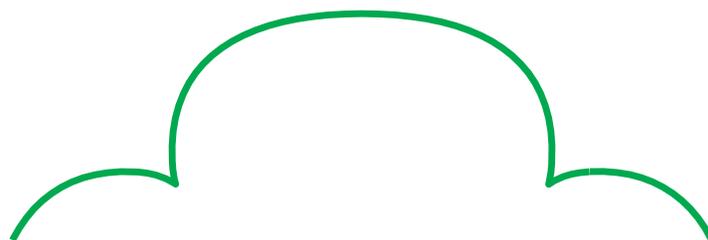
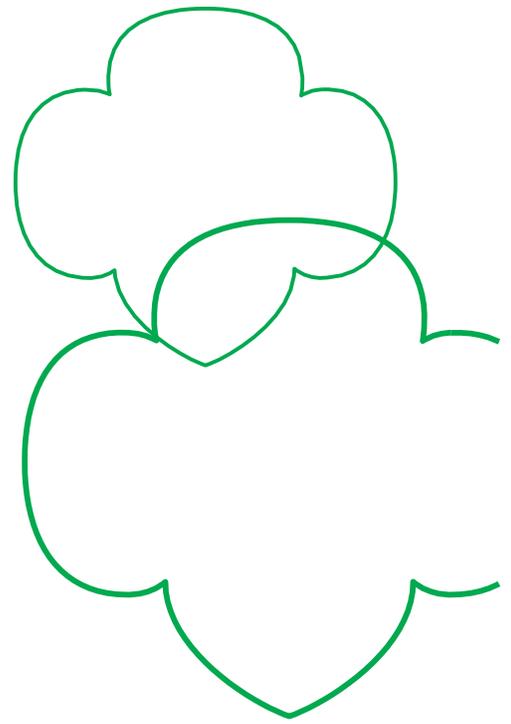
Step 5: Day of Event

Recruitment Toolkit

- Please reference the Recruitment Practice on the next page

At the event:

- Arrive within event check-in time.
- Unload supplies
- Assign greeters near door
- Set up tables, displays, decorations
- Keep track of who attends or visits booth
- Smile!
- Throw garbage in designated container
- Leave space better than you found it
- Put interest cards in a secure location



Practicing the Recruitment Conversation

As you recruit:

- Greet everyone with a smile and a hello
 - Approach them first, don't wait for them to come to you
- Describe the council and the volunteer and girl opportunities
- Be prepared

During the Recruitment Conversation for Volunteers:

- Make sure to have a conversation with each person expressing interest in volunteering
- Let the candidate talk
- Give the candidate the chance to ask questions and respond to the questions honestly
- Ask the candidate what their interests are
- Let them know we are a volunteer-based organization and we are looking for people interested in volunteering
- Discuss alternative volunteer positions and pathways with the candidate if during the conversation it becomes apparent that the original volunteer position is not a good fit. (Leader, troop cookie manager, etc.)
- Ask candidate if they are interested in being involved with their girls' activities or participating with their daughter and her friends.
 - If yes, present them with options based on your conversation about their interests
 - If no, be prepared to respond using responses from the battling excuses section
 - Use language that will make the alternatives more appealing such as: "We really need someone with your experience (talent, knowledge, passion etc.) who can ..." "You'd be really good at (in the role of) ..." "Have you ever considered volunteering as a co-leader of a troop?"
- Have the candidate fill out an interest card if they are interested
 - Return the form to your recruitment specialist for follow-up

During the Recruitment Conversation for Girls:

- Make sure to have a conversation with each person expressing interest in getting their girl involved
- Ask the candidate what their girls' interests are
- Talk about the Girl Scout benefits
- Talk about ways they can get involved
- Talk about all the fun things girls can do

