

Service Unit Event Planning Checklist

Volunteer event planners can use this checklist as a guide through planning and implementing a service unit event. Additional resources can be found at gsdakotahorizons.org under [Service Unit Resources](#).

What	Details	Resource
Event Creation		
Brainstorm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a good feel for how you want your event to look. • Gather inspiration from girl input and surveys, community program partners and interested facilitators/presenters. • Ask yourself what the girls are looking for in an event? What type of event is needed in your area for the girls? 	
Planning Considerations	<p>Girl Scout programming revolves around the 4 Pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM • Outdoors • Life Skills • Entrepreneurship, <p>and must meet at least one of the five outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a strong sense of self, • display positive values, • seek challenges and learn from setbacks, • form and maintain healthy relationships, • and/or learn to identify and solve problems in her community. <p>Be sure to check Safety Activity Checkpoints & Volunteer Essentials and review the activities being done at the event to see what safety measures and ratios need to be met. If there is not a Safety Activity Checkpoint for an activity, contact the Girl Experience Manager.</p>	<p>TIP: Use the Award and Badge Explorer to view the badges and awards available for each grade level or by topic.</p> <p>Volunteer Essentials</p> <p>Safety Activity Checkpoints</p>
Create a Basic Event Outline	<p>This outline should include a schedule, supply list, and information that will help you build your budget - like presenter or location fees, etc. You can change or add details later.</p> <p>Considerations: Travel time between activities, time to complete activities for age of girls, designate volunteers to specific jobs, and arrange these ahead of time with the volunteers.</p>	<p>Event Outline Template</p> <p>Camp Outline Template</p>
Create a Budget	<p>Use the current Service Unit Event Budget template on our website. Instructions on how to use the template are within the workbook.</p>	<p>Event Planning Budget Template</p>
Submit Completed Budget to Council	<p>This can be submitted to your local Troop Engagement Specialist. For events that are open to all areas, GSDH will assist in the marketing and promotion of your program opportunity to a wider audience. For events only open to specific service units, GSDH can ensure compliance and consistency in the use of GSUSA/GSDH graphics.</p>	
Event Logistics	<p>Determine where your event will be located, what date it will be held and the timeline. Recommendation: Check the school, city/community and council calendars to determine when you may get the most participation.</p>	

Event Flyer Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service unit events that are open to girls throughout the council and advertised on the GSDH website, must have their flyers created by council for consistent branding. Allow 3 weeks for flyers to be created. • Submit the Service Unit Event Budget template to your Troop Engagement Specialist so they can use it to request flyer creation. • Service unit events that are open to only girls in their service unit, may create a flyer without council approval using the Girl Scout Branding 101 information found on our website. • If desired, council will create the flyer (allow 3 weeks). 	Girl Scout Branding 101
Event Development		
Contracts	If Applicable: Check with your local Troop Engagement Specialist on what signatures are required for a contract.	
Create a Confirmation Letter/Email	<p>Create your confirmation letter/email with the details of your event. Please blind carbon copy your Troop Engagement Specialist.</p> <p>Important information to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Name & date • Physical address for drop-off and pickup & applicable details (where to park, enter building, etc.) • Check in time • Program Beginning time • Program Ending time • Shop-in-a-box available • Who to contact with special considerations (allergies, activity restrictions, dietary, etc...) • Items to bring • Items not to bring • Participant Substitution allowed/not allowed • Tag-a-longs (unregistered participants i.e. siblings) allowed/not allowed • Day of event contact • Photo will be taken at this event. If you prefer to opt out of photograph publication and use, please contact me. • Weather/Event Cancellation Info • Forms required <p>Note: The Health and Permission Form needs to be collected by the event coordinator when an event includes an overnight, travel, is a camp, has activities with an increased risk of injury, or as designated by the event coordinator. In all other cases, the Health and Permission Form must be held by the volunteer that is chaperoning. If no chaperone is present, the form must be provided at check in to the event coordinator.</p>	Health & Permission Form
Choose or design an Event Patch (if applicable)	<p>Stock patches can be ordered from any vendor.</p> <p>Custom patches must follow the Girl Scout Branding 101 information located on our website. Please remember that you must go to a Girl Scout licensed vendor to have any materials produced that you are reselling (including troop or service unit t-shirts) or giving away at a fee-based event.</p> <p>TIP: You can create and get your patch approved ahead of time so that when it comes time to order, everything is ready to go. Most patches take 3 weeks to print and mail out. Be sure to check if there is a minimum quantity to meet and custom patches are generally more expensive than stock patches.</p>	Girl Scout Branding 101

