



Volunteer Training: Troop Travel



gsep.org



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Getting Started

Welcome to Troop Travel Training!

If you are participating in a classroom or webinar session, you will learn from a facilitator and your fellow participants about taking girls on trips. No pre or post work is required.

Course Objectives

By the end of this session, you will:

- Be able to define progression and readiness factors for girls.
- Be prepared to plan, implement and evaluate a trip or overnight with girls.
- Know the safety standards that apply to trips and overnight activities.



Training Requirements for Trips

While Troop Travel Training is not required for taking troops on trips, completing this training will prepare you to plan day, overnight, and high risk trips with your girls. The type of trip will determine the type of training required. Please see the chart below to determine what additional trainings you may need.

Type of Trip	Required Training
Overnights	Indoor Overnight Skills Training*
Trips that include camping and outdoor skills	Basic Outdoor Skills Training
Trips & Activities indicated by Safety Activity Checkpoints	Medic/First Aid

*Pre-requisite for Basic Outdoor Skills

Please refer to the Council Courses Schedule on the [Volunteer Trainings](#) page of www.GSEP.org. This handy schedule lists the upcoming courses and the registration procedures.

Troop Trip Approval Process

Before all trips, please use the proper forms and adhere to the appropriate deadlines. This training will answer most questions about which travel forms to fill out and when, and who to send them to. Do you have additional questions? Contact: Member Services at memberservices@gsep.org.

Policy Note: While the troop leader(s) does not have to attend every troop trip, all trips must be approved by the troop leader. If the troop leader is not going on the trip, one of the registered and cleared adults in attendance must take Step 2 of New Leader Training prior to the trip being approved.

What is a trip?

A trip is defined in Volunteer Essentials as any activity outside of your regular troop meeting time and/or place. All trips require the leader to obtain permission slips and health history forms from parents. Additionally, leaders are required to notify their Service Unit and/or GSEP by completing a trip application.

Prior to filling out your application, ensure that:



- ☐ All girl members and troop leaders are registered and cleared with the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania.
- ☐ Adults participating in trip understand the purpose of the trip, health and safety requirements, and their role in the girl/adult partnership.
- ☐ The cost of the trip is feasible for the troop and manageable for each individual troop member.
- ☐ The trip is appropriate for your program level - i.e. consider length of time, distance, activities, and readiness of troop members.
- ☐ Adequate adult coverage is in compliance with Girl Scouts of the USA and Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania's **Safety Activity Checkpoints**.
- ☐ Trip plans were shared with all parents/guardians.

Understanding which activities are not allowed

In an exciting, learning-by-doing environment like Girl Scouting, it's only natural that girls will sometimes want to take part in activities not covered in Safety Activity Checkpoints. Safety Activity Checkpoints is your go-to source for permissible activities.

Forms

The type of activity will determine the form(s) required and deadline for submission. A complete list of forms frequently used in trip and overnight planning can be found in the Resources & Forms section of this guide.

All forms are available at: www.gsep.org. Many are available in the Frequently Accessed Forms section, and others you can search for by keywords.

GSUSA Leadership Outcomes



5 Ways Girl Scouts Builds Girl Leaders

Girl Scouts' mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Since 1912, girls have explored new fields of knowledge, learned valuable skills, and developed strong core values through Girl Scouts. Today Girl Scouts is, as it always has been, the organization best positioned to help girls develop important leadership skills they need to become successful adults.

At Girl Scouts, guided by supportive adults and peers, girls develop their leadership potential through age-appropriate activities that enable them to *discover* their values, skills, and the world around them; *connect* with others in a multicultural environment; and *take action* to make a difference in their world. These activities are designed to be girl led, cooperative, and hands-on—processes that create high-quality experiences conducive to learning.

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.



UNIT 1:

Progression, Planning, and Evaluation

Progression

Progression is an important aspect of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. As a Girl Scout leader, you should plan to integrate progression into your troop year.

Progression in Girl Scouts is the continuing development of girls and adults. As you plan your troop year with your girls, you should build on skills already learned, and progress toward further development of those skills. The goal of progression is to ensure that each girl is ready for the group activity, and that the girls gradually develop the skills and self-confidence needed to complete the activity. A gradual development of skills will build confidence and self-esteem in the girls. When done properly, the girls will have increased abilities to plan their year with you as represented in the chart below.

Daisy	Brownie	Junior	Cadette	Senior	Ambassador
Leader's Involvement in Planning			Girl's Involvement in Planning		



Progression by Grade Level

Girl Scout Daisy—Brainstorm ideas in the Daisy circle and vote on one to do.

Girl Scout Brownie—Discuss activities they want to do, narrow down the list, and vote on one. Then ask girls for suggestions on where they can do that activity.

Girl Scout Junior—Decide where to go and what to do. Plan portions of the trip in patrols. Leaders advise as needed to help girls keep ideas realistic and age appropriate.

Girl Scout Cadette—Participate in trips of three days or longer, where almost all of the planning is done by the girls. Start combining experiences like camping with exploration and travel. Begin to share experiences with others.

Girl Scout Senior and Ambassador—Participate in extensive travel opportunities where all the planning is done by the girls. Share experiences and expertise with younger or in-experienced groups.



girl scouts

Outdoor Progression

Progression allows girls to learn the skills they need to become competent in the outdoors, including how to plan and organize outdoor activities. Acknowledge a girl's mastery of an outdoor skill and invite her to challenge herself further by taking that next step up and out! Outdoor fun can be endless when girls lead.

Adventure Out

Plan and take an outdoor trip for several days.

Learn and practice a new outdoor skill.

Learn a new outdoor cooking skill.

Develop first-aid skills and use safety check points.

Budget, schedule, and make arrangements.

Participate in an environmental service project.

Teach and inspire others about the outdoors.

Imagine new experiences to be had outdoors.

Practice all Leave No Trace principles.

Camp Out

Plan and take a 1-to-2-night camping trip.

Take more responsibility for planning.

Learn and practice a new outdoor skill.

Learn a new outdoor cooking skill.

Plan a food budget, then buy and pack food.

Practice camp-site set up.

Plan an agenda that includes fun activities.

Explore/protect the surrounding environment.

Sleep Out

Plan and carry out an overnight in a cabin/backyard.

Discuss what to pack for the sleep out.

Learn to use and care for camping gear.

Learn and practice new outdoor skills.

Plan a menu with a new cooking skill.

Discuss campsite organization.

Plan time for fun activities.

Cook Out

Plan and cook a simple meal outdoors.

Make a list of gear and food supplies needed.

Learn and practice skills needed to cook a meal.

Review outdoor cooking safety.

Practice hand and dish sanitation.

Create a Kaper Chart for the cookout.

Explore Out

Plan and take a short and easy hike.

Discuss what to take in a day pack.

Dress for the weather.

Plan a healthy snack or lunch.

Learn how to stay safe in the outdoors.

Move Out

Plan and take a short walk outside.

Discuss being prepared for the weather.

Do activities to explore nature.

Plan and carry out an indoor sleepover.

Meet Out

Step outside to look, listen, feel, and smell.

Share what was observed.

Learn more about what was discovered.

Look Out

Share past experiences in the outdoors.

Talk about favorite outdoor places and why they're special.

Wonder what else can be seen in the outdoors.

LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES:

Plan Ahead & Prepare

Leave What You Find

Respect Wildlife

Minimize Campfire Impacts

Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces

Dispose of Waste Properly

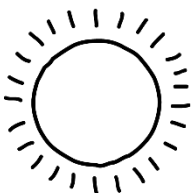
Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Progression of Trips

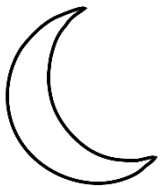
Here are some recommended examples of progression while planning trips, from Girl Scouting's Ladder of Leadership:



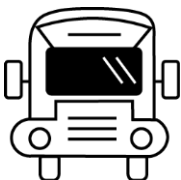
Meeting Time Trips (Daisies and older)—Travel to points of interest in your troop's neighborhood. Examples include a walk to a nearby park, or short ride by car to a fire station or courthouse.



Day Trips (Brownies and older)—Go on daytime excursions away from the group's meeting place and outside their regular meeting time. This could be an all-day trip to a point of historical or natural interest where they bring their own lunch or a trip to a neighboring city where they make plans for a meal in a restaurant.



Simple Overnight Trips (Brownies and older)—Spend one to three nights away. The destination may be a nearby state park, historical site or city for sightseeing. The group stays in a hostel, hotel, motel or campground. For younger girls (Brownies), the trip could include family members like a Mom and Me overnight.



Extended Overnight Trips (Juniors and older)—Spend five or more nights away. Trips range from a week at camp to extended travel in the continental United States. The group might use several accommodations and modes of transportation throughout the trip.



National Trips (Cadettes and older)—Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Try to steer clear of trips girls might take with their families and consider those that offer some educational component—this often means no Disney and no cruises, but can incorporate some incredible cities, historic sites, and museums around the country.



Destination Trips (Seniors and older)—Travel individually through GSUSA sanctioned events with many trip options that take place at the state, national or international level.



International Trips (Seniors and older)—Experience travelling outside the country. This type of trip is most successful with girls who are 14 years or older and have successfully completed extended overnight trips. These trips are subject to special requirements including regulations and procedures from the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). For more information on international travel, please see page 26 in the resource section of this manual.

Is Your Troop Ready for an Overnight Trip?

Girls will enjoy their trip experiences best if they have previous experiences to prepare them. Taking a group of girls on a trip with no preparation is likely to lead to frustration and confusion on the part of both girls and adults. The experience of each girl and how ready she is for an overnight experience away from family and familiar surroundings will greatly affect how she feels and how enjoyable the experience will be for her. Readiness in girls is checking where they are when it comes to their emotions, physical ability and skills for living away from a parent/guardian.

Review the chart below. In the right hand column, write down some actions you and the other adults supporting the troop can take to help girls become ready for an overnight troop trip experience.

Types of Readiness	Readiness Indicators	What actions can be taken to prepare the girls based on the checked items?
Emotional Readiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid to be away from home overnight <input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid to be away from parents/guardians overnight <input type="checkbox"/> Parents/guardians are prepared to let their daughter go <input type="checkbox"/> Wants to go <input type="checkbox"/> Is willing to sleep, eat and play with all girls, not just friends <input type="checkbox"/> Can cope with unknowns, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strange places (including outdoor bathrooms) ○ Darkness ○ Woods and night noises ○ Spiders, bugs, worms <input type="checkbox"/> Can manage with little or no privacy <input type="checkbox"/> Doesn't always have to have her own way <input type="checkbox"/> Can function as a member of a group	
Physical Readiness (Adjustments should be made for physical needs and differences of girls.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Has stamina, does not tire easily <input type="checkbox"/> Strong enough to carry own gear, bedroll/sleeping bag <input type="checkbox"/> Has coordination for planned activities and jobs (sleeping, hiking, sweeping, mopping, moving chairs and tables, etc.)	
Skills and Knowledge for Age-Level	<input type="checkbox"/> Can plan simple activities <input type="checkbox"/> Can read a recipe and help with cooking <input type="checkbox"/> Can follow a kaper chart <input type="checkbox"/> Can use kitchen implements <input type="checkbox"/> Can wash and disinfect dishes <input type="checkbox"/> Can clean up the kitchen and cooking area <input type="checkbox"/> Is able to store food properly <input type="checkbox"/> Can make up her bed <input type="checkbox"/> Can clean a toilet <input type="checkbox"/> Can use a flashlight	
Proven Ability and Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> Has previously followed instructions satisfactorily <input type="checkbox"/> Has previously been on day trips without difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> Has demonstrated the ability to pack and repack personal gear, sleeping bag or bedroll	

Six Steps to Planning a Trip or Overnight Experience

Being Girl Led is one way that Girl Scouting is unique from other organizations. In Girl Scouts, the girls take the lead. They are involved in all aspects of planning, implementing and evaluating their experiences. The adults guide the girls for a successful experience. Below you will find six steps to planning with girls for a day or overnight trip experience.

STEPS	Description
1. Think ahead.	Check out the Girl Scout Journey books and the Girls' Guide to Girl Scouting according to the interests of the girls in your troop. Look in <i>Volunteer Essentials</i> and <i>Safety Activity Checkpoints</i> for information on council policies and safety standards. Consider facilities, time of year, cost, and purpose for the trip, and the girls' experience level.
2. Get ideas from the girls.	Share some of your research from Step 1 with the girls. Have the girls look into their Girl Scout Journey books and Girls' Guide to Girl Scouting. Involve them in the planning by asking them some questions. Where do they want to go? What do they want to do? For older girls, you could break out into patrols and have girls brainstorm ideas for the trip. Come back together and compile a master list.
3. Sift through ideas, decide on a trip and create your plan with the girls.	Prioritize, decide, and come up with a plan for the trip. Assign different planning responsibilities to different patrols—meals, activities, permission forms and transportation, etc. Always have a back-up plan; for example, in case weather forces one activity to be cancelled.
4. Inform parents, other adults and the Service Unit/GSEP.	Communicate with parents and other adults working with the troop. Be specific in enlisting support—drivers, grocery shoppers, etc. Distribute necessary paperwork (Permission Slips, High-Risk Activity Forms, etc.) Submit a trip application form to your service unit or to GSEP, and apply for additional insurance, if necessary.
5. Implement and discuss.	Gather your adults, girls, supplies, drivers and go. Help girls to see the advantages of their pre-planning as the trip progresses. Perhaps have a "Plan B" in mind, in the event that things don't go according to the original plan.
6. Evaluate during and after the experience.	Review the experience as it is happening. During the activity, ask the girls open-ended questions about what they see, how they feel, what they like so far and so on. At the next meeting, continue to review by asking questions designed to make girls think. What went well? What was your favorite thing? What were the surprises? What could we do better next time? Are we ready to step up to a bigger trip? Do we want to try a different place or a different season of the year?

