

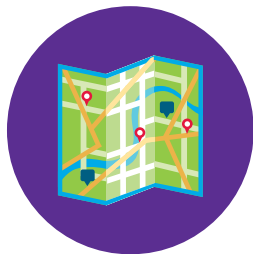
Adult Guide for Earning the Silver Award



girl scouts 
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Silver Award at a Glance

7 Steps to the Silver Award



Prerequisite:

Go on a Cadette Journey, including the Journey's Take Action™ project.



Step 1:

Identify issues that you're passionate about and how they affect your community.



Step 2:

Build your team. Work with a team of up to three other Cadettes or on your own. Either way, plan to partner with the community.



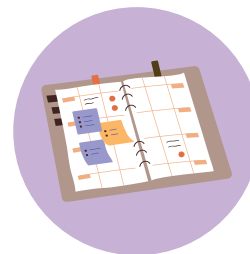
Step 3:

Explore your community to learn more about issues that interest you. This can be your neighborhood, your school, Girl Scouts, your place of worship, or another community of interest.



Step 4:

Choose your Silver Award project based on your passions and what you've learned by exploring your community and talking to others.



Step 5:

Make a plan and submit your Project Proposal to carry out your Silver Award Take Action project.



Step 6:

Put your plan in motion. You and your team will each spend about 50 hours to earn the award. Planning time counts too! Use the Time Log to track your time.



Step 7:

Spread the word and submit your Final Report. Inspire others! You can give a presentation to another Girl Scout troop, your local Girl Scout community, or to students at school. Turn in your Final Report to your council before September 30 after completing 8th grade.



Then...

Celebrate! Check with your council to see if they host a local ceremony or celebration, or organize one of your own!

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Part 1:

The Silver Award Defined

How to Use This Guide

The guide is designed to help you feel comfortable guiding Girl Scouts through the Silver Award Take Action project so that you'll know what the project is—and how Girl Scouts do it.

You'll also learn about Silver Award requirements, the seven steps Girl Scouts take to earn a Silver Award, and tips to help you guide Girl Scouts each step of the way. Girl Scouts use a checklist in the back of their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* to keep track of their actions. Find the same checklist in this guide so that you can follow along (see page 29).



Benefits of Becoming a Silver Award Girl Scout

Earning the Silver Award enables Cadette Girl Scouts to...

- Make the world a better place, starting in their own communities!
- Be recognized as a community leader.
- Find support from the community in many ways. Being a Silver Award Girl Scout will help them build relationships. These valuable connections may support future projects or part-time employment opportunities/references.
- Learn to work closely with a team to accomplish a project for the community. They will practice cooperation, leadership, compromise, and teamwork—all skills that they'll use throughout their lives.
- Build leadership skills like time management, problem solving, and effective communication, all while tackling a community issue they really care about.
- Help them develop skills and abilities that will set them up to successfully earn the Gold Award. Plus, it's one of the prerequisites options for earning the Gold!

We call this the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. It's a special opportunity that gives Girl Scouts real-world skills that they'll use for a lifetime. Thank you for making the Silver Award experience possible for Girl Scouts.

The Silver Award is the highest honor a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. With your support, Girl Scouts:

Discover

- What they care about.
- Their talents.
- The world around them.

Connect

- With each other.
- With others in their community and around the world.

Take Action

- To tackle a meaningful issue.
- To make the world a better place.

Silver Award Resources

Highly recommended: Silver Award Training for Girl Scouts, troop/group volunteers, and other adults

In addition to this guide and the GSSJC *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*, the Volunteer Toolkit provides suggested meeting plans to get you started on Silver Award; the Girl Scout Activity Zone has helpful videos and self-guided activities related to award requirements; and gsLearn has on-demand Silver Award training for girls and adults.

To learn more about the Silver Award program and processes at GSSJC, please visit our Silver Award webpage and the Highest Awards Online Community. You can also search the GSSJC Events page for Highest Awards to find additional trainings being offered, including:

- **Silver Award Training** – This live, virtual GSSJC training is designed for Girl Scout adults supporting Cadettes through the Silver Award process. It covers topics such as GSSJC-specific project guidelines, submission deadlines, coaching tips, and more. The Silver Award Committee strongly recommends adults take this live, virtual GSSJC Silver Award Training first and then take GSUSA's Silver Award Training on gsLearn with their girls.
- **Older Girl Take Action Workshop** – This live, virtual workshop for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors covers the differences between community service and Take Action and allows girls to practice designing a Take Action Project. This training is led by Highest Awards volunteers and girls who have successfully completed their Highest Awards.

When you are locating Silver Award resources, always confirm that you are reviewing **GSSJC-specific Silver Award resources and trainings** because each council's way of work for earning the Silver Award is different. The single best place to find all information on the GSSJC Silver Award program is the Highest Awards Online Community.

Your Role in the Silver Award

Your role in the Silver Award Take Action project is primarily as a guide.

This is true whether you are a troop leader, assistant leader, a project volunteer, or a parent/legal guardian. When you think about your role, keep the Girl Scout Leadership Experience in mind. The Girl Scouts should:



Girl-Led
Lead age-appropriate project activities.



Learning by Doing
Make learning memorable, meaningful, and long-lasting.



Cooperative Learning
Learn by working together.

Though you won't be directly planning or leading the project, you can make suggestions and guide Girl Scouts to stay on track. You can also help them find the resources they need, like helping them connect with and visit community experts. You can encourage Girl Scouts and ensure their safety by following Girl Scout safety guidelines. And, of course, have fun! It's amazing to watch what they can do. When the Girl Scouts wrap up, plan to celebrate!

How You Can Help

You know Girl Scouts are getting the Girl Scout Leadership Experience if they can check these boxes as they work on their Silver Award Take Action project:

Girl-Led

- ☐ Choosing roles
- ☐ Making decisions
- ☐ Running activities and meetings (appropriately for their age)

Learning by Doing

- ☐ Being active
- ☐ Going places
- ☐ Being hands-on

Cooperative Learning

- ☐ Working with others
- ☐ Experience a sense of belonging
- ☐ Engage in action and reflection

Key Elements of the Silver Award Project



The Silver Award Take Action project may be different than other projects you've done with your troop or Girl Scout.

For example, many Girl Scouts do projects like collecting coats for the homeless, or pet food for an animal shelter. These helpful acts support their communities with services and are called service projects. The Silver Award is a Take Action project.

Take Action vs. Community Service

It's important and helpful for Girl Scouts to understand the difference between these projects before they begin. Here's the difference:

Take Action	Community Service
A long-term project with sustainable and ongoing influence that addresses an issue's root cause	A short-term effort that helps something or someone fulfill an immediate need
Done WITH the community	Done FOR the community
Creating a unique initiative to address an issue's root cause	Joining an existing effort to solve an issue
Creating and leading your own team of volunteers	Done as part of an existing team , usually as a volunteer
Setting the goals and leading a team to achieve them	Working toward a goal that's set by others

Often, a community service project idea can be developed into a Take Action project.

For example, Girl Scouts may want to collect cans of food for an overcrowded pet shelter. That's a service project, of course. But if they partner with the shelter to understand the root causes of the overcrowding and develop a solution, such as free workshops to teach the importance of spaying and neutering pets, that's a Take Action project.

It is important for leaders and adults to understand what a Take Action project is to ensure your girls are on the right track before they begin. For more information on Take Action, be sure to explore all Silver Award Suite resources, especially Silver Award Training on gsLearn and the Silver Award meeting plans on the Volunteer Toolkit. Volunteers can also find information on Take Action on the Highest Awards Online Community. Finally, look for adult training opportunities on Take Action at events such as Summer Train-Ins, Membership Kickoff, and Fall Volunteer Conference.

Girls are eligible to attend a live, virtual Older Girl Take Action Workshop to practice their Take Action skills. Check the GSSJC Events page for information on upcoming training opportunities.

Highest Award Take Action Project Elements

	Leadership	Root Cause	Sustainable	Measurable	National and/or Global Link
Bronze Juniors	◆	◆	●		
Silver Cadettes	◆	◆	◆	●	●
Gold Seniors/Ambassadors	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

Required element



Introduction of new concept



To earn their Silver Award, Girl Scouts need to:

- Show leadership.
- Research and address a root cause of an issue in their community.
- Create a plan to make the project sustainable.
- **Optional:** “Try” to make their project measurable.
- **Optional:** “Try” to make a national and/or global link.

How to Show Leadership

There are two ways to earn the Silver Award: Girl Scouts can work with a small team (of up to three other Cadettes), or they can take on a project on their own. Both options provide opportunities to learn leadership skills.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Each Girl Scout should play an active role in choosing, planning, and developing their Take Action project.
 - Individuals on a team can share their vision to help align the group.
- It isn't a leader's job to do everything; rather, it's the leader's job to make sure everything gets done.
 - If working in a team, each individual is encouraged to be responsible for one specific aspect of the project.
 - For individuals as well as teams, active leadership is shown when involving others in their efforts. Recruiting and engaging other people from their network and around the community may be necessary to complete certain tasks.
- Plan to partner *with* community members to take action.
 - Community members might be teachers or school administrators, business or religious groups, or staff at a local community center working on the issue the Girl Scouts are interested in. They should be experts in the issue they're working on. Ideally, their project will provide the community they serve with a much-needed solution, so they will help sustain their project. Taking action to make a positive change in their community is leadership.

Keep in mind: each Girl Scout will be required to identify and reflect on their own leadership experience in their Final Report, as well as provide names of volunteers and community partners who assisted in their projects.



Why not a big group of Cadettes?

Small Teams: Have you ever worked on a project with a large group of people and noticed that some folks talk a lot, make a lot of decisions, or call the shots—while other group members may hang in the background? When you work in a group of three people or fewer, you have the best chance of creating a space where all voices are heard and everyone gets to develop their leadership skills equally.