Event Promotion	<p>There are many ways to promote events. Some options work better at different times and for different target audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events open to the entire council: Promote locally using the suggestions in the service unit only section below. Council will post the event to our online events listing and include in communications to members. Consult with your Troop Engagement Specialist about additional options such as staff sharing event information to other SU Facebook pages. • For events that are within the service unit only: You could advertise on the service unit Facebook page, create a Facebook event, send emails, make phone calls to troop volunteers or parents, or talk about/distribute information at the service unit meetings/events. Consult with your service unit manager to determine the best way to market the event to service unit members. 	Girl Scout Branding 101
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4-5 Weeks Prior to the Event

Check Program Numbers	<p>Look at how many you have registered for your program. Things to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are at max, can you accommodate more? • If your numbers are low, figure out what kind of event promotion to do? See event promotion section above for ideas. 	
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After the Event Closes

Program Roster	<p>Put together a roster of all girls and adults registered for the program.</p> <p>TIP: You can include all information for a quick glance guide for yourself. This may include emergency contact, pickup person, t-shirt size, special needs, photo permission, any forms needed.</p>	
Confirm Location	<p>If applicable: Make sure that everything is in order for the event location, and a number where you can get a hold of someone day of event.</p>	
Confirm Presenters	<p>If applicable: Time to be there, location, number where they can reach you and you can reach them day of event, program supplies/equipment, event numbers, review payment agreement, etc.</p>	
Review/Revise Event Outline	<p>Make sure everything is set, so you can order supplies based on the number of attendees.</p>	
Order Supplies	<p>If applicable: Online/special purchases need to be made early, to have plenty of time for shipping.</p> <p>If you are purchasing items from the Girl Scout Retail Store, please work with your local Retail Specialist to ensure enough inventory is on hand.</p>	
Order Patches	<p>If applicable: Get these in ASAP as most times they need 3 weeks for a custom patch order.</p>	

<p>Required Permissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Permission Release: Collect photo permission forms from attendees at check in or as part of your confirmation letter. • Outside Group: May require a separate release form to use images for their own marketing. • Waivers – Outside Groups may require a waiver to participate in a certain activity – be sure to include this in your confirmation materials. • Health & Permission Form: The Health and Permission Form includes emergency contact information and medicines that can/are to be dispensed. Medication, including over-the-counter products, must never be dispensed without prior written permission from a girl's custodial parent/guardian. Permission is obtained using the Health and Permission Form. Information disclosed should remain confidential and shared only with those as needed. • Sensitive Issues: Visit Volunteer Essentials for more information. If sensitive issues are going to be discussed, you will need parent permission. 	<p>Photo Permission Release Form</p> <p>Health & Permission Form</p> <p>Volunteer Essentials</p>
<p>Safety & Risk Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificates of Liability: Are often requested by the event location and they can be provided by your Troop Engagement Specialist. Allow one full business day to receive the certificate. Be sure to check the contract or ask the vendor if this is required to hold the event. • First Aid: Review Volunteer Essentials for details. • Safety Activity Checkpoints & Volunteer Essentials: Review the activities being done at the event to see what safety measures and ratios need to be met. If there is not a Safety Activity Checkpoint for an activity, contact the Girl Experience Manager. • Special Needs: Through the event registration form or the confirmation letter you may have special considerations you need to accommodate such as dietary needs, activity restriction, allergies, etc. GSDH events provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Requests should be made to the Service Unit at least two weeks in advance of the event. No Girl Scouts will be excluded from an activity on the basis of a disability-related accommodation request. Information disclosed should remain confidential and shared only with those as needed. • Overnights: Ensure the safety of sleeping areas – review the Camping SACs for more details, including provisions for adult males. 	<p>Volunteer Essentials</p> <p>Safety Activity Checkpoints</p>

