



Volunteer Mentor Guide



The Volunteer Mentor Role

Thank you for volunteering to mentor new troop co-leaders in your service unit. The volunteer mentor plays an important role in a new troop co-leader's first-year experience. Mentors are a resource and guide for new troop co-leaders as they get started and can offer guidance or even just a listening ear as a new troop co-leader navigates their first year. Mentors are not expected to know all the answers but are able to guide the new co-leader to the appropriate resources and staff members for more information as needed.

Purpose: The Service Unit (SU) Volunteer Mentor uses Girl Scout expertise to provide local support and guidance to new volunteers.

Term of Appointment: The SU Volunteer Mentor is appointed for a 1-year term that is renewable upon successful re-election by the service unit and adherence to Girl Scouts Dakota Horizons and GSUSA policies and procedures.

Requirements: All volunteers are required to be registered members, successfully pass a criminal background check, and follow the Girl Scout Promise and Law at all times. Excellent communication skills and good computer skills required. Previous Girl Scout experience and willingness to stay up to date on the Girl Scout materials and resources available is required for this role.

Responsibilities:

- Complete required training and expectations agreement.
- Facilitate a positive working relationship between council staff and the service unit.
- Participate as part of the service unit team and regularly attend service unit meetings.
- Welcome and connect new troop co-leaders to the service unit.
- Provide ongoing support to new volunteers throughout the Girl Scout year.
- Encourage and support the use of Girl Scout volunteer resources such as the Volunteer Toolkit and gsLearn.
- Maintain knowledge of GSDH policies and procedