Managing Emergency Situations and CPR/First Aid

What To Do If There is an Accident

Although you hope the worst never happens, you must observe council procedures for handling accidents and fatalities. At the scene of an accident, first provide all possible care for the sick or injured person and contact emergency services. Girl Scouts—Dakota Horizons requires notification as soon as possible by calling your District Director. The District Director will be able to assist with any questions and concerns you may have. Find your District’s Emergency Contact Information and Procedure Card at http://www.gsdakotahorizons.org/forms. This information provides you with a step-by-step check list of actions you will need to take in the event of an emergency. This procedure should be followed for all emergencies requiring additional medical assistance. If media is present, do not make any comments and refer them to the Chief Officer of Communications and Strategy.

After receiving a report of an accident, council staff will immediately arrange for additional assistance at the scene, if needed, and will notify parents/guardians, as appropriate. If a child needs emergency medical care as the result of an accident or injury, first contact emergency medical service, and then follow council procedures for accidents and incidents. Your adherence to these procedures is critical, especially with regard to notifying parents or guardians. If the media is involved, let council-designated staff discuss the incident with these representatives.

In the event of a fatality or other serious accident, notify the police. A responsible adult must remain at the scene at all times. In the case of a fatality, do not disturb the victim or surroundings. Follow police instructions. Do not share information about the accident with anyone but the police, your council and, if applicable, insurance representatives or legal counsel.

Providing Emergency Care

As you know, emergencies can happen. Girls need to receive proper instruction on how to care for themselves and others in emergencies. They also need to learn the importance of reporting to adults any accidents, illnesses or unusual behaviors during Girl Scout activities. You can help girls by keeping in mind the following:

- Know what to report. See the “What To Do If There is an Accident” section above.
- Establish and practice procedures for weather emergencies. Know the type of extreme weather to expect in your area (e.g. tornadoes, hurricanes and lightning). Please consult with your council for the most relevant information for you to share with girls.
- Establish and practice procedures for such circumstances as fire evacuation, lost persons and building-security issues. Every girl and adult must know how to act in these situations. For example, you and the girls, with the help of a fire department representative, should design a fire evacuation plan for meeting places used by the group.
- Assemble a well-stocked first-aid kit that is always accessible. First-aid administered in the first few minutes can make a significant difference in the severity of an injury. In an emergency, secure professional medical assistance as soon as possible, normally by calling 911, and then administer first aid, if appropriately trained.
**First-Aid/CPR**
Emergencies require prompt action and quick judgment. For many activities, Girl Scouts recommends that at least one adult volunteer be first-aid/CPR-certified. For that reason, if you have the opportunity to get trained in council-approved first-aid/CPR, do it! You can take advantage of first-aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association or other sponsoring organizations approved by your council.

**Caution:** First-aid/CPR training that is available entirely online does not satisfy Girl Scouts’ requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique. If you’re taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or any course that has online components, get approval from your support team or council prior to enrolling in the course.

**First-Aider**
A first-aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout-approved first-aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR. If, through the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America or American Heart Association, you have a chance to be fully trained in first-aid and CPR, doing so may make your activity planning go more smoothly.

The Safety Activity Checkpoints always tells you when a first-aider needs to be present. Since activities can take place in a variety of locations, the presence of a first-aider and the qualifications they need to have are based on the remoteness of the activity. For example, if you take a two-mile hike in an area that has cell phone reception and service along the entire route and EMS (Emergency Medical Services) is no more than 30 minutes away at all times the first-aider will not need to have knowledge of wilderness first aid. If, on the other hand, you take the same two-mile hike in a more remote area with no cell phone service and where EMS is more than 30 minutes away, the first-aider must have knowledge of wilderness first aid (see the chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to EMS</th>
<th>Minimum Level of First Aid Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 minutes</td>
<td>First Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 30 minutes</td>
<td>Wilderness First Aid (WFA) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR)*</td>
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*Although a WFR is not required, it is strongly recommended when traveling with groups in areas that are greater than 30 minutes from EMS.*

It is important to understand the differences between a first-aid course, and a wilderness-rated course. Although standard first-aid training provides basic incident response, wilderness-rated courses include training on remote-assessment skills as well as emergency first-aid response including evacuation techniques, to use when EMS is not readily available.

**Note:** The presence of a first-aider is required at resident camp. For large events there should be one first-aider for every 200 participants. The following healthcare providers may also serve as first-aiders: physician, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, paramedic, military medic and emergency medical technician.

**First-Aid Kit**
Make sure a general first-aid kit is available at your group meeting place and accompanies girls on any activity (including transportation to and from the activity). Please be aware that you may need to provide this kit if one is not available at your meeting place. You may purchase a Girl Scout first-aid kit, buy a commercial kit or you and the girls can assemble a kit yourselves. The Red Cross offers a list of potential items in its Anatomy of a First Aid Kit (note that the Red Cross’s suggested list includes aspirin, which you will not be at liberty to give to girls without direct parent/guardian permission). You can also customize a kit to cover your specific needs, including flares, treatments for frostbite or snake bites and the like.

In addition to standard materials, all kits should contain your council and emergency telephone numbers (which you can get from your council contact). Girl Scout activity insurance forms, parent consent forms and health histories may also be included.