Sample Planning Calendar

When preparing and planning for a trip, it will take several meetings with the girls before they will be ready to leave for their adventure. Below is a sample calendar that will guide you through six meetings of planning with girls. It may or may not take six weeks to prepare the girls. You will need to be the judge.

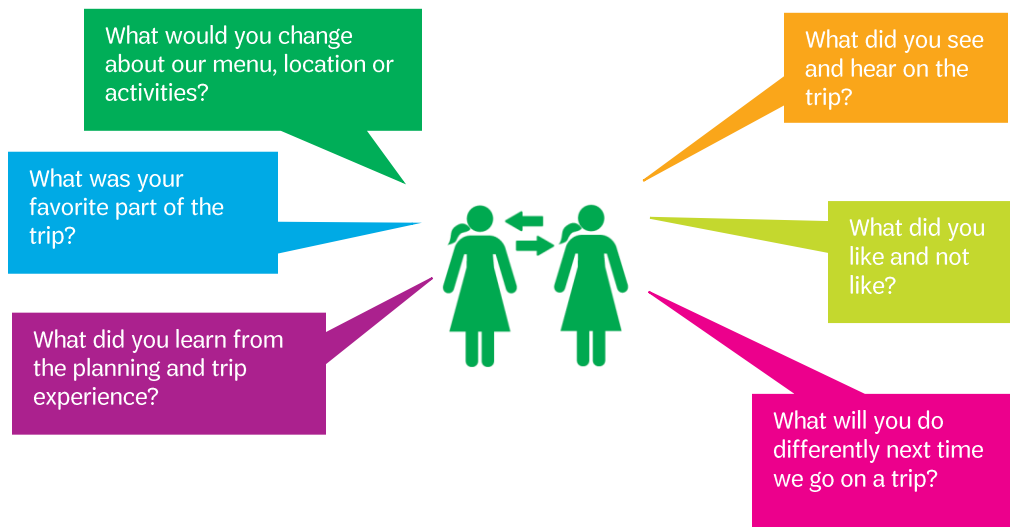
Meeting #	Meeting Content/Discussion with Girls	Leader Activities*
1	Discuss the trip with girls. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explain what a troop trip is. ○ Have girls brainstorm where they would like to go and discuss location options with them. ○ Discuss what type of activities they could do on the trip. ○ Discuss what it may cost to go on a trip. Have the girls brainstorm all costs. How will they pay for it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research the location options. ○ If girls make a decision on where they would like to go, make the site reservations. ○ Begin communication with parents regarding the upcoming trip.
2	Discuss the menu with girls. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What would the girls like to eat? Are they experienced with cooking? What would be appropriate? Do you have to consider food allergies? ○ Brainstorm meal ideas and begin to create a menu and a shopping list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Find out from parents and Health History forms if girls have food allergies. ○ Begin to recruit for adult support, volunteers to help with shopping for supplies (with the girls), drivers to get girls to and from the destination, chaperones, etc.
3	Discuss activities that the girls want to do. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Begin to make a list of activities and supplies needed. Discuss with girls how they will collect/purchase any supplies. ○ Begin to plan the schedule for the trip. ○ Learn a fun song or Girl Scout grace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Add to your shopping list and to the budget any supplies needed for activities. ○ Confirm with parents when shopping will take place.
4	Work on skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss trip safety and the buddy system. Randomly pick buddies for each Girl Scout. ○ Practice simple first aid (if age appropriate). ○ Send permission slips home with the girls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that a certified First-Aid and CPR adult and First-Aid kit is lined up for the trip. ○ Plan the shopping list; make sure your adults are confirmed to help the girls shop. ○ Begin to put your equipment together.
5	Discuss expectation and behavior for the trip. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create behavior guidelines for the trip experience. ○ Implement a game or have the girls identify items to pack and not to pack. ○ Begin to gather permission slips. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create poster board with the guidelines the girls created. ○ Give the girls a list of what to pack and not to pack.
6	Discuss kapers (chores) and have the girls create their kaper chart. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the trip agenda with everyone. ○ Collect permission slips. ○ Answer any questions the girls may have. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm with all adults/drivers and ensure screening process and registration are complete. ○ Ensure you have permission slips and <i>Parent Permission and Health History Forms</i> for all girls/adults. ○ Ensure you have everything needed for what girls planned.