Create a Healthcare Binder (if applicable)	<p>A Healthcare Binder is needed for overnights, travel and increase risk of injury activities. Be sure to share with your First Aider how the binder is organized and what information needs to be documented.</p> <p>Sections to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roster – A list of all girl and adult participants and notes that the camp first aider would need to know at a glance (i.e. food allergy) • Individual Participant (Camper) Info • Individual Participant Health & Permission Forms • Required Treatment Notification Forms (blank copies) <p>When you have given medication/administered treatment that is not scheduled, fill out this sheet to give to the parent/guardian at pick up so they know what was done. Keep a copy for your records.</p>	<p>Health & Permission Form</p> <p>First Aid Treatment Notification Form</p>
Find Extra Help	If the event requires more helpers, email event volunteers or PAs/CITs to help. If you need help finding people to volunteer, please contact your Service Unit Manager who can assist you with contacting local volunteers.	
10 Days Prior to the Event		
Send the Event Confirmation to Participants	Send out a confirmation (email/call/mail) to all participants to remind them of the event and what is needed. Make sure to include packing lists and additional forms if applicable.	
Confirm with Volunteers	Forward the Event Confirmation Letter to volunteers adding in any special things they need to know, such as how early to come and what job they may be doing.	
Week of the Event		
Supplies	Gather/sort all supplies needed and get organized for the event.	
Confirmations	If needed, contact location and presenters one last time.	
Purchasing	Purchase any last minute supplies, such as snacks or other perishable items.	
Check the Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the weather forecast and continue to monitor it if there is a chance of a weather event. For example, if it is supposed to be very hot and sunny – you may need to make adjustments to camp activities or purchase freezies to cool campers down. Or, if bad weather is in the forecast, you may need to make additional changes. • It doesn't hurt to send out an email to participants with weather related changes a few days prior to the event. Let them know how to look for weather cancellations or if they need to bring something extra like a hat and bandana. This can save you a lot of time with the amount of questions you can sometimes get and the parents/volunteers really appreciate it. • Safety First: Always know what the weather shelter and evacuation plans are at your event location. 	

Day of the Event		
Set Up Time	Depending on the amount of set up time needed, the Event Lead and any set up volunteers should arrive at the program location at least 1 1/2 hours prior to the event start time- one hour for set up and volunteer assignments and a half an hour for the check in time. Make sure to allow ample drive time in case of unforeseen circumstances like bad weather, site not unlocked, etc. TIP: You will always have attendees arrive early.	
Check In	During check in: Check in all girls and adults that attend. If you have any changes to the roster, note them. Changes may include: an unregistered participant, girls that register late, change in adult helpers, email and address changes.	
Event Start	It's nice to start all events with a welcome, introductions, a flag ceremony, the Girl Scout Promise and safety guidelines and rules.	
Capture the Event	During the event – take pictures and collect stories! If possible, post on social media. TIP: Assign a volunteer to do this job!	
Event Closing	Try to end the event with the following if time/space permits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program evaluation (done in a group or individually) • Friendship Circle • Announcements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank You for coming/helping. • What the girls earned. • Don't forget to take home: craft, gift bag, patch, etc. • What is coming up: Service Unit events, Council Events, etc. 	
After the Event		
Program Notes	After each event, make notes to yourself about the program so that you have a record of what you liked, didn't like, ideas, etc. This is helpful if you do the program again or if you share the program with other service units or council. You will want to complete this ASAP so you remember more. You can also add the notes from the evaluations you receive or comments/feedback you get from your follow up email.	
Submit the Service Unit Event Recap Form	Submitting a recap of your service unit event brings forward great ideas and best practices that can be shared across the council. This also allows GSDH to elevate service unit activity, record girls that have been served in Girl Scout Leadership Experience driven program opportunities, and use this information to support our mission when working with partner organizations such as United Ways and corporate sponsorships.	Event Recap Form
Funding	If the event was supported by a grant or United Way funding, check with your local Troop Engagement Specialist for any reporting needs.	
Thank You's	Take the time to send personal Thank You's - write/call/email the event locations, presenters, volunteers, etc.	
Clean Up	Make sure to leave places cleaner than you found them, return any borrowed materials, and return the Shop in a Box if applicable.	
Follow Up Email	After an event is over a follow up email to participants is a good idea. This is an opportunity to thank them, gather more feedback, promote your next event and share lost & found items if you have them.	
Event Media	Send photos and a short write up of the event to your Troop Engagement Specialist for an opportunity to share it on the council's social media channels. If media was present at your event, send a link to the coverage to your Troop Engagement Specialist.	