How You Can Help

- **Make the prospect of the Silver Award come alive** by sharing stories or videos about what other Silver Award teams have done. You might even reach out to an older troop to join your meeting to share their experiences and recommendations for a successful project. But remember, looking at other projects is just for inspiration. Girl Scouts should explore their own interests and their own communities. Taking action in this personal way makes the project more meaningful.
- **Encourage Cadettes to make community connections.** Are there other volunteers or parents/legal guardians who can help, or introduce Girl Scouts to a potential community partner? You can help brainstorm, but keep it girl-led by having the Cadettes take the lead in seeking out their experts. Help them plan their questions and practice ahead of time so they are prepared and feel more confident.

What You Need to Know About Root Cause



Researching various community issues and then deciding which to address will require Girl Scouts to complete an additional step of exploring the situations or factors that cause the issue, or the “root cause.”

The extra step of identifying and then addressing a root cause will result in a successful Take Action project. This is because Girl Scouts will take steps to impact the issue’s root cause, therefore making long-term improvements, or fixing the issue itself.

But why does a root cause matter, and how do you find it?

This scenario might help:

Imagine that you’ve agreed to take care of a neighbor’s garden while she is on vacation. You drop by after dinner and notice that all the plants are drooping. You quickly grab the hose and water the plants. Whew! You solved the problem.

But the next day, the plants look worse. Why? Well, you assumed that the cause of the wilted plants was lack of water. But the plants seem to be drooping for another reason. Maybe they have pests. Maybe they’ve had too much water. Maybe they aren’t the kinds of plants that last. As you can see, it’s important to know the real root cause before taking action.

You find the real root cause by researching and talking to experts in the community. In this case, you could research the type of plant to understand its needs. You could visit a plant nursery and ask an expert.



For the Silver Award, you will guide Girl Scouts to research and connect with community experts to find out what activates their community issue. Then, have them ask why that happens in order to find the real root causes. Often, they will have to look at the “why” in a lot of places, or ask “Why?” several times, in order to get to the root causes.

You noticed that:	You researched and asked “Why?” to uncover these root causes:	You addressed the root cause when:
<i>The plants are drooping.</i>	<i>The plant has pests that are damaging the leaves, causing wilting.</i>	<i>You developed a natural plant pest spray and sprayed the plants.</i>
	<i>This plant variety should only be watered once a month.</i>	<i>You made a note to tell your neighbor that their plants need water less often.</i>

Once Girl Scouts have identified their issue, they can also use the mind mapping diagram in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* as a visual tool to help them explore root causes. See the appendix in this guide for an example of the mind mapping diagram.

What You Need to Know About Sustainability

Girl Scouts will create a plan to make the project sustainable, which means the project's impact lasts even after it's over.

The goal is for the Girl Scouts to create and put a plan in place to sustain their project; however, how the community partners follow through is often outside the Girl Scouts' influence or control. For the Gold Award, they will need to ensure their plan carries on—that's the Take Action progression!



Discuss how they can make their projects sustainable. Here are three methods to consider:

Create a permanent solution that can be used after the project is complete.	Educate and inspire others in the community or within Girl Scouts to be part of the change.	Advocate to change a rule, regulation, or law, and encourage others to join!
Start a school club and get a teacher or a Girl Scout troop to commit to continue the work.	Run a stress relief awareness campaign and enact a call to action, like a pledge to track who commits to adopting new self-care habits.	Protect sea turtle habitats by getting others to take up the cause by signing a petition as part of a campaign to enact a law protecting the animal's habitats. Advocacy is what matters. Bonus points if the law is passed—but if not, you still changed minds and behaviors along the way.
Create a sensory room and leave an instruction manual on how to use it.	Host a reading workshop to promote early literacy and share the curriculum with a community partner to continue literacy education.	
Start a school composting program and collect before and after surveys to understand the increase in composting know-how.	Post an educational video or blog and partner with an established organization to ensure people can find it.	

Girl Scouts will share their plan for sustainability in their Silver Award Project Proposal and describe what they actually did in their Final Report. See the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*.

How to “Try” to Measure Impact - optional

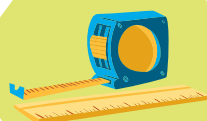


One of the most important questions to ask before the project is started is “How will I know when I’ve succeeded?” To try to answer this question, have Girl Scouts set a goal for what can be meaningfully counted to measure the effectiveness of their project.



Some ways they may want to track their project’s impact are by counting the:

- Number of people who volunteered with the project.
- Number of people who visited the project’s website.
- Number of people who can eat vegetables produced by the new garden.
- Number of people who attended an event for the project.
- Number of bottles recycled because of new recycling cans at the playground.
- Amount of food donated for a cooking workshop at the food pantry which is supported by new recipes on the pantry’s website.
- Number of books donated for the new library section created at the preschool.



Once Girl Scouts know what to watch to track success, help them decide what tools to use to measure how the project progresses. Here are a few suggestions:

- Complete a survey or evaluation and calculate the results.
- Track numbers like attendees, hours, or donations with a log sheet.
- Track clicks, views, or shares.

Match the results against the initial goal to measure the project’s impact.

How to “Try” to Identify a National and/or Global Link - optional

Identifying a national and/or global link is connecting how the project’s issue is relevant worldwide. It’s likely the issue can be found in your own local, regional, or national community and across the globe, whether it’s hunger, poverty, illiteracy, homelessness, or pollution.



Try to identify the project’s national and/or global link by encouraging Girl Scouts to research how other people and places address their issue.

Try to figure out:

- How do other organizations or communities implement solutions?
- What can be learned?
- What can be incorporated into their project?

Girl Scouts can consider reaching out, asking for advice, ideas and even collaboration. Seeing how other people and places implement solutions might also inspire Girl Scouts. They can use what they learned to inform their project. Plus, these kinds of partnerships can be excellent ways to ensure sustainability. Encourage Girl Scouts to have sensitivity when pursuing issues that impact communities that are underrepresented or marginalized. Remember that every community holds a unique space in the world and still has plenty to offer, even through adversity.

Making the project measurable and establishing a national and/or global link is optional. Why take these steps? They will make the project stronger and help Girl Scouts prepare for the Gold Award.

SAMPLE: **Silver Award Take Action Project** ***Shoe-Tying Success***

Ava, Zuri, and Gloria were excited to earn their Girl Scout Silver Award. They agreed to be extra observant at school and in their neighborhood to discover potential issues that could be the focus of their Take Action project.

*They came together as a team to share ideas, and they chose several ideas to explore. Their leader helped them connect with community members who could help them learn more. One of their observations was that lots of younger students don’t tie their shoes. They researched to find the **root cause**: the students were not fully learning how to tie their shoes because they needed more hands-on practice.*

*They showed **leadership** by partnering with a preschool, and by each individual Girl Scout handling different aspects of the project. Ava took the lead on research, Zuri scheduled calls with experts to learn more, and Gloria worked with a small team of volunteers to create a hands-on tool to help students practice tying their shoes. Together, they developed workshops that they led at the preschool to put their program into action. Ava doesn’t feel comfortable speaking publicly, so she helped set up and took attendance while Zuri and Gloria presented to students and teachers.*

*They felt proud when the preschoolers gained the skill and confidence to tie their shoes. And they made their project **sustainable** by teaching preschoolers to tie their shoes, and by sharing their workshop outline and hands-on tool with the preschool, which will continue to encourage the students to practice. They made a lasting impact!*

*Their troop leader explained the concepts of **measurable** and **national and/or global link**. They knew these weren’t required for the Silver Award, but they made a goal to teach at least 50 students to tie their shoes. They decided to keep track of attendance at their presentations, just to practice for the Gold Award. They also discussed how their project links to a national and/or global issue because the increased demands on parents’ time leads to a higher demand for more hands-on life skills programs at school.*

Part 2:

Achieving the Silver Award

Every Cadette Girl Scout can earn the Silver Award if they choose.

The Silver Award process is built to accommodate different learning styles and abilities. Your council team has resources to support all Girl Scouts in planning and implementing a successful project.

Getting Started

Before you begin, confirm that the Girl Scouts interested in earning the Silver Award have met these prerequisites:

- A registered Girl Scout Cadette (grades 6–8)
- Completed a Cadette Journey, including the Journey's Take Action project
- **Optional:** Completed Silver Award Training

It is important for leaders and adults to understand what a Take Action project is to ensure your girls are on the right track before they begin. For more information on Take Action, be sure to explore all Silver Award Suite resources, especially Silver Award Training on gsLearn and the Silver Award meeting plans on the Volunteer Toolkit. Volunteers can also find information on Take Action on the Highest Awards Online Community. Finally, look for adult training opportunities on Take Action at events such as Summer Trainings, Membership Kickoff, and Fall Volunteer Conference.



Girls are eligible to attend a live, virtual Older Girl Take Action Workshop to practice their Take Action skills. Check the GSSJC Events page for information on upcoming training opportunities.