Helpful quotes

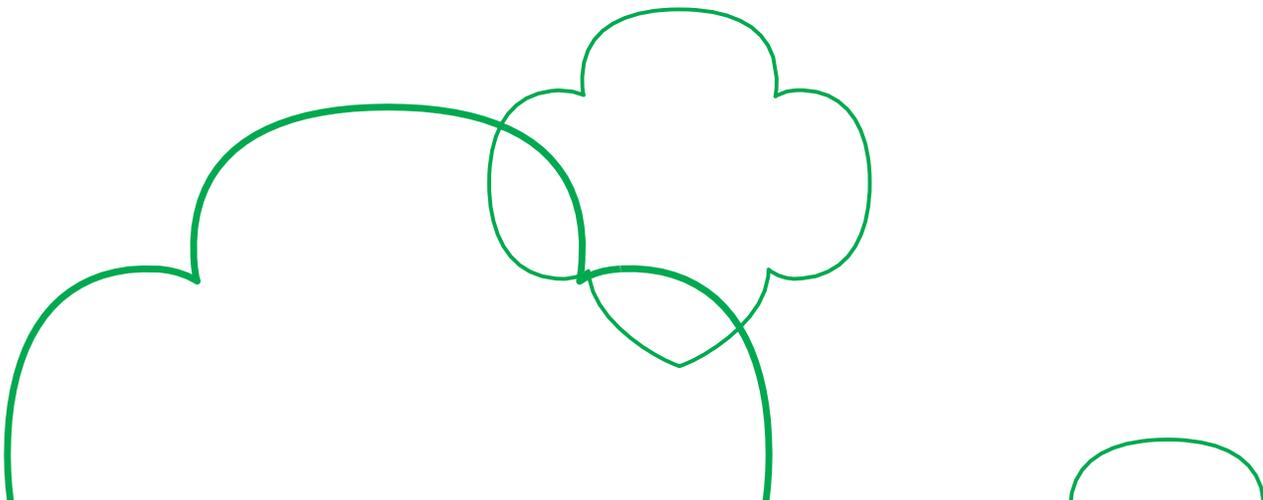
- "At Girl Scouts, we prepare her for a lifetime of leadership, adventure and success. Because Girl Scouts is not an activity -- it's an experience!"
- "Girl Scouts offers exciting programming that gives girls the opportunity to try new things, take risks in a safe environment and earn badges, patches, and awards along the way."
- "Girl Scouts is a place where a girl can be inspired to change the world. She practices leadership and her confidence grows. It's a place where 'Can I?' quickly turns to 'I will!' "
- "Being a Girl Scout has never been so much fun. Your daughter will explore nature, create masterpieces, care for animals, go to camp, and sell cookies. Together with her friends, she will grow into the resourceful, capable, innovative Girl Scout you know she can be. Girl Scouts are more likely than non-Girl Scouts to have good grades, take an active role in decision making and feel hopeful about their future."

Concluding the Conversation:

- Explain the next steps (application/background check, training/adult learning opportunities, support, girl placement etc.)
- Conclude by thanking the potential volunteer and/or girl for their interest and time
- Let them know someone from council will be in contact with them very soon

Following the conversation:

- Review the conversation with your recruitment specialist if necessary
- Write as much detail about the information you gathered on the back of Interest Cards



Step 6: Follow Up

After Recruitment Event/Parent Meeting:

- Appreciation
 - Send email or card to troop leaders who assisted
 - Thank school personnel or other location community members

Follow-up:

- Return interest cards to recruitment specialists.



Event Progress Check List

- Create team for recruitment efforts
- Define event (booth/open house or parent information night)
- Select location
- Define theme or focus
- Contact council staff and Service Unit to let us know
- Contact your Council Staff for flier rules in your area
- Fill out materials request form and turn into council staff
- Create fliers using templates or order fliers from council
- Contact school for flier delivery
- Pick up fliers at council office (if applicable)
- Disburse fliers to local school or other location(s)
- Promote event through social media or community boards, or other venues
- Consult Recruitment Toolkit for day of event planning
- Decide how many people are needed for day of event
- Decide on materials needed for event
- Find volunteers to help with event
- Turn in volunteer/girl interest forms to council staff

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Are you selling cookies? When are cookie sales?

