

Chapter 2:

Girl Scouting 101

This chapter gives you a quick and easy introduction to Girl Scouting, including the following information:

- Who can join Girl Scouts and how girls and volunteers can participate
- What important dates are on the Girl Scout calendar
- How Girl Scouts is organized

Who Can Join Girl Scouts—and How!

Any girl—from kindergarten through 12th grade—can join Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts is about sharing the fun, friendship, and power of girls and women together, whether that’s a girl in the United States or an American girl living overseas. Volunteers are also a diverse group, and may be a college volunteer working on a community action project, a parent volunteer ready for an outdoor adventure with her daughter’s group, or any responsible adult (female or male, who has passed the necessary application process) looking to make a difference in a girl’s life.

What all members share, whether girls or adults, are the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Each member also agrees to follow safety guidelines and pay the annual membership dues of \$12 (or you can purchase a lifetime membership for \$300).

After they join, girls team up in the following grade levels:

- Girl Scout Daisy, grades K–1
- Girl Scout Brownie, grades 2–3
- Girl Scout Junior, grades 4–5
- Girl Scout Cadette, grades 6–8
- Girl Scout Senior, grades 9–10
- Girl Scout Ambassador, grades 11–12

Across the country, the Girl Scout community is hard at work on a whole new approach to making sure that everyone can participate in Girl Scouting in the ways they want to. Both girls and adult volunteers can choose from several flexible ways to participate—called “pathways”—that offer the freedom to tailor your level of involvement to fit your schedule and lifestyle. (You can also volunteer behind-the-scenes, working in your council office, instead of volunteering directly with girls.)

Girls can choose any one, all, or some of these pathways (camp, series, troop, travel, and virtual)* within a single membership year, while you have the option of partnering with girls throughout a membership year or committing to an opportunity for only a few weeks or months. (*Note that the virtual pathway is still in development.)

Did You Know?

Girl Scouts has always been committed to ensuring that all girls who want to be a Girl Scout can be. We reach out in a variety of unique ways to make sure that happens. Check with your council if you're interested in learning more!

Here are a few examples of happenings around the country:

- **Challenge and Change:** Funded in rural communities through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this program uses the GSLE to emphasize social entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **Girl Scouts Beyond Bars:** For more than fifteen years, Girl Scouts, in partnership with the National Institute of Justice, has provided girls with an opportunity to visit their incarcerated mothers and take part in troop meetings.
- **Girl Scouts in Detention Centers:** This program brings the GSLE to girls in juvenile detention centers.

Girl Scout Calendar

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

- **February 22:** World Thinking Day (the birthday of both Lord Baden-Powell and Lady Olave Baden-Powell, the originators of Boy Scouts and the Scouting Movement worldwide).
- **March 12:** The birthday of Girl Scouting in the USA. The first troop meeting was held in Savannah, Georgia, on this date in 1912.
- **April 22:** Volunteer Leader Appreciation Day—this day is set aside especially for you!
- **October 31:** Founder's Day (Juliette Gordon Low's birthday).

Note that Girl Scout Week begins the Sunday before March 12 (a day known as "Girl Scout Sunday") and extends through the Saturday following March 12 (a day known as "Girl Scout Sabbath").

World Thinking Day

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

Today, girls show their appreciation and friendship on World Thinking Day not only by extending warm wishes but also by offering a voluntary contribution to the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, which helps offer Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting to more girls and young women worldwide.

Girl Scouts' Organizational Structure

Girl Scouts is the world's largest organization of and for girls, and it currently encompasses 2.6 million girl members and nearly one million volunteers! Two core structures support all these members: local councils and the national headquarters.

Local Councils

Local Girl Scout councils are chartered by the national office to establish local responsibility for leadership, administration, and supervision of the program, and to develop, manage, and maintain Girl Scouting in a geographic area. As a volunteer, it is through your Girl Scout council that you will have the most contact. However, the national office also provides resources, especially those you can find online at www.girlscouts.org. In addition, councils are provided with program and other support resources by the national office to ensure that what is delivered through the councils is nationally consistent for all girls across the country.