Before you begin, confirm that the Girl Scouts interested in earning the Silver Award have met these prerequisites:

- A registered Girl Scout Cadette (grades 6–8)
- Completed a Cadette Journey, including the Journey's Take Action Project
- **Optional, but strongly recommended:** Completed Silver Award Training on gsLearn

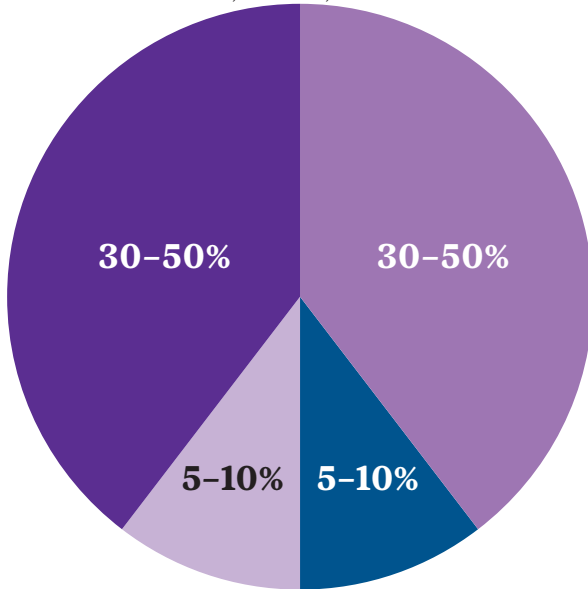
Highly recommended: Silver Award Training for Girl Scouts, troop/group leaders, and other adults

How You Can Help

- **Register your Girl Scout(s) for training:** Troop leaders or parents/legal guardians can register Girl Scouts for training.
- **Attend a training session:** Troop leaders and parents/legal guardians are encouraged to attend Silver Award trainings with their Girl Scouts to familiarize themselves with the Silver Award requirements and process. When troop parents/legal guardians understand the process and see the value, they can help their Girl Scouts prioritize it among their other commitments.
- **Dedicate a few minutes of meetings to updates on Silver Award Projects:** Short check-ins during regular meetings or dedicated meetings to Silver Award issues can help Girl Scouts brainstorm general tips for moving forward, troubleshoot obstacles, give direction for resources, and discuss ways members can support one another. Step 2 on page 19, “Build Your Team,” and Step 3 on page 21, “Explore Your Community,” include great meeting activities for troops.

How much time does it take?

It is recommended that each individual Cadette spend approximately 50 hours working towards the Silver Award. However, the process Girl Scouts engage in and their leadership growth are much more important than the total number of hours logged. In some cases, the project is completed over the course of a summer; in others, over the course of a school year.



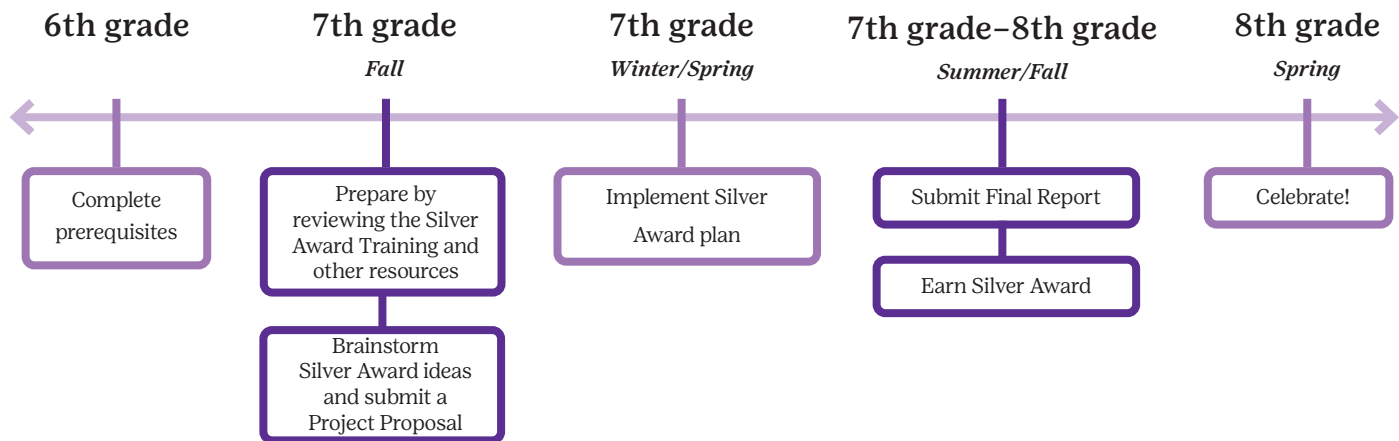
Budgeting Hours

- Preparation (30-50%)** is the process of preparing the project plan and Silver Award Project Proposal (required). This includes research, contacting possible community partners, investigating activities, and finding volunteers.
- Implementation (30-50%)** is the process of leading and executing the plan and making changes when necessary to achieve the goal. This includes training volunteers, leading the team, and more.
- Earning money (5-10%)** is optional, and only includes time spent earning money for the Silver Award.
- Final Report and thanks (5-10%)** includes reflecting on their project's impact, completing the Silver Award Final Report, and thanking their team.

When to start?

While Girl Scouts can earn the Silver Award anytime during their Cadette years (grades 6-8), it's recommended that they aim to earn the Silver Award by the summer following their 7th grade year. The additional year offers a buffer in case the Silver Award takes longer than anticipated. Plus, this gives Girl Scouts the entire 8th grade year to relax and do other fun activities before bridging to Seniors and turning their sights to the Gold Award.

Recommended (not required!) Timeline:



Although the above timeline is recommended, girls may choose to wait until later in their Cadette years to start their Silver Award adventure. 8th grade Cadettes must be sure to adhere to the following deadlines:

- The F-485 Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal via Jotform is due for first submission no later than **July 1** of the year a girl completes 8th grade (i.e. the summer before 9th grade).
- The Girl Scout Silver Award Project must be completed and the F-486 Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report via Jotform must be submitted by **September 30** of the same year (i.e. the fall of a girl's 9th grade year).

These are firm deadlines. It is highly recommended that girls do not wait until these deadlines to submit their paperwork. Please be aware that it may take up to three weeks for forms to be reviewed by the Silver Award Committee and forms may not be approved the first time they are submitted. Girls should plan for this approval timeline in their overall project timeline. Note: Project proposals must be approved by the Silver Award Committee **prior** to a girl starting her project. Please note, we strongly do not recommend girls waiting until September 30 to submit their final reports. If there are any issues with the paperwork, then they risk not being able to earn their Silver Award.

Steps to Earn the Silver Award

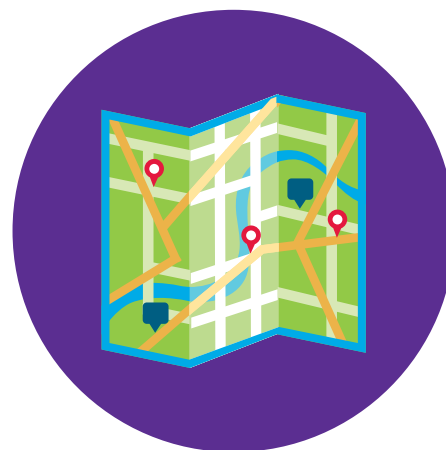
Prerequisites

Before getting started, each Girl Scout must complete a Cadette Journey, including the Journey's Take Action project.

In the Silver Award Project Proposal, each Girl Scout will be asked to provide the name of the Cadette Journey completed and the completion date. In addition, they will be asked to reflect on these questions:

- What did you do?
- What did you learn?
- What will you do better, or differently, next time?

Girl Scouts need the skills they'll develop in the Journeys—like how to identify community issues, how to plan, and how to lead or work with others—to succeed on their Silver Award. The reflection will help them begin to connect the dots between their Journey Take Action project and their Silver Award.



How You Can Help

- **Share Cadette Journey options with Girl Scouts.** Visit the [Award and Badge Explorer page](#). Select “Cadette” as the grade level and search “Journeys” as the topic. Print a PDF to share with Girl Scouts, who can then choose the one that they’ll work on.
- **Guide Girl Scouts to reflect and discuss their completed Journey Take Action experiences.** Using the questions above, which are also listed in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* give them time to discuss their answers together. Tell them to write down their individual answers and save them. They will need to provide the answers to these questions in their Project Proposal.



Step 1: Identify issues.

In this step, Girl Scouts spend time thinking about issues that they care about and how those issues affect their community.

This is an important step. Girl Scouts who choose a topic that they are passionate about are more interested in making an impact. They see value in what they are learning and doing. As a result, their motivation and engagement lasts throughout the project. And, they reap the benefits of taking action and growing as leaders.



Highly recommended: Once Girl Scouts begin this step, they should start tracking hours. Girl Scouts are encouraged to track time as they go along, so they don't get stuck trying to recreate it at the end. Use the Time Log found in the template section of the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*, a spreadsheet, or a piece of paper—just don't lose it!



How You Can Help

Encourage each Girl Scout to explore, to think about their own experiences, and imagine what they could change in their community.

- A great tool for narrowing down their options is the Take Action Brainstorming Decision Bracket, which can be found in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* and in this guide's appendix. The decision bracket will help Girl Scouts match their talents and skills with the issues they want to solve and people they want to help.

Guide Girl Scouts to use the Issue Chart in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* and also on the next page.

Get the conversation started:

- Ask: "What are some places we can look for ideas?"
- Suggest options such as newspapers, friends, or social media.
- Challenge them to think more deeply.

Create an open, comfortable environment where Girl Scouts (whether one or a group) can share their thoughts and ideas.

Break out into small groups to explore issues more deeply—this may result in spontaneous team formation.

Issue Chart:

<div></div> <div>What issues are you passionate about?</div>	<div></div> <div>Why are these issues important to you?</div>	<div></div> <div>How do the issues affect your community?</div>

Step 2: Build your team.

To meet the Silver Award leadership requirement, Cadettes will need to build a team, and they have options:

- **Small team model:** They can work with a team of up to three other Cadettes. Their team can be made up of Girl Scouts from the same troop, other troops, or individually registered Girl Scouts. Each Girl Scout must play an active role in choosing, planning, developing, and completing the team's project, and must have their own role and responsibilities in the project.
- **Solo model:** They can create and implement a project on their own. Recruiting and engaging youth and/or adult volunteers from their network and around their community will be necessary to complete certain tasks.