A: Today we are here to tell people about all of the opportunities in Girl Scouts. We're a lot more than just cookies. Girls will be selling cookies in January through March.

Q. Is there a troop in my area?

A: Girl Scouts are in most communities throughout Colorado; however, not all troops have the capacity for more girls. When you complete an interest card, a staff or volunteer from your area can connect with you to discuss troops you might be able to join or new troops that may be forming soon.

Q. We just moved here from _____, is my membership still good?

A: We can easily transfer your membership from your former council. We just need the name of the person whose membership we are transferring, your previous GS Council, and your previous zip code.

Q. How much does all of this cost?

A: Girl Scout membership is \$25 a year. Other costs are flexible and vary based on the type of experience you choose to have. Girls can participate in money-earning activities such as the annual cookie sale program to learn financial responsibility and help cover costs. Financial assistance is available to families in need.

Q. When, where, and what time are troop meetings?

A. This decision is made by the Troop Leaders and the girls. Locations must meet specific safety standards defined by Girl Scouts of the USA.

Q. What about the uniform?

A. In addition to the Girl Scout membership pin each grade level has a unifying piece – a sash or vest on which to wear Girl Scout insignia. While a uniform is not required for membership, girls enjoy wearing their uniforms to show pride in belonging to worldwide sisterhood. Uniforms are available the Girl Scout shop and online. Financial assistance is available to families in need.

Q: When a girl leaves the troop does she get to keep her cookie money?

A: The cookie money earned is troop property, and not tracked according to who earned what. However if a girl is transferring to another troop, the leaders may come up with an agreement to transfer money to the new troop.

Q. Are the Girl Scouts affiliated with the Boy Scouts?

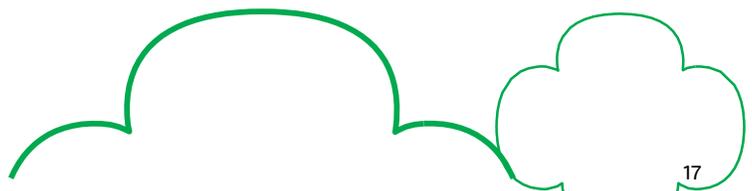
A. No.

Q. How do I help start a Girl Scout troop/become a leader?

A. The first step is to complete the online application, which includes a background check. A troop can get started after a minimum of two unrelated adults commit to being the troop's leadership team.

Q. Are there costs to being a troop leader?

A. The troop leaders must be members and pay the \$25 national membership fee, as well as contribute at least \$24 toward the cost of the background check.



Battling Excuses to Volunteering:

I don't know anything about Girl Scouts / I was never in Girl Scouts.

- “We have resources that do a great job of teaching the basic Girl Scout values and processes, and amazing volunteers who have great fun supporting each other. You won't be in this alone! You'll be learning right along with the girls, or a few steps ahead of them!”
- “You'll learn a lot as you go! “
- “There is no exact right wayevery troop is different!”

I don't have time.

- “That's why you'll have a whole team of parents to work with! Girl Scouting is all about sharing responsibility and leadership, not doing it all on your own!”
- “The good thing about being a leader is you get to decide when Girl Scouts works for you. You get to set the day of the week and the time! “
- “The girls will give you lots of ideas too.” (Give examples of what troops have done)

I work full time.

- “Most of our troop leaders work too!”
- “Meetings don't have to be after-school. They can be at night, or even on the weekends. You decide!”
- “Don't think of Girl Scouts as a 2nd job—think of it as a fun way to get to be with your daughter.”
- “The good thing about being a leader is that you get to set the time, location, and frequency of meetings to fit YOUR family's schedule! Lots of troops meet in the evenings, or on weekends, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. It's up to you.”

