

Girl Scout Safety Guidelines

Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls, and we demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these standards at all times. (**Note:** See *Volunteer Essentials* for details on each standard.)

- 1. Follow the Safety Activity Checkpoints.** Instructions for staying safe while participating in activities are detailed in the Safety Activity Checkpoints. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls (as grade-level appropriate) before engaging in activities with girls.
- 2. Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls.** Each Pathway Leadership team must have at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary, depending on the size of the group and the ages and abilities of girls. Pathway Leadership team volunteers must be at least 18 years old (or the age of majority defined by the state, if it is older than 18) and must be screened by your council before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female.
- 3. Get parent/guardian permission.** When an activity takes place that is outside the regularly scheduled time and site, advise each parent/guardian of the details of the activity and obtain permission for girls to participate.
- 4. Report abuse.** Sexual advances, improper touching, and sexual activity of any kind with girl members are forbidden. Physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. Follow your council's guidelines for reporting concerns about abuse or neglect that may be occurring inside or outside of Girl Scouting.
- 5. Be prepared for emergencies.** Work with girls and other adults to establish and practice procedures for emergencies related to weather, fire, lost girls/adults, and site security. Always keep handy a well-stocked first-aid kit, girl health histories, and contact information for girls' families.
- 6. Travel safely.** When transporting girls to planned Girl Scout field trips and other activities that are outside the regularly scheduled time and site, every driver must be an adult volunteer and have a good driving record, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears her seat belt at all times, and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.
- 7. Ensure safe overnight outings.** Prepare girls to be away from home by involving them in planning, so they know what to expect. On trips where male volunteers are part of the group, it is not appropriate for them to sleep in the same space as girl and female adult members. Men may participate only if separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use. During family or parent-daughter overnights, one family unit may sleep in the same sleeping quarters in program areas. When parents are staffing events, daughters should remain in quarters with other girls rather than in staff areas.
- 8. Role-model the right behavior.** Never use illegal drugs. Don't consume alcohol, smoke, or use foul language in the presence of girls. Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls unless given special permission by your council for group marksmanship activities.
- 9. Create an emotionally safe space.** Adults are responsible for making Girl Scouting a place where girls are as safe emotionally as they are physically. Protect the emotional safety of girls by creating a team agreement and coaching girls to honor it. Agreements typically encourage behaviors like respecting a diversity of feelings and opinions; resolving conflicts constructively; and avoiding physical and verbal bullying, clique behavior, and discrimination.
- 10. Ensure that no girl is treated differently.** Girl Scouts welcome all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, helping plan, and carrying out activities, carefully consider the needs of all girls involved, including school schedules, family needs, financial constraints, religious holidays, and the accessibility of appropriate transportation and meeting places.
- 11. Promote online safety.** Instruct girls never to put their full names or contact information online, engage in virtual conversation with strangers, or arrange in-person meetings with online contacts. On group Web sites, publish girls' first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge (at www.girlscouts.org/help/internet_safety_pledge.asp) and have them commit to it.
- 12. Keep girls safe during money-earning activities.** Girl Scout cookies and other council-sponsored product sales are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes, and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout-approved product sales and efforts.