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana at a Glance

About us

Girl Scouts is the world's preeminent organization dedicated solely to girls - all girls - where girls build skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adults, girls develop qualities that will serve them all their lives - like strong values, social conscience, and conviction about their own potential and self worth. Our mission - Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place - confirms our unwavering commitment to girls.

Girl Scouts of Central Indiana (GSCI) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, that depends on gifts from individuals and corporations in the community to support our programming. It costs an average of \$215 to provide a girl with one year of Girl Scouting, giving GSCI an annual budget of over \$9 million. Over 80 percent of that budget goes to program services, meaning that nearly all of the money raised by GSCI goes directly to the girls and adults we serve in the form of over 300 council program activities, 50 camp sessions, hundreds of program assistance grants, and outreach activities.

Web site: www.girlscoutsindiana.org

Phone Numbers 317.924.6800 ❖ 877.474.2248

Council Properties:

- ❖ Camp Ada: 4731 W. CR 600 S, Spiceland, IN 47385
- ❖ Camp Dellwood: 2301 N. Girls School Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46214
- ❖ Camp Gallahue: 6758 Bear Creek Rd. Morgantown, IN 46160
- ❖ Camp Munsee: 5701 S. CR 475 E., Selma, IN 47383
- ❖ Camp NaWaKwa: 7865 E. CR 300 N. Poland, IN 47868
- ❖ Camp Treaty Line: 5330 Pottershop Rd., Centerville, IN 47330
- ❖ Camp Windigo: 11495 E. CR 1158 S., Upland, IN 46989
- ❖ Girl Scout Cabin: 1321 N. Sexton St., Rushville, IN 46173
- ❖ GSCI Bloomington: 1108 N. Walnut Suite H, Bloomington, IN 47404
- ❖ GSCI Columbus: 1300 Hutchins, Columbus, IN 47201

- ❖ GSCI Daleville: 13555 W. CR 550 S., Daleville, IN 47334
- ❖ GSCI Indianapolis: 1800 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46202
- ❖ GSCI Kokomo: 815 W. Superior St., Kokomo, IN 46901
- ❖ GSCI Lafayette: 615 N. 18th St., Ste. 203., Lafayette, IN 47904
- ❖ GSCI Richmond: 1421 N. A St., Richmond, IN 47374
- ❖ GSCI Terre Haute: 1100 Girl Scout Lane, Terre Haute, IN 47807
- ❖ Hawthorne Trails: 802 N. 1000 E., Zionsville, IN 46077
- ❖ Marion Cabin: 222 Spencer Ave., Marion, IN 46952
- ❖ Sycamore Valley Camp 8439 SR. 26 E., Lafayette, IN 47905

National Organization and Worldwide Sisterhood

The national office of Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), located in New York City, employs roughly 400 employees. (To visit GSUSA online, direct your browser to www.girlscouts.org, where you'll find a wealth of resources for both girls and volunteers.) This 97-year-old organization is now affiliated with a worldwide family of 10 million girls and adults in 145 countries through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).

As girls engage in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (see Chapter 3), Global Girl Scouting ensures that they have increased awareness about the world, cross-cultural learning opportunities, and education on relevant global issues that may inspire them to take action to make the world a better place. Visit [www.girlscouts.org/who we are/global](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/global) for additional information.

Juliette Low World Friendship Fund

To honor Juliette Gordon Low's love of travel, of experiencing different cultures, and of making friends, Girl Scouts created the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund in 1927. Today, this fund supports girls' international travel, participation in adult learning, and attendance at other international events—any event that fosters global friendships that connect Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from 145 nations. Visit www.girlscouts.org/juliette_low_fund.asp to find out more or donate to the fund! See Chapter 6 for more on traveling with Girl Scouts.

Since 1925, USA Girl Scouts Overseas (USAGSO; a division of Global Girl Scouting) has helped ease the transition for American families relocating overseas by offering the familiar traditions and exciting opportunities of Girl Scouting to girls. USAGSO now serves thousands of American girls living overseas, as well as girls attending American or international schools.

Through Global Girl Scouting, members participate in World Thinking Day on February 22, visit the four WAGGGS world centers (see Chapter 5), participate in international travel, help promote global friendship and understanding by supporting the Juliette Low World Friendship Fund, and take action on global issues.