I'll think about it.

- “I understand. However, we don't want the girls to wait too long. They are excited and we want the troop to get started as soon as possible.”
- “Talk to your daughter's friends' moms, your co-workers, neighbors, women at church, etc. See if any of them would like to be your co-leader.”

I am just not creative.

- “You don't have to be! We provide training to get you started.”
- “The online Volunteer Toolkit makes it really easy to plan your meetings.”
- “We want the girls to be able to decide what they want to do, with your guidance of course.”

I hate camping.

- “Good News--We don't have rules that say you must camp!”
- “Every troop gets to decide what they want to do. If you don't want to camp, you don't camp. If you like traveling, you can take trips throughout the year.”

I can help, but I can't be the leader.

- “I'm sure there are many ways the troop could use your help: Planning meetings, helping with activities, driving, maybe writing a troop newsletter.”
- “Would you consider being a co-leader? Maybe you and one or two other moms or dads could divide up the jobs so it's not so much for one person. One could handle the paperwork, one could plan the meetings, and one could handle the cookie sale. What do you think of that?”
- “Go ahead and complete the volunteer application and we'll work on just how the troop can use your extra set of hands.”

I don't know if I could do it.

- “When we say that “Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character...”, it isn't just the girls who grow! I really think that your example of moving through that uncertainty with courage and developing your OWN confidence is exactly the kind of “character” I'd want them to see modeled.”
- “Girl Scouting is a leadership development program. Girls AND adults learn and grow together!”
- “This is actually a great way to build your own resume. We have great trainings, and resources. We make sure you've got the tools and resources you'll need at every step along the way.”
- “Our curriculum is really easy to use. You can log into the Volunteer Toolkit and use the meetings already planned for you OR customize it and use all your creativity... it's up to you!”

I wouldn't know where to start.

- Simple! We always start with the application and background check. We have a virtual training system with a variety of classes you can take anytime, and we offer in person trainings too. We also pair you with a mentor troop leader who can help walk you through setting up your troop, recruiting more girls, etc.

But I don't have a daughter.

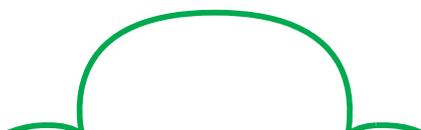
- “Which means you might not even know what a wonderful example you would be to girls out there who might not have the best role models in their own lives?”
- “You don't have to have a girl of your own to be a terrific leader.”
- “We have girls in your area who have just been waiting for someone to step up and be their leader.”
- “You know, I've heard grown women say that their Girl Scout leader was the one person in their life they could count on, and that Girl Scouting saved their lives. You could be that point of stability in the midst of all the challenges of growing up female in this society.”

But I'm a guy! How can I be a Girl Scout Leader?

- “Oh, we SO need dads to step up! And they DO! You would work with a female volunteer to model great respect and values for your girls. We have lots of dads who have discovered how amazing it is to be a Girl Scout Leader. It gives them a wonderful way to connect with their daughters and make sure that those girls have excellent male role models in their lives. “
- “I know lots of dads who are proud, card-carrying Girl Scouts!”
- “I'll bet you have some great skills you could share with girls. What do you enjoy doing? Outdoor activities? Financial management? Construction skills? Auto mechanics? Wouldn't you want your daughter to learn those skills, too?”

But I already did that for my girls, and they're all grown now.

- “Which means you have the core of Girl Scouting already in your bones! Some things may have changed, but the core never will.”
- “You would be an amazing Co-Leader to a younger mom who is just starting out. Your skills and experience would be invaluable to her.”



Ten Consistent Messages about Girl Scout Membership

All girls are encouraged to become members and begin to make their mark in their schools, in their communities and in the world. To support these convictions, Girl Scouts developed ten consistent messages about Girl Scout membership that should be considered as you develop your recruitment strategies. These ten messages are our core membership values, and they are a big reason why Girl Scouts has remained the premier all-girl organization since 1912.