Highly recommended: Form teams based on shared interest, not friend groups.

No matter what option they choose, they should plan to partner with community members to learn about an issue, discover root causes, make a plan, and take action.

These partners should be experts in the issue they are working on.

Note: The Silver Award Final Report asks Girl Scouts to identify and reflect on their leadership role, responsibilities, and experience.

If your troop has more than four Girl Scouts interested in the Silver Award, it's possible that you'll be guiding more than one team. You may also have a group of Girl Scouts who want to work together and one or two who want to work on their own. That's OK because it means that they are branching out in order to take action in a way that's personally meaningful. Just remember, each team should develop a unique project based on their own interests. Multiple teams may NOT collaborate on the same Silver Award project.

Adult roles:

Required: Each Silver Award project should have the support of **at least one registered, background-checked adult Girl Scout volunteer** who is responsible for safety and Silver Award procedures. If your troop is working on several Silver Award Take Action projects, you might find it helpful to ask parents/legal guardians or other troop volunteers to guide one of the teams or an individual. Any volunteer can take training and have access to Silver Award materials.

Try it: Encourage teams and individuals to seek out a **project advisor**. A project advisor is an adult who has some level of knowledge, skills, expertise, or access to resources that can help with their project. The project advisor does not design the project, but can offer valuable insight, advice, and guidance. While parents/legal guardians and troop leaders can be project advisors, you can encourage Girl Scouts to expand outside their familiar circles and grow their networks. **Note:** This role is different than the registered, background-checked Girl Scout volunteer and is optional, but strongly encouraged. See *Highest Awards Guidance for Girl Scouts Engaging with Project Advisors* in this guide's appendix.

Then, get started!

Girl Scouts who have formed a team of two or more should plan a first Silver Award meeting. The focus of the first meeting should be to encourage team bonding and problem solving—even if they have been in a troop together for years. Encourage each Girl Scout to use this experience to utilize their strengths while also gaining new skills.

How You Can Help

Design a “kick-off” meeting that includes one or more of the activities below to help Girl Scouts build their teams. Include all Girl Scouts in these activities—even those working on their own. This meeting should be a celebration where everyone feels good about making the world a better place.

Activity 1: Help the Girl Scouts choose and plan games and activities for this meeting that will help them discover something they didn’t know about one another and ideally work toward a common goal. They will find one activity in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*.

Activity 2: Guide Girl Scouts to create team rules before the first meeting ends. Have them come up with rules that help the team work together. Start the list by talking about the values in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Examples include being on time, or listening to each other without interrupting. Post the rules at each team meeting and refer to them as a reminder if needed.



Traits of a Good Team	Coaching Tips
Respect different points of view and ways of work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote an inclusive environment as Girl Scouts work on their project. Values you might suggest include: ensuring each team member is invited to express their thoughts and opinions, encouraging active listening and asking questions. Discuss ways that team members can respect each other and the diverse background, viewpoints, and life experiences of their team. Note: Girl Scouts should not be expected to be the spokespeople for communities they are a part of; sharing lived experience is a choice. Reach out to community partners for their expert knowledge.
Contribute to the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Girl Scouts to make a task list for each member and then discuss how they can put those tasks into motion.
Accept constructive suggestions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to Girl Scouts about the differences between constructive suggestions, criticizing, and attacking. For example, if an idea is criticized, ask the individual who gave the feedback whether they have any suggestions that might help make the idea better. Encourage Girl Scouts to be courteous, considerate, and respectful of fellow teammates by living the Girl Scout Promise and Law.
Work together to create and develop a plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Girl Scouts to use their knowledge and skills to locate tools and resources they need, and also to know when, where, and how to enlist the help of others.
Solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss how problem-solving skills contribute to effective leadership. Discuss some of the obstacles that may come up during their Take Action project and how the team can work together to overcome them.

Step 3: Explore your community.

When Girl Scouts explore the world around them, they connect to their communities, build empathy, and expand their view. While they may already have a Take Action project idea in mind, actually being out in their communities may bring new ideas and information to light.

For Girl Scouts who are unsure, exploring their communities can help them discover a focus for their Take Action project. They may decide to explore on their own, with their families, or together with their team.

This activity also assists Cadettes in identifying organizations and experts who can assist them in their project and help them gather information on the root cause (the situation/factor that causes the issue) they are interested in addressing.



How You Can Help

1. **Guide Girl Scouts to map the communities they see.** Step 3 in the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* recommends drawing a community map. It might help Girl Scouts to know that community can be more than just a physical place. Sure, they can explore their neighborhood. But a community is also a group of people, like an athletic team, faith-based group, Girl Scouts, and groups with a common characteristic, as shown in the Juliette Gordon Low Community Map (both examples are in the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*). Even a younger sibling's preschool is a community that they might know something about and want to explore for a project. For more ideas, see the [Girl Scout Activity Zone's Cadette Getting Started with the Silver Award Activity](#), which explains how to make a community map.



How You Can Help, cont.

If your Girl Scouts decide to physically explore the community:

- Have Girl Scouts keep an eye out for things that could be improved, fixed, or otherwise benefit from their special talents and skills.
 - Stress safety. Follow the guidelines outlined in Step 6's "Think safety" section.
2. **After exploring their community and making a community map**, have Girl Scouts list contact information for any organizations within Girl Scouts or the wider community that they'd like to explore, or that might be able to help them.
 3. **Then, guide Girl Scouts to find experts in the community who can help them understand the root cause of the project issue.**
 - Remind Girl Scouts to wear their uniform, if they have one, when meeting with community members or engaging with others during their Silver Award Take Action project.
 - Practice communication skills with Girl Scouts before they talk to others about community issues. They can practice by taking turns explaining the Silver Award, sharing their ideas, and asking questions of their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*.
 4. **Help Girl Scouts to uncover root causes, which is a required element of the Silver Award.** Once they have explored their community and identified issues, they'll need to research and talk to experts to understand what causes the issues before choosing a project and taking action.
 - Uncovering root causes may seem hard, but it can be surprisingly easy. Brainstorm with your team—keep asking "Why?" Use colorful sticky notes to track your ideas, or use the mind mapping diagram in the appendix and in the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* to help them uncover what they've learned about the root causes of their issue.

Examples of how observation and research become
a project that addresses a real root cause:

A Silver Award team noticed that:	They researched and asked "why" to uncover this root cause:	To address the root cause:
<i>Preschoolers are tripping on the playground because they aren't tying their shoes.</i>	<i>Students aren't learning how to tie their shoes.</i>	<i>They created an in-school workshop with a hands-on tool to help students practice tying their shoes.</i>
<i>Children are afraid and confused when a family member develops Alzheimer's disease.</i>	<i>Information about Alzheimer's disease written by children for children isn't readily available.</i>	<i>They created an Alzheimer's disease brochure for children and partnered with an Alzheimer's organization for distribution and continued support.</i>
<i>There are fewer ducks at a local park.</i>	<i>Mold growing on bread left out for the ducks has made some ducks sick. Others are overweight from too much bread.</i>	<i>They created a campaign to educate the public about not feeding bread to ducks and provided samples of appropriate duck food at a special event.</i>

Step 4: Choose your Silver Award Project.

In this step, Girl Scouts will choose their Silver Award Take Action project from the options they identified in previous steps and make it official by writing it down.



How You Can Help

Help Girl Scouts who still aren't sure about their project.

- They may have two (or more!) ideas they love. Help them narrow down their options by reviewing the information they've collected. They can create a pros and cons list if they can't decide between two or more project ideas. They could also narrow down a project that feels like it's too much. Contact your local council if you are feeling stuck.
- A team may be split between two project ideas. Help them come to consensus or compromise by fist-to-five voting. Here's how: Everyone shows their level of agreement by holding up a number of fingers, so each person can convey their opinion without speaking and ensuring no one's view is ignored. A fist means "No interest;" one finger means "I'll just barely go along but am not blocking the project idea;" two fingers mean "I don't like it, but will go along;" three fingers mean "I'm in the middle;" four fingers mean "This idea is fine;" and five fingers mean "I like the project idea a lot." Anyone showing fewer than three fingers is given an opportunity to state their objection, and the team addresses their concerns. The team continues the fist-to-five process until they achieve consensus (a minimum of three fingers or higher for all team members).

Have Girl Scouts write down what they'll do for their project, why their project matters, who it helps (target audience), and how it addresses the root cause of their issue in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*. Writing down the answers to these questions will help solidify their plans.

- The target audience is the clearly identified members of the community affected by the issue. For example: pet owners, children in grades 3–5, refugees, their classmates at school, Girl Scouts in their service unit, or the elderly in their neighborhood.

Step 5: Make a plan and submit your Project Proposal.

By now, Girl Scouts have chosen a Silver Award Take Action project and are ready to make a plan to get it done.

They should review the questions in Step 4 of the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award* to help them outline their plan and complete the Silver Award Project Proposal before sharing it with you and/or your council for review and approval. If Cadettes are working in a group, they should fill out the proposal together. Good news: the questions in the workbook and proposal are the same!

Review the Silver Award Project Proposal and Silver Award Checklist in the appendix with each team. Together, you can decide if the project plan is complete, or if more planning is needed first. When you're ready, encourage your Girl Scouts to officially submit!

The Silver Award proposal must be submitted and approved **BEFORE** the Girl Scouts continue work on their projects.



How You Can Help

Help Girl Scouts plan by directing them to complete the Silver Award Project Proposal in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*. Ask them if their plan is realistic and suggest that they brainstorm new directions if needed.

Review the Silver Award Project Proposal Checklist with Girl Scouts to anticipate any questions that could come up while completing the Project Proposal. Provide any further explanations for the project's required elements. Offer to proofread their Project Proposal.