*Seniors and Ambassadors are able to do many of these Leader Activities.

Evaluating with Girls

Asking Good Questions:

A key process in implementing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is experiential learning or learning by doing. The trip experience is a perfect environment where girls learn by doing. Asking good questions **before, during and after** the trip will help you, your girls, and other adults learn from the experience. It teaches girls to be inquisitive and question their own experiences. This will help the girls create meaning and apply it to future experiences. Here are some questions to ask:



During the Trip

As you implement the trip with girls, take some time to ask the girls questions throughout the experience. What does this look like? Here are some suggestions on how to engage the girls in evaluating their experience without them even knowing it is happening.

Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down—This is a quick and easy way to gauge how the girls feel about the experience. After they have their first meal and they are waiting to start the next activity ask, “How do you think breakfast went? Did we work well together? Thumbs up for yes, Thumbs down for no.” Then ask probing questions based on how the girls rated the experience, “Sally, why do you have a Thumbs down?”

On a Scale of 1 to 10—This is another quick and easy way to get the girls evaluating and talking about their experience on their trip. When doing a sit down activity or waiting for the next step to begin, ask the girls to rate from 1-5, 1-10 or 1-100 (you can create the scale) what they think about their lodge camp experience. Tell them 1 = “yuck, the worst experience of my life” and 10 = “this is great, the best experience ever.” You can choose the words for the scale. As they give you a number, ask them to explain why.

Name One Thing—As you are wrapping up your first day of your experience or an activity, ask these three questions: “Name one thing you liked about today (or the activity). Name one thing you did not like. Name one thing you would change.” As the girls discuss their one thing, ask them to explain why they liked it or why they would change it.

Evaluating with Girls

After the Trip

The trip is over! The girls and adults had fun. It's now time to formally evaluate the experience and see how the girls feel about the trip and what they can do to improve the planning and experience the next time.

There are multiple ways to evaluate with the girls. Write down what you hear from them, put it with the paperwork from the trip and pull it out when they are ready to plan another adventure. Here are some ideas to evaluate with girls:

Evaluation Tools

Evaluation takes many forms. As your girls grow, your techniques for evaluation will evolve as well. You will get to know the girls in your troop better and be able to judge which techniques encourage them to share the most.

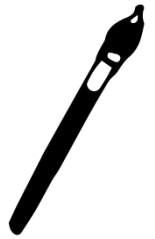


Bull's Eye

Draw a large bull's eye on a piece of newsprint. Have the girls use stickers to gauge their feelings about being "on target" or "way off." For example: Use your bull's eye as a way to see how the girls feel about their success with the planning trip.

Mural

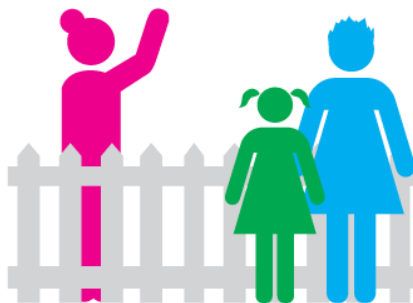
Place a large sheet of butcher paper on the wall or on a long table. Ask the girls an open-ended question. For example: "Since we have been planning a trip to COSI, what have we learned about planning a trip? Supply paints and markers and have the girls draw pictures and write in response to the question. This activity can be done on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, etc.).



Collage/Picture

Have each girl cut out magazine pictures or draw something in response to a question. This tool works best with a before or after question. For example: Have the girls find or draw a picture about how they felt before they had to plan the trip, while they were on the trip and then after the trip when it was over. Have the girls share their pictures and explain them to the troop.

**Don't forget to share the success of the experience with the parents!
Tell them how you saw their daughter succeed and grow while she participated.**





Unit 2: Trip Safety

Safety Policies

As Girl Scout activities keep pace with an ever-changing world, ensuring the health and safety of the girls is paramount. Safety is the responsibility of girls and adults alike. When Girl Scouts learn about safety, more activities are within their reach. The two key resources for safety information are *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints*.

Please review Chapter 4 and the Troop Travel Appendix in *Volunteer Essentials* and *Safety Activity Checkpoints* on gsep.org for additional safety information beyond the key points outlined in this planning guide.

Trip Safety Preparation

The information outlined on the next few pages will cover some key areas of safety to help the troop get started with planning the trip. Links to all forms are located on pages 24-25 of this packet.