Girl Scouting is for girls—Girl Scouting exists for girls and provides a unique setting for leadership development and girl decision-making opportunities. Girls, working in partnership with caring adults, can explore their potential in Girl Scouting without competition from boys. As the world becomes more and more co-educational, Girl Scouting provides one of the rare opportunities to work and play in an all-girl setting, which is considered by educators to be essential to the encouragement of girls' future aspirations.

Girl Scouts of the USA is a membership organization—Girl Scouting is open to all girls between the ages of 5 and 17 and to adults over 18 years of age who accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law and pay annual membership dues or become Lifetime members. These are the only requirements for membership. Each adult participating in the Girl Scout Movement shall be registered as members with Girl Scouts of the USA. The Girl Scout national program portfolio and other program resources, uniforms, and insignia are developed and produced by GSUSA for the exclusive use of its members.

Individual spiritual beliefs are respected in Girl Scouting—Every Girl Scout group shall respect the varying religious opinions and practices of its members in planning and conducting activities. Girls are encouraged and helped through the Girl Scout program to become better members of their own religious group, but every Girl Scout group must recognize that religious instruction is the responsibility of parents/guardians and religious leaders. Each Girl's Guide to Girl Scouts has requirements for My Promise My Faith which encourages girls to strengthen their personal relationship with their faith.

Adults provide role models in Girl Scouting—All Girl Scout adults—women and men—bring special talents and expertise that enrich Girl Scout program for girls. Every volunteer and staff position is open to both men and women; however, the female role model is essential in carrying out the purpose of Girl Scouting. Interaction with women in leadership positions is of particular importance in the development of girls.

Girl Scouting is committed to inclusiveness—All Girl Scout councils shall be responsible for seeing that membership is reflective of and extended to all girls in all population segments and geographic areas in their jurisdictions. A girl shall not be denied admission or access to Girl Scouts because of race, color, ethnicity, creed, national origin, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for girls with disabilities to ensure access. The Girl Scout program will include pluralism, a system with individuals or groups differing in background, experiences and culture that allows for the development of a common tradition while preserving each group's right to maintain its cultural heritage.

Girl Scout program is an informal educational program adapted to meet the developmental, educational, emotional, and social needs and interests of girls in the program age levels. Program experiences and activities are based on the Girl Scout Promise and Law and enable girls to grow and develop. Girls and young women who have mental developmental disabilities should be registered as closely as possible to their chronological age but may retain their girl membership through their 21st year and then move into an adult membership category.

A Girl Scout council is chartered by GSUSA—A Girl Scout council has the authority and responsibility to provide and safeguard the Girl Scout program, build an organization to serve its membership, and extend membership opportunities to all girls within its jurisdiction. Girl Scout councils develop organizational structures to provide effective services to troops, groups and individuals in every community. Council resources are allocated to organize groups of girl members and to train and support their adult leadership and to provide individually registered members with group experiences among peers that are carried out in partnership with adults.

Girl Scout councils are community-based organizations—A Girl Scout council seeks to be an integral and responsive part of the communities in its jurisdiction. For this reason, Girl Scout councils establish partnerships and collaborations with local agencies and businesses. The end results of these cooperative efforts should be better delivery of Girl Scout program and increased membership and retention.

An effective Girl Scout council ensures that Girl Scout program is delivered to all girls ages 5-17 in all segments in its jurisdiction—The Council Performance Assessment uses membership share (membership to population percentage) to determine the degree of effectiveness in meeting charter obligations, and provide a review of the council's progress toward fulfilling the criteria and standard of GSUSA every four years.

Membership growth is an interdependent responsibility of councils and GSUSA—Girl Scout councils and GSUSA work in concert to achieve annual membership goals. The national organization provides a wide range of membership services and resources to councils. Councils recruit girls and adults as members; they deliver Girl Scout programs to girls and provide training for the adults who support them.