Ask what supplies they think they will need. They can list these and make an estimated budget in their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*. Then, have them think about how they'll fund their project.

Check with your local council for guidelines related to donations, money-earning activities, or the use of troop funds that Girl Scouts should keep in mind for their projects. Keep these two notes in mind as well:

- Girl Scouts cannot raise funds to give to another organization as part of their Silver Award Take Action project. Check with your local council for guidelines related to donations, money-earning activities or the use of troop funds that Girl Scouts should keep in mind for their projects.
- Silver Award Take Action project requirements are often met using education and advocacy—not by spending large amounts of money. If the project has been designed and the budget is unattainable, suggest that they re-evaluate. Ask: Is the project truly a Take Action project?

Project Proposal Review and Approval Process

The Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal helps girls stay on track to complete a project that meets Silver Award guidelines. Girls must receive approval for their project from the Silver Award Committee through submission of the F-485 Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal via Jotform **prior** to starting their project.

As your girl completes her Project Proposal, be sure to consult the Project Proposal Checklist on page 34 of the Adult Guide for Earning the Silver Award page 30 of the Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award) to ensure a complete and thorough submission.

The steps to submitting the F-485 Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal are:

OPTIONAL

1. Optional but highly recommended. Create a free Jotform account on www.jotform.com. If you create a Jotform account, you will have the ability to return to your form multiple times to edit BEFORE submitting. Once you submit you will no longer be able to edit.

REQUIRED

2. Open and complete the online F-485 Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal via Jotform. Whether a girl is working individually or in a Project Team (up to 4 girls), only one form should be submitted per project.

Tip: To avoid losing their answers, we recommend filling in all answers to the online form in one sitting, especially if they choose not to create a Jotform account.

3. Once the online Project Proposal is complete, click "Submit to Council."

4. Once the form has been successfully submitted, all emails listed on the form (girl, parent, Adult Girl Scout Volunteer Supervisor, and Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader) will receive a confirmation email (subject line: GSSJC F-485 Silver Award Project Proposal Submission Complete).

Tip: Be sure to download the PDF of the online Project Proposal for your own records (you do not need to submit this PDF to council since council will have automatic access to it through the Jotform platform).

Note: The Jotform confirmation email with the subject line: GSSJC F-485 Silver Award Project Proposal Submission Complete serves as confirmation that the girl's complete submission was received and will be reviewed by the Silver Award Committee soon. Please note that, due to the high volume of submissions received, council is not able to respond to individual requests asking if a form was received.

Congratulations! The submission of your girl's Project Proposal is complete!

Deadline

The F-485 Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal via Jotform is due no later than **July 1 of the year a girl completes 8th grade** (i.e. the summer before 9th grade).

Approval and Feedback

Once a girl has submitted her Project Proposal, she will receive approval or feedback from the Silver Award Committee within three weeks (email subject line: “Silver Award Project Proposal Approval” or “Silver Award Project Proposal Feedback”). Girls should plan for this approval timeline in their overall project timeline since the Silver Award Committee is not able to expedite project reviews on request or guarantee approval upon first submission. **Girls are not permitted to start their project without Project Proposal approval from the Silver Award Committee.**

If a girl does not receive a response from the Silver Award Committee within three weeks, she can follow up with an email to silveraward@sjgs.org.

After the Silver Award Committee has reviewed a girl’s Project Proposal, an email response will be sent to the email addresses listed on the Project Proposal (girl, parent, Adult Girl Scout Volunteer Supervisor, and Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader). The girl’s Project Proposal will either be approved, or the Silver Award Committee will ask for additional information and/or for revisions to help the project meet Silver Award guidelines. Receiving feedback is not unusual and not a cause for concern or discouragement. Girls receiving feedback and their supervising adults should read the feedback carefully and incorporate it into their next submission.

Please note that most resubmissions will be made through a supplemental Auxiliary Form (link provided in the feedback email), rather than through re-submission of the Project Proposal. Most projects are approved on the first or second submission. Once a girl’s Project Proposal is approved, she is ready to get started on her project.

Troops with Multiple Projects

If a troop has multiple girls/Project Teams working on their Silver Award simultaneously, the projects must be developed separately, be substantively different, and reflect the unique interests of the individual girls/Project Teams.

If projects are truly developed separately, then it is expected that, in most cases, the girls will come up with different project ideas. If the girls are having difficulty coming up with topics of interest to them, help them to brainstorm using GSUSA’s Main Theme Guide for Highest Awards .

After brainstorming separately, if multiple girls/Project Teams decide to pursue a similar topic, then they should adhere to the following guidelines to ensure that their projects are different enough and provide enough opportunity for individual girl leadership across all projects.

The projects can demonstrate being substantially different in one of three ways. They can:

1. address different issues/concerns, OR
2. address different root causes of the same issue/concern, OR
3. create different project concepts to address the same root cause of the same issue/concern.

Funding for Silver Award

Many impactful Silver Award projects are accomplished without the need for funding. Often, time and talents are more important to a successful Silver Award project than money. For example, perhaps a girl is worried about food waste at her school. She could a) raise money to buy compost bins (funding required) or b) use her advocacy skills to persuade school and town officials to set up a composting system (no funding required). Be creative! Girls may realize they don’t need that much money after all. However, if a girl or Project Team decides to pursue a project requiring funding, they should carefully read the guidelines associated with the various funding options.

There are three options for funding a Silver Award project:

1. Self-funding
2. Money Earning Activities
3. In-Kind Donations

Self-funding does not require Council approval; however, money earning activities and in-kind donations do require advance approval from Council.

Please read the guidelines below for each funding option and be sure to thoroughly review all documents associated with each. In addition, the following should also be reviewed to make sure that Council protocols are being followed:

- Volunteer Essentials
- Safety Activity Checkpoints
- GSSJC Policies and Operating Procedures (F-433)

Finally, please note that if a girl applies to do a money earning activity or solicit for in-kind donations, she should first receive Project Proposal approval from the Silver Award Committee prior to submitting her funding approval paperwork.

Self-Funding

Self-funding includes a girl's own money, money from family or friends, and/or troop funds. No council prior approval or paperwork is needed for funds received through these avenues. Please keep in mind that use of troop funds must be approved by the girls in the troop, even those not participating in the Silver Award project, prior to use.

It is important to note that personal donations to a Silver Award project through self-funding avenues are not eligible for tax receipts. Any personal donations accepted are between a girl and the donor (i.e. family or friend). Since self-funded donations, whether monetary or in-kind, to a Silver Award project are between the girl and the donor, Council cannot provide a copy of its 501c(3) letter or tax ID number.

Money Earning Activities

Money earning activities are Council-approved, coordinated efforts to provide a product or service in exchange for money. To apply to conduct a money earning activity, please carefully review and submit the F-32 Guidelines and Application for GSSJC Money Earning Projects for Troops/Groups and Individual Girls to your local Community Leadership Team (CLT) or, if your Community is Council-managed, to your Volunteer Experience Manager (VEM). Submit the approved form, including the CLT or VEM signature, to silveraward@sjgs.org. Money earning activity applications must be submitted **after** a girl has received approval for her Silver Award Project Proposal.

Participation in the last two Product Sales is required to apply to conduct a money earning activity. All girls in a Project Team must individually meet this requirement for the team to be eligible.

In-Kind Donations

Soliciting for in-kind donations is a Council-approved, coordinated effort to acquire supplies needed for a project by seeking donations from local businesses or individuals (not friends and family), e.g. soliciting a hardware store for lumber. Soliciting a gift card from a store for the supplies needed is also permitted. For Silver Award

projects, only non-monetary support is allowed, except in the case of gift cards which serve as credit to a store rather than cash. Please note that hosting a supply drive (e.g. canned food for the food pantry) among the local community is not considered to be soliciting for in-kind donations.

To apply to solicit for in-kind donations, please carefully review and submit the F-30A Contribution/Solicitation Request Form to the Highest Awards Manager at silveraward@sjgs.org. Additional resources to review are:

- F-30B Contribution/Solicitation Request Process
- F-30C Contribution/Solicitation FAQ

Soliciting for in-kind donation applications must be submitted after a girl has received approval for her Silver Award Project Proposal.

Participation in the last two Product Sales is required to apply to solicit for in-kind donations. All girls in a Project Team must individually meet this requirement for the team to be eligible.

Please note that since GSSJC is a nonprofit organization, there are specific rules on how in-kind donations can be acquired. The IRS's tax codes state that only adults may complete the "ask" for the donation. However, GSSJC encourages girls to be a part of the planning process through budgeting, composing ask scripts/inquiry letters, etc. Although adults may make the specific request for donations, girls can be present to answer questions, give a presentation, provide justification, and more for why they need the supplies. By doing so they will build valuable knowledge of finances and leadership!

Silver Award Projects on GSSJC Property

Girls may decide they want to do their Silver Award project at a Girl Scout property (e.g. Girl Scout camp) if the Girl Scout property is the most logical beneficiary of the project. However, please keep in mind that all Highest Awards projects should always be "what, how, then who" projects. This means that girls should first decide what they would like to do to make the world a better place, and then decide how they'll tackle it and for whom. The girls may find that there are other locations and organizations to work with that would be more impactful to partner with for their particular project concept.

If a girl decides her project should be carried out on a GSSJC property, she will need to submit an F-208 Request to Conduct a Project on GSSJC Property to propertyprojects@sjgs.org for approval prior to submitting her Project Proposal. Please note, that girls do not need to have a GSSJC staff contact in mind when they submit the form. One will be provided upon approval.

Step 6: Put your plan in motion.

Help Girl Scouts work together to accomplish their project. Remember: Each Girl Scout should spend around 50 hours each on the Silver Award Take Action project.



How You Can Help

Help Girl Scouts organize trips in the community that will help them carry out their project.