Every troop must have for their trip:

- A submitted trip application *for*:
 - Any trip that is outside your regular meeting time/place
 - Any trip that includes a high-risk activity
 - Extended and International Trips
- *Parent Permission for Troop Activity Forms* and *Parent Consent and Health History Forms*.
- Proper girl/adult ratios, including the correct number of registered and cleared adults.
- Insurance forms and an *Incident/Accident Report Form* placed in first-aid kit or readily available.
- Additional Insurance. (If necessary.)
- At least one person certified in First-Aid/CPR in attendance for the duration of the trip. Make sure your First-Aider is among the first to arrive.
- Fully stocked first-aid kit.
- Notification of any medications taken by troop/group members and written permission and instructions for dispensing from the parent/guardian with the First-Aider. See more information in the section on First-Aid.
- Appropriate sleeping arrangements, if the trip is an overnight.
- A designated emergency contact person with a trip roster. (An adult, not on the trip, who is willing to communicate with families and the troop in case of an emergency.)
- Troop Leader ensures that the Volunteer Driver Policy is enforced. Check *Volunteer Essentials* Chapter 4. *Tip: Provide drivers with the “Checklist for Drivers” found in VE.

Permission Forms

Permission forms are required if you are meeting at a time or location different from your regular meeting place or if transportation is involved. Permission forms must be signed by the custodial parent/guardian. Be certain that an emergency phone number is listed in case contact is necessary. An adult who can be reached by phone should have the names and phone numbers of all persons traveling with the group. This prevents the leader from having to make numerous phone calls.

Girl/Adult Ratios

Girl Scouts' adult-to-girl ratios show the minimum number of adults needed to supervise a specific number of girls. These supervision ratios were devised to ensure the safety and health of girls- for example, if one adult has to respond to an emergency, a second adult is always on hand for the rest of the girls.

	Group Meetings		Events, Travel, and Camping	
	Two non-related adults (at least one of whom is female) for this number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:	Two unrelated adults (at least one of whom is female) for each number of girls:	Plus one additional adult for each additional number of this many girls:
Girl Scout Daisies (grades K-1)	12	6	6	4
Girl Scout Brownies (grades 2-3)	20	8	12	6
Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5)	25	10	16	8
Girl Scout Cadettes (grades 6-8)	25	12	20	10
Girl Scout Seniors (grades 9-10)	30	15	24	12
Girl Scout Ambassadors (grades 11-12)	30	15	24	12

In addition to the adult-to-girl ratios, please remember that adult volunteers, drivers, and chaperones must be at least 18 years old and registered as an adult member. Volunteer drivers must be 21 years old. One lead volunteer in every group must be female.

Sleeping Arrangements

Sleeping Arrangements for Overnights

Always ensure the following:

- Each participant has her own bed.
- Girls and adults do not share a bed.

In an instance where adults need to share a sleeping area with girls (For example: an open space sleeping environment or to support a girl with special needs), there should always be two unrelated adult females present.

Men on Overnights

Men are welcome to attend trip and overnight outings with Girl Scouts and camp at Girl Scouts of Eastern PA sites. However, the following guidelines need to be followed.

- Men do not sleep in the same tent or room with the girls.
- Restroom arrangements must be made as separate facilities for men. Please see ranger.
- Remember that other troops using the property may have male volunteers with them.

First-Aid Policies

- A First-Aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout-approved first-aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR. Click here for a list of [GSUSA approved training providers](#).
- A First-Aider must be available on all trips and have a first-aid kit along with them at all times.
- Information on first-aid kits and medications can be found in the boxes below and in *Volunteer Essentials*.
- Emergency procedures can be found in the current *Volunteer Essentials*.
- An *Incident/Accident Report Form* should also be in the First-Aid kit for serious emergencies.
- Serious injuries should be reported immediately using the council emergency numbers.

First-Aid Kit

An effective, yet inexpensive first-aid kit can be made by using a container that has a plastic lid. Other good containers are a tackle box or a fanny pack. Contents can be found around the home or purchased at a minimal cost. Troop members can help obtain needed items. Look at the resource list in the appendix for a link to a list of necessary items a first-aid kit should contain.

