

Silver Lining

Texas Department of Aging and Disabilities Services (DADS) and GSSJC



OVERVIEW

Silver Lining is a partnership between Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Girl Scout councils in Texas. Girl Scout troops are connected with a nursing home or assisted living facility in their area. The troop commits to visiting the facility at least four times in a year. When a Girl Scout troop participates in Silver Lining, they improve the quality of life for the residents of nursing homes and they also make friends.

GOAL

The goal of the Silver Lining Patch program is to increase connections through new friendships and increase positive changes for people living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and state supported living centers. Many residents of long-term care facilities are away from family and friends and often don't receive many visitors. By taking a little time, girls can bring a sense of community and companionship and make life a little happier for residents.

CRITERIA

1. Any Girl Scout troop may participate. Girl Scouts of all ages are welcome.
2. The troop selects a nursing home, assisted living, or adult day care and contacts the activity director. If you need help funding a facility, contact the DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement (VCE) office by calling 512-438-3057 or 1-800-889-8595. A VCE staff member can help you to search for a nursing home or assisted living facility in your area.

3. The Girl Scout troop, or any Individually Registered Scout and an adult, makes a one-year commitment to visit at least four (4) times a year.

4. Once they visit four times, girls write a short story about what you have learned, and then earn the patch!

TIPS TO GET STARTED

Contact the Activity Director at the facility. You may need to contact more than one facility to accommodate your group. The facility may or may not be aware of the Silver Linings Program, but they will almost certainly appreciate the interest the girls or troop has in interacting with their residents.

Tell them about your troop—number of girls, ages, interests, other projects they have done etc. Ask the director about the facility- How many residents make their home there? How many residents participate in activities? Do they have favorite activities? Does the facility have any age requirements for volunteering? What time of day is best for volunteering? Ask if the facility has any volunteer activities that they need help with—crafts, sing-a-longs, game night etc. Explain the types of activities your troop would like to do and ask if it is something, their residents would enjoy. Could the Activity Director to provide a facility tour prior to the first visit? Does the facility have the supplies for the activity, or will your group need to provide them? What is the best way to contact the Activity Director? (email/phone) Is there a preferable time of day to contact them?

ACTIVITY IDEAS

There are many ways your troop can get involved with the residents of a facility. To help guide your efforts, check with the facility's activity director to discuss residents needs and ask their guidance in coordinating the activity.

Here are some projects to start your ideas:

- Make and deliver Valentine's Day cards
- Plan a day of service based on the facility needs provided by the activity director
- Spend one-on-one time with residents
- Help decorate for holidays and special occasions
- Lead a sing-along
- Perform skits
- Play board games or put puzzles together
- Send all residents hand-made birthday and holiday cards
- Plant flowers or butterfly gardens outside residents' windows
- Start a quilting or knitting group
- Record residents' histories (audio or written)
- Host a dance

- Read with residents
- Help write letters
- Invite a resident to teach a craft or a song
- Go caroling in the hallways or lobby
- Make “Welcome” cards or signs for new residents
- Make or decorate picture frames for residents to display their favorite pictures
- Plan and perform a puppet show for the residents
- Make seasonal door wreaths for residents’ doors
- Host an art group so residents can draw or paint
- Read aloud stories or poems
- Create or maintain residents’ libraries
- Help with sewing projects
- Perform a show for the residents with actors and sound effects
- Host a Bingo game or help with current ones

You may add your own ideas, too!

PATCHES

Thanks to a generous grant from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, girls can receive these patches at no cost. Troop Leaders or Parents/Guardians can request to pick up patches from the Girl Scout Center in Houston. To request your patches, please send an email to GSCommServ@sjgs.org with the names of the girls who have completed the requirements. Patches must be picked up from the Council office at 3110 Southwest Freeway, 77098. Unfortunately, we are unable to mail them directly to the participants. For outlying areas, we can make arrangements for a council staff member to pick up the patches from the main office and bring them to the outlying area satellite offices for you to pick up there, but please allow additional time to coordinate.