Remind them to wear their uniform, if they have one, when meeting with community members or engaging with others during their Silver Award Take Action project.

Encourage Girl Scouts to record the time they spend on the project in the Time Log of their *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*. Review the pie chart in the “How Much Time Does it Take?” section of this guide and remind them that time spent researching, planning, and taking action can be included.

Encourage them to take photos or shoot video of their project along the way. They’ll use these items to tell their Silver Award Story in Step 7: Spread the Word and share them in their Silver Award Final Report.

Important: When the Silver Award project winds down, the outcome may not be exactly as they planned. That’s OK! Girl Scouts earn the Silver Award as long as award requirements have been met. What they learn in the process about themselves and the world around them is what’s most valuable. Look at any unexpected twists as a learning opportunity.

Think safety. Think safety. Check GSSJC resources for safety policies that Girl Scouts should keep in mind for their projects. This may include driving and travel safety, recommended use of Girl Scouts’ Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC), Internet Safety Pledge, activity accident insurance, and Covid-19 guidance when applicable.

Step 7: Spread the word and submit your Final Report.

Each Silver Award project is a story of inspiration, teamwork, and change for the better. Girl Scouts should proudly share their work via their Silver Award Final Reports and with their wider communities.

Final Report: Each project team will submit a Final Report about their project to you and their council. The report will contain individual sections for each Girl Scout to share their role and reflect. Because the award experience is different for each Girl Scout, guide them to answer the questions on their own—a shared “cut and paste” won’t do!

When your Girl Scouts’ *Silver Award Final Report* is approved, they are officially Silver Award Girl Scouts!



How You Can Help

Have Girl Scouts reflect on their Silver Award Take Action project by completing their Final Report. This will help the Girl Scouts learn by reflecting on the experience in new ways. Of course, the most important outcomes are the ones Girl Scouts gain for themselves, like improved confidence, better organization, and stronger teamwork. If the garden doesn’t look as neat as they anticipated or if the project had fewer volunteers than desired, that’s OK as long as they discovered things along the way. Ensure that each Girl Scout has the opportunity to reflect on and share their answers.

Encourage Girl Scouts to make and keep a copy of their Final Reports and submit before September 30 after completing 8th grade.

Ask Girl Scouts how they’d like to share their story. There are lots of possibilities! They can give a presentation to another Girl Scout troop, their local Girl Scout community, or students at their school. They can even create a display for a local library or community center, or submit an article to their local news or school website.

Remember to review the [Internet Safety Pledge](#) with Girl Scouts and have them sign it first!

Final Report Review and Approval Process

The Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report is the conclusion and reflection of a girl's Silver Award project. Once a girl has completed her project as approved in her Silver Award Project Proposal, she is required to complete and submit the F-486 Silver Award Final Report.

Note: As your girl completes her Final Report, be sure to consult the Final Report Checklist on page 35 of the Adult Guide for Earning the Silver Award (page 31 of the Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award).

The steps to submitting the F-486 Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report are:

1. Sign in to your free Jotform account (if you created one) and complete the online F-486 Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report via Jotform. Whether a girl is working individually or in a Project Team (up to 4 girls), only one form should be submitted per project. A budget (reporting income and expenses equaling zero) and individual Time Logs for each girl in the project (demonstrating individual leadership as well as group hours) are required to be included in the Final Report.

Tip: To avoid losing their answers, we recommend filling in all answers to the online form in one sitting, especially if they choose not to create a Jotform account.

2. Once the online Final Report is complete click "Submit to Council."

3. Once the form has been successfully submitted, all emails listed on the form (girl, parent, Adult Girl Scout Volunteer Supervisor, and Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader) will receive a confirmation email (subject line GSSJC F-486 Silver Award Final Report Submission Complete).

Tip: Be sure to download the PDF of the online Final Report for your own records (you do not need to submit this PDF to Council since Council will have automatic access to it through the Jotform platform).

Note: The Jotform confirmation email with the subject line: GSSJC F-486 Silver Award Final Report Submission Complete, serves as confirmation that the girl's complete submission was received and will be reviewed by the Silver Award Committee soon. Please note that, due to the high volume of submissions received, Council is not able to respond to individual requests asking if a form was received.

Note: The Final Report contains a publicity section. If your girls are interested in having their project added to a list of possible projects to be promoted within the Girl Scout Community (via the Golden Link, Highest Awards Yearbook, etc) and/or to the public (via social media, media releases, etc), then they must fill out this section approving the corresponding promotion level/s (parent signatures are required on the Final Report for this reason).

Approving publicity does not guarantee that a project will be chosen for promotion. Silver Award projects are chosen for promotion based on a variety of criteria and promotional opportunities are limited. Girls can submit their project to be included in the Golden Link Scrapbook by sending their project details to communications@sjgs.org.

Congratulations! The submission of your girl's Final Report is complete!

The F-486 Girl Scout Silver Award Final Report via Jotform is due no later than **September 30** of the year a girl completes 8th grade (i.e. the fall of a girl's 9th grade year). This is a GSUSA deadline and exceptions cannot be made except in extreme circumstances. We strongly do not recommend girls waiting until September 30 to submit their final reports. If there are any issues with the paperwork, then they risk not being able to earn their Silver Award.

Once a girl has submitted her Final Report, she will receive approval or feedback from the Silver Award Committee within three weeks (email subject line: "Silver Award Final Report Approval" or "Silver Award Final Report Feedback"). Girls should plan this time into their celebration timeline since the Silver Award Committee is not able to expedite project reviews on request or guarantee approval upon first submission.

If a girl does not receive a response from the Silver Award Committee within three weeks, she can follow up with an email to silveraward@sjgs.org. Please do not resubmit the Final Report through Jotform unless asked by the Silver Award Committee.

After the Silver Award Committee has reviewed a girl's Final Report, an email response will be sent to the email addresses listed on the Final Report (girl, parent, Adult Girl Scout Volunteer Supervisor, and Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader). The girl's Final Report will either be approved, or the Silver Award Committee will ask for additional information and/or for revisions to help the project meet Silver Award guidelines. Receiving feedback at the Final Report stage most often (but not exclusively) occurs when girls:

- do not submit a budget that lists both income and expenses that equal zero,
- in a Project Team do not submit individual time logs that demonstrate individual leadership hours,
- complete a project that does not match their approved Project Proposal,
- do not complete the required number of 50 hours per girl in a project, or
- do not properly complete all form fields.

Girls receiving feedback and their supervising adults should read the feedback carefully and incorporate it into their next submission. Please note that most resubmissions will be made through a supplemental Auxiliary Form (link provided in the feedback email), rather than through resubmission of the Final Report. Most projects are approved on the first or second submission. Once a girl's Final Report is approved, it's time to celebrate!

What comes next?

Suggest giving thanks.

Encourage Girl Scouts to thank everyone who has helped along the way. A hand-written note or an email with a project photo means a lot.

Celebrate, Girl Scout–Style!

Check with your council to see if/how they recognize the Silver Award. And remember, you can always plan a celebration with your troop!

Here are a few ideas:

- Host a special troop pinning party. Be sure to invite friends, families, younger troops, and local dignitaries.
- If your troop is bridging to Seniors, pin your Silver Award Girl Scouts as part of your ceremony.
- Share the news with your local newspaper by submitting photos and an article on all the projects completed.
- Tell your story via social media outlets.
- Mark this accomplishment with additional Silver Award mementos, available at your local Girl Scout store or online at girlscoutshop.com.

Check with your local council for how they recommend celebrating this accomplishment!



Celebrate!

Once a girl's Final Report has been approved, she will receive a congratulatory letter via email. Present this letter at our local Girl Scout Center Shop to purchase the girl's Silver Award pin. Complimentary Silver Award certificates for each Silver Award Girl Scout are mailed to the Girl Scout Troop/Group Leader listed on the Final Report. These certificates are printed and mailed on a quarterly basis. Please note that Council is not able to fill certificate requests outside this timeline.

Don't forget to celebrate your girl's Silver Award achievement! You can host a celebration as a troop or attend a Community or Region recognition event. Contact your local Community Service Team (CST) and/or Region Service Team (RST) to see what plans are already in place for celebrating Silver Awardees in your local area.

GSSJC hosts an annual Council-wide Silver Award Celebration for all Silver Award Girl Scouts who earn their award between October 1 and September 30 each year. Be on the lookout on the Highest Awards Online Community or more information about this event!

Finally, did you know Silver Award Girl Scouts are invited to attend Gold Award Ceremony at a discounted rate? Bring your girls to this extraordinary event and watch as they become inspired to Go Gold! In addition to having the opportunity to be inspired by the year's Gold Award Girl Scouts and their incredible projects, Silver Award Girl Scouts will have the opportunity to stand and be recognized during the ceremony as well as participate in the "I was Inspired by a Gold Award Girl Scout" patch program.

To learn more about how to celebrate your girl's Silver Award achievement, visit the Highest Awards Online Community.



Congratulations to your girl for earning her Silver Award! Did you know that she is already on her way to Going Gold? The Gold Award is the Highest Award that Girl Scout Seniors or Ambassadors can earn and the Highest Award in Girl Scouting. Gold Award Girl Scouts have unique, impactful experiences and stories to share with the world. Earning a Gold Award prepares girls to excel in whatever comes next: as a student in college, a working professional, and a proactive leader of their community. Plus, in recognition of their significant leadership skills, Gold Award Girl Scouts can earn college scholarships and skip a paygrade when enlisting in the military. Learn more about the Gold Award at GSSJC by visiting our Gold Award webpage and the Highest Awards Online Community.