Medications

Parents or guardians of girls who take prescribed or over-the-counter medications (for example, allergy pills) should inform leaders in advance. Over-the-counter or prescribed medications should be in the original container and administered in the prescribed dosage by or in the presence of the responsible adult as per the written instructions of a custodial parent, guardian or physician. Also, each girl must bring her own sunscreen and non-aerosol insect repellent from home and the girl's name should be clearly marked on the container. Sharing of these items is **not** permitted as some people have allergic reactions to certain types of sunscreen and insect repellent. The "OTC Prescription Medication Form" is a resource that your troop First-Aider can use to help you manage

Additional Insurance

An optional Activity Insurance plan is available for Girl Scouts taking extended trips and for non-members who participate in Girl Scout activities. For enrollment in the optional plan of activity insurance only, please complete the enrollment form found at <http://www.gsep.org/forms/>. Make sure that your payment is made payable to United of Omaha Life Insurance Company. Return the form and premium to Shelly Ridge Service Center at least two weeks prior to the scheduled activity for submission. Review the [Girl Scouts insurance plan](#) description here.

High Risk Activities

If your trip includes a high risk activity, a *High Risk Activities Permission Form* is also required for each girl. This form may be used instead of a Parent Permission for Troop Activity form when applicable.

You must also obtain a Certificate of Insurance (COI) Form from the facility at which you are participating in a high risk activity. To submit a vendor COI for trips including high risk activities, email memberservices@gsep.org.

When preparing for any activity with girls, always refer to the Safety Guidelines in the [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) on gsep.org.

Some high risk activities include but are not limited to:	CAUTION: The following list of activities are <i>never</i> allowed for any girl:
Amusement parks Archery Backpacking Bicycling Boating Caving Canoeing Climbing Horseback Riding Skating Skiing Sledding Swimming Rafting	Bungee Jumping Flying in small private planes, helicopters or blimps Go-Carting Hang gliding Hot air ballooning Hunting Motor biking Parachuting Parasailing Riding all-terrain vehicles Riding motorized personal watercraft such as jet skis Skydiving Stunt skiing Indoor/Outdoor trampolining

Emergency Preparation

An emergency contact person(s) is available at home for the duration of the event or trip. The emergency contact person is an adult who is willing to communicate with families and the troop in case of an emergency. The family of each girl should have the name and phone number of the emergency contact person.

The emergency contact person's packet should include the following checklist:

	Names and phone numbers of everyone attending		Phone number of nearest police location
	Names and phone numbers of all drivers		Schedule of activities
	Name of, directions and phone number where you are going/staying (hotel, activity site, etc.)		Council emergency number

Emergency Hotline: 866.564.2030 and press 9

A GSEP representative will answer or return your call. Make sure you leave your name and phone number.

Reviewing Safety with the Girls

Health and safety is very important. Prior to your trip, you should brainstorm ideas for a basic set of rules for the group to follow while travelling. Discuss the safety rules and consequences that could result if they are not followed. Use the chart below for some ideas to help get you started. Have the girls give reasons why they think each of these rules are important. Try to relate the safety rules to things that the girls will understand. Example: “Why should we always use the Buddy System?” “If someone gets hurt, there is always someone to go for help.” Have the girls create their own rules to add to the chart.

Rule	Reason
Girls always use the buddy system.	
Girls don't leave the group without permission.	
Everyone wears closed toe shoes until bedtime.	
The troop takes a first-aid kit and certified First-Aider on each trip.	
The first-aid kit is checked before leaving to be sure it is stocked.	
Troops practice emergency evacuation drills.	
Weather radios and phones are available for emergencies. (Depending on trip location.)	
Girls know that it's important to tell an adult if they are hurt or sick.	

Trip Emergency Procedures

Complete the chart below for the upcoming trip. These are procedures that you will want to go over with your troop at the beginning of your trip.

What to do in case of.....?

Fire	
Storms	
Tornado	
Health/Accident Emergency	
Intruders	

Where is the nearest.....?

Phone	
Emergency Care Facility	
Hospital	



Unit 3: Resources and Review

Resources

Resource	Purpose	Where to Find It
SPARK	GSEP publishes Spark Magazine twice per year. The magazine contains articles highlighting girls in our community who <i>Discovery, Connect, and Take Action</i> , as well as a Program Guide listing programs, day and resident camp sessions, and scholarship/financial aid information	gsep.org/OurProgram/Spark
Volunteer Essentials	Primary resource with information on Girl Scouting, council policies, and safety.	gsep.org/volunteerResources
Safety Activity Checkpoints	Safety guidelines written for specific activities.	gsep.org/volunteerResources
Anatomy of a First Aid Kit	Recommendations on what you should have in your troop's first aid kit.	redcross.org
Game Resources	Website with information on games you can play.	ultimatecampresource.com
Nature Resources	Websites with information on nature and nature activities.	biglearning.com wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/education-and-outdoor-discovery/conservation-education-project-wild/education-materials www.education.com
Song Resources	Websites with information on fun Girl Scout songs.	gsleaders.org www.macscouter.com

Forms

Below is a list of forms frequently used in trip and overnight planning.