Girl Scouts Gold Award:

- Eligibility: Senior or Ambassador Girl Scouts (grades 9–12)
- Prerequisites: Girls who earned their Silver Award must complete one Senior or Ambassador Journey, including the Journey's Take Action Project (Note: girls who do not earn the Silver Award must complete two Senior or Ambassador Journeys.) Complete GSSJC's Gold Award Orientation. Learn more about how to sign up for Gold Award Orientation on the Highest Awards Online Community.

Learn more at girlscouts.org/gold.

Let Cadettes know the Gold Award is the highest award in Girl Scouting and the preeminent leadership award for high school Girl Scouts. Gold Award Girl Scouts have unique, impactful experiences and stories to share with the world. Earning a Gold Award prepares them to excel in whatever comes next: as a student in college, a working professional, and a proactive member of their community. Plus, in recognition of their significant leadership skills, Gold Award Girl Scouts can earn college scholarships, and they skip a paygrade when enlisting in the military.

Did You Know?
Gold Award Girl Scouts are widely recognized as leaders who make the world a better place.

Appendix

Girl Scout Silver Award Checklist

Check items off your list once you have completed them. When you've checked off all the items from each section and received approval from your troop leader or council, you're ready for the next section!

Prerequisite

- ☐ I am a registered Girl Scout Cadette (in grades 6–8).
- ☐ I have finished a Cadette Journey, including the Journey's Take Action project.
- ☐ I know that I need to finish my project and submit paperwork by Sept 30th after 8th grade is completed.
- ☐ I know the Silver Award **Take Action** project's required elements are 1. Practicing **leadership**; 2. Addressing a **root cause** of a community issue I care about; and 3. Creating a plan to make my project **sustainable**.
- ☐ I have completed Silver Award training from my council. (This is highly recommended if available.)
- ☐ I have reviewed the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*.
- ☐ I am excited to get started!

Project Proposal

- ☐ I developed a title for my project.
- ☐ I provided information about myself (solo model) or myself and up to three other Cadettes (small team model) and additional adult resources.
- ☐ I provided the name of the completed Cadette Journey and completion date.
- ☐ I answered the Journey reflection questions to remember the lessons learned from the Journey's Take Action project.
- ☐ I decided my project's expected start date and expected completion date.
- ☐ I researched an issue I am passionate about and identified at least one **root cause** that is based on a need in my community.
- ☐ I have identified my target audience (who is going to benefit).
- ☐ I have identified and engaged experts and others in my community who might be able to help with my project or have knowledge of how my project issue affects my community.
- ☐ I have described my plan to address my issue's root cause and make my project **sustainable** by using one of these three methods:
 - ☐ Create a permanent solution that can be used after the project is complete.
 - ☐ Educate and inspire others in the community or within Girl Scouts to be part of the change.
 - ☐ Advocate to change a rule, regulation, or law and encourage others to join.
- ☐ I have worked with my team (if applicable) to identify all team members' **leadership** roles, which are all different and will each take approximately 50 hours of work.
- ☐ I have reviewed my plan and confirm my project is Take Action and not Community Service.
- ☐ I have listed potential supplies needed and estimated costs.
- ☐ I am aware of my local council's requirements for any of my project's donations, money-earning activities, or the use of troop funds.
- ☐ I am aware that each individual team member should spend approximately 50 hours on the project and maintain a Time Log.
- ☐ *Optional: I've identified how I would try to make my project measurable by making a goal to measure the project's success.*
- ☐ *Optional: I've identified how I would try to make a national and/or global link.*
- ☐ I have worked with my team (if applicable) to complete all fields on this form, including all questions, lines, and signatures.
- ☐ I have worked with my team (if applicable) to develop and submit one Project Proposal.

Girl Scout Silver Award Checklist

Check items off your list once you have completed them. When you've checked off all the items from each section and received approval from your troop leader or council, you're ready for the next section!

Final Report

- ☐ I have updated my Project Proposal responses, sharing my project results—including what I did, how my project went, and what my team (if applicable) and I accomplished (Section 1).
- ☐ I have submitted a Budget Worksheet,* which has a record of the funds raised (donations, money earned, and troop funds) and spent, including how they were spent. I've also provided any additional council-required documentation related to money-earning activities (Section 1).
- ☐ I have identified how I let others know about my project and the impact it had (Section 2).
- ☐ I have provided copies of photos, videos, flyers, or other evidence that documents what was accomplished (Section 2).
- ☐ I have submitted a Time Log* of my hours. Each Cadette should spend approximately 50 hours working towards the Silver Award (Section 3).
- ☐ I have included my reflection on this experience and how it has prepared me to pursue the Gold Award (Section 3).
- ☐ I have worked with my team (if applicable) to complete all fields on this form, including all questions, lines, and signatures.
- ☐ I have worked with my team (if applicable) to submit one Final Report, which includes individual sections that each team member completed on their own.
- ☐ I have submitted the Final Report no later than September 30 after finishing 8th grade.

*Other formats are acceptable for Time Log and Budget Worksheet

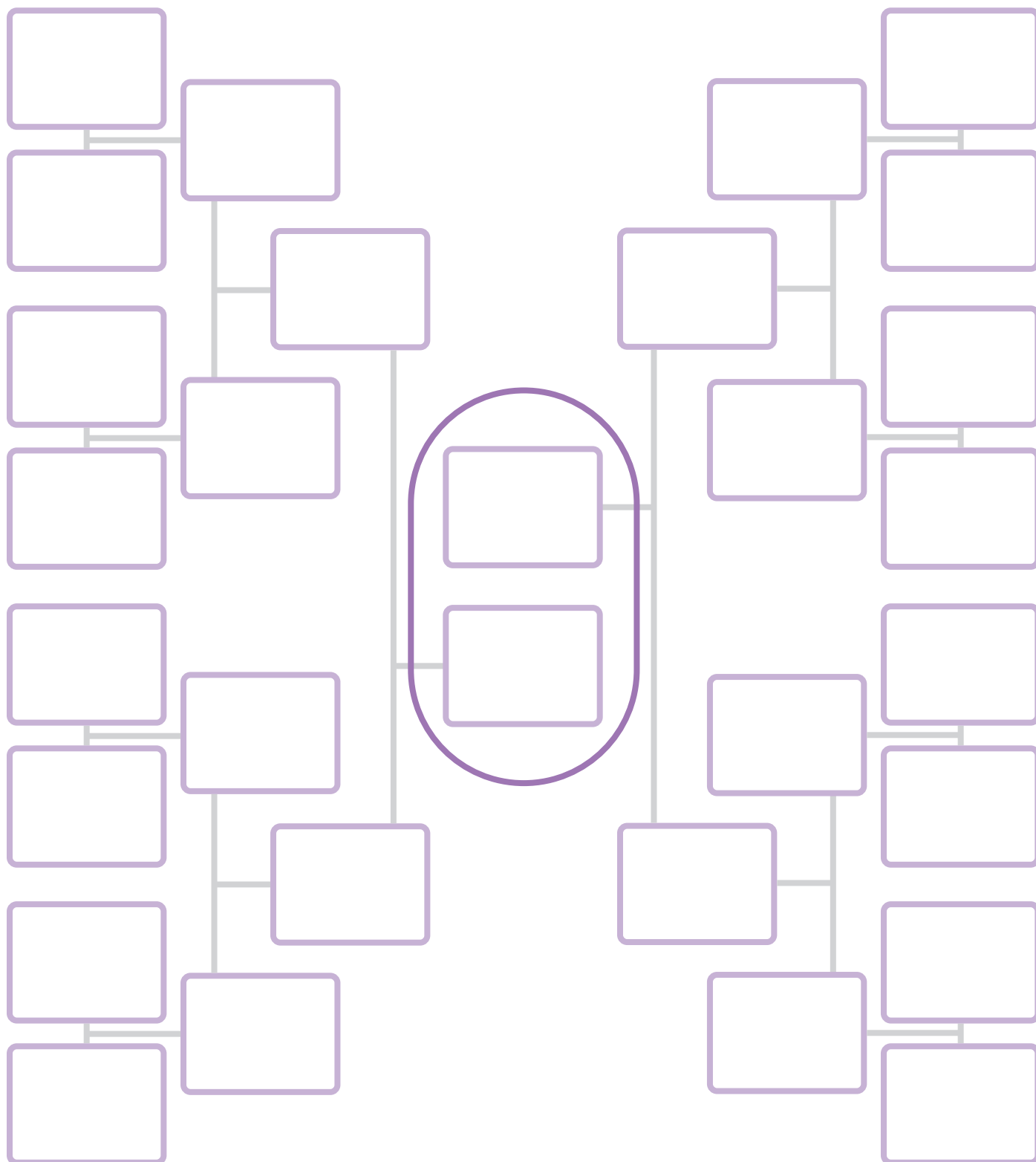


Take Action Project Decision Bracket

What are your talents and skills?
What did you do for fun?

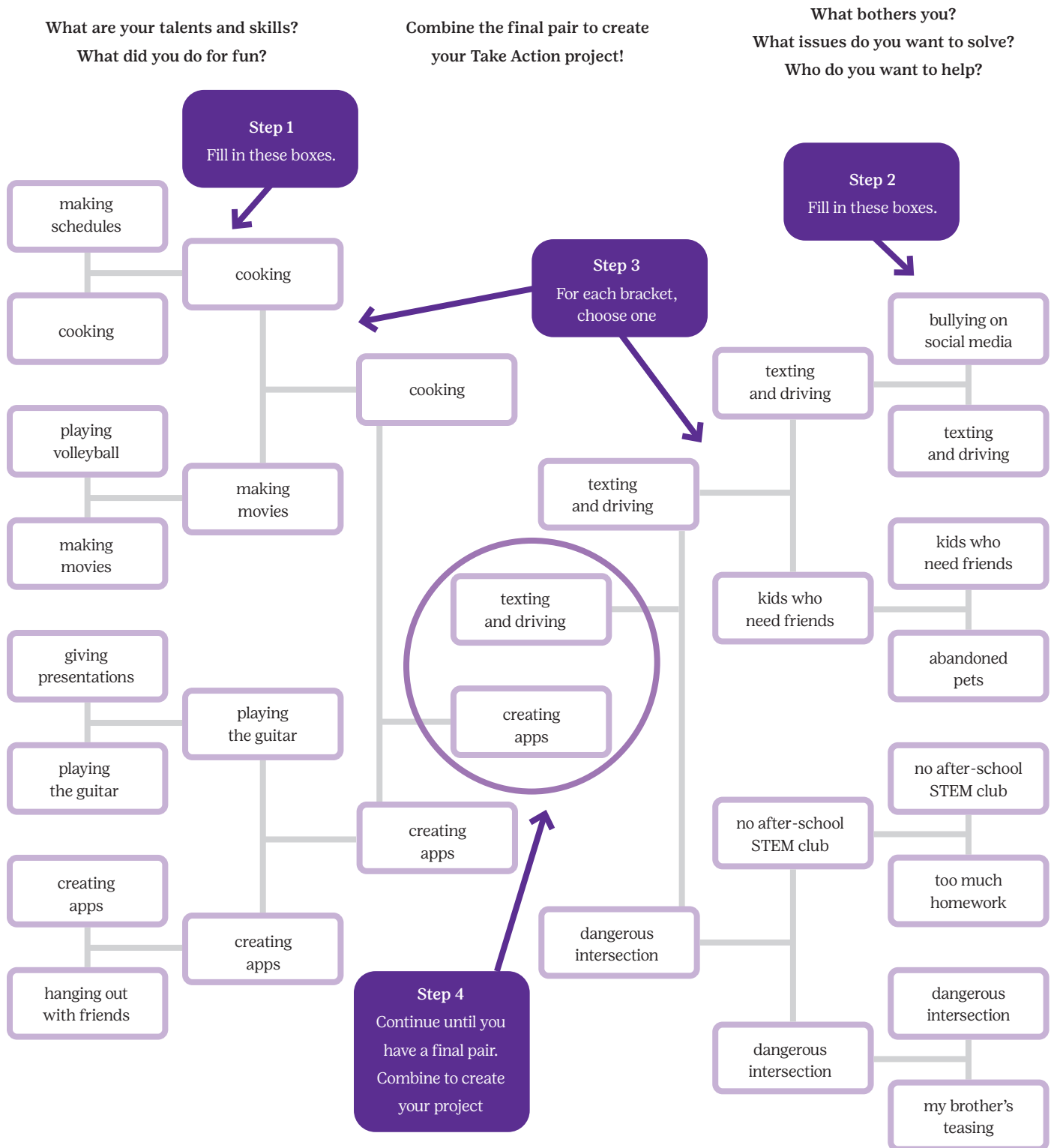
Combine the final pair to create
your Take Action project!

What bothers you?
What issues do you want to solve?
Who do you want to help?



Take Action Project Decision Bracket

In this example, your Take Action project might be to create an app that locks your phone before you drive, then sends a unique code to someone who's not in the car. You can't use your phone until the person with the code unlocks it.



Mind Mapping Diagram

**Step 1:
Write your
community issue.**

(Place the answer in the inner circle.)

**Step 2:
Ask: “What activates
the issue?”
Then, explore further.**

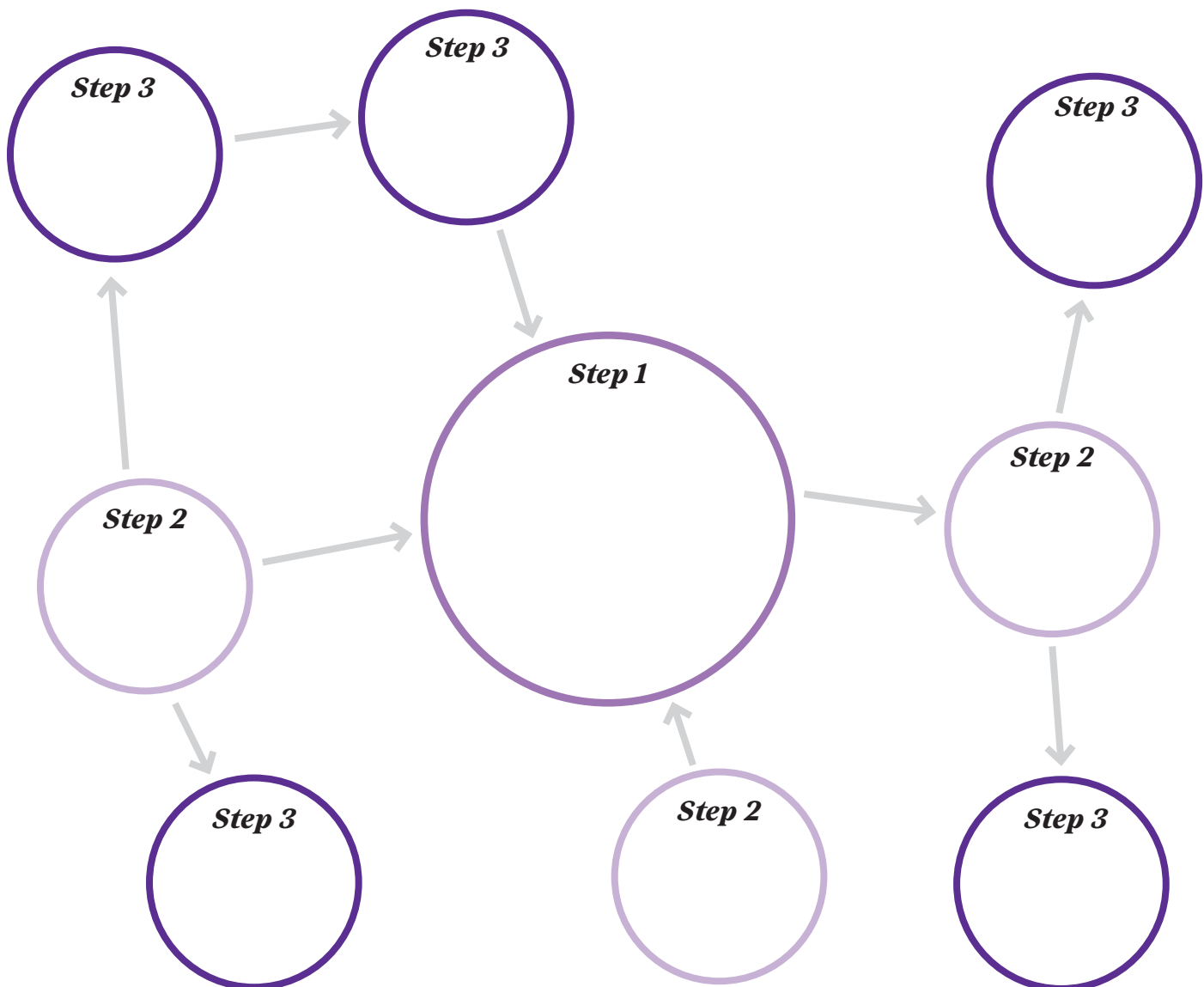
(Place answers in circles just
outside the community issue.)

**Step 3:
To find the root cause,
ask: “Why does this
happen?”**

(Place answers in outer circles.)

Try it!

Write your community issue in the center circle. Ask yourself: What activates the issue? Write your answers in the circles closest to the center circle (add more if you need to). Then, explore further. Ask: “Why does this happen?” Place these answers in the smaller outer circles. Add as many of these circles as you like. These are your root causes. Select one or two root causes and you have the foundation of a strong Silver Award Take Action project! See an example in the *Cadette Workbook for Earning Your Silver Award*.



Guidance for Girl Scouts Engaging with Project Advisors

At Girl Scouts, there is nothing we take more seriously than the safety and well-being of our Girl Scouts. The structure of the national Highest Awards is designed to give Girl Scouts the framework and platform to address a community need and expand their network in appropriate ways for each respective grade level.

As part of each of the Highest Awards, Girl Scouts may identify, connect with, and request support from a project advisor. A project advisor is an adult who has some level of knowledge, demonstrated skills, expertise, or access to resources that can help Girl Scouts with their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award projects. A project advisor is optional for the Bronze and Silver Award and required for the Gold Award.

The Highest Awards structure encourages Girl Scouts to expand their network beyond their familiar circles, learn to describe their passions and plans to others, and grow their networks. To help Girl Scout members do so safely, please consider the following guidance and recommendations:

Silver Award (Cadette Girl Scouts):

- It's highly recommended that all project advisors successfully pass a criminal background check performed by the Girl Scout Council or other credible entity, such as a public school system.
- At least one registered background-checked adult Girl Scout volunteer should be present at all in-person meetings between Girl Scouts and project advisors.
- Meetings among Girl Scouts and project advisors should take place in open public spaces (such as libraries, parks, or cafés); meetings should not be held in private homes.
- Parents/legal guardians and troop leaders are recommended to help, guide, and closely support Cadette Girl Scouts as they consider who to approach to become a project advisor. They are also recommended to join any phone calls and be included (i.e. CC'd) on written and electronic communication.
- We recommend that a separate and dedicated email is created and used with project advisors or any other adult project team members, and that one designated adult troop volunteer receives emails to eliminate direct communication with Girl Scouts. An example email address is troop12345highawardproject@example.com. This is a versatile address that can be used for Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award projects! We recommend retiring the email address once the projects are complete.
- There should be no exchange of personal phone numbers belonging to Girl Scouts between the project advisor and Girl Scout members. We recommend the project advisor be provided with a phone number for one designated adult troop volunteer; all other communication should be conducted in person, virtually (e.g., Zoom), or via email.