All forms are available at: www.gsep.org. Many are available in the Frequently Accessed Forms section, others you can search for by keywords.

Form	Purpose	Submission Deadline	Where to submit form
Parent Permission for Troop Activity	When doing activities beyond the troop meeting, parent/guardian permission is required.	Prior to trip departure	Troop Leader
Parent Consent and Health History Record	An updated record of a girl's past and present health status (for example, of allergies, chronic illnesses and injuries), which her parent/guardian completes for Girl Scouts.	When girls join the troop	Troop Leader
High Risk Activities Permission Form	Used for permission to participate in activities that are inherently high risk. This form may be used instead of a Parent Permission for Troop Activity form when applicable	Prior to participation in activity	Troop Leader
Volunteer Driver Form	Every driver must be a registered and cleared adult volunteer, at least 21 years old, and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Every driver must complete a Volunteer Driver Form.	Prior to trip departure	Troop Leader

Form	Purpose	Submission Deadline	Where to submit form
Day Trip Application	This form must be submitted for any day trip that is outside of your regular meeting time and/or place and any trip that includes a high-risk activity.	One week prior to trip	Service Unit Manager or Trip Advisor
Overnight Trip Application	This form must be submitted for any overnight trip lasting 1-2 nights.	One month prior to trip	Service Unit Manager or Trip Advisor
Extended Trip Application	This form must be submitted for any trip lasting 3 nights or longer. Extended trips require both a Proposal and a Final Submission to be submitted. One form serves both purposes-check off "Proposal" at the top of the forms for your first submission, and check off "Final Submission" for your final paperwork.	Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 months prior for trips 3 nights or more in council. • 6 months prior for trips 3 nights or more outside of council within the US. • 12 months prior for international trips. Final Submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days prior for trips 3 nights or more in council. • 60 days prior for trips 3 nights or more outside of council within the US. • 60 days prior for international trips. 	GSEP Volunteer Support- Email to travel@gsep.org
Incident/Accident Report	A form that must be completed in the event of an accident or injury.	Within 24 hours of incident	GSEP Human Resources- Email to humanres@gsep.org
Request for Additional Insurance	A form used to purchase insurance for a trip longer than 3 days or for anyone participating in your activity that is not registered through Girl Scouts.	Two weeks prior to activity Review the Girl Scouts insurance plan description here: https://www.mutualofomaha.com/girl_scouts_of_the_usa/index.htm	GSEP Human Resources- Email to humanres@gsep.org

Extended Trips and International Travel

Extended trips (over 5 nights) and International travel are considered the ultimate travel experience for girls. Travelling internationally can be a wonderful opportunity for girls to gain cultural insight, an appreciation for differences and similarities, and a broadened perspective. As girls mature in Girl Scouts, many consider travel one of the most exciting aspects of their membership.

Because of the riskier nature of these big trips, there are additional considerations that you will need to account for when planning and preparing to leave. This page will give you a basic checklist of information to help you and your girls properly prepare for an extended trip or traveling out of the country. You can find all the detailed information you need in these three resources found at www.girlscouts.org/travel:

1. Exploration, the Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel
2. The Adult Guide to Girl Scout Global Travel
3. The Girl Scout Travel Appendix

All extended and international trips should be approved through your Volunteer Support Specialist. Please contact them as soon as you know you'll be taking a trip. Your support staff will provide you with the additional policies and forms necessary for your trip. Planning for an international trip should take 18-24 months.

International Travel Guidelines:

- All travelers must be registered Girl Scouts (both girls and adults). There should be a minimum of two registered and background checked adults traveling.
- Activities done abroad should be done as a group. Girls should not participate in any activity without the supervision of the travelling adults.

Submit Required Forms	Due before trip
Extended Trip Application- Proposal	12 months
Extended Trip Application- Final Submission	60 Days
Intent to Travel Form (To GSUSA- Girl Scout Travel Appendix)	3-6 Months
Additional Tasks	Due before trip
Obtain passports	12 months
Obtain Traveler's insurance	4-6 weeks
Register your trip with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate of the country you will visit	4 months
Provide all girls with emergency contact card (In Volunteer Essentials)	
Collect from girls/families	
Signed parent/guardian permission slips	
Copies of passports for all travelers (girls and adults)	
Girl and adult health forms (reviewed by first aider)	
Permission to Travel with Minors form (examples can be found online)	
Parental Permission to Travel in Mexico (if necessary- examples can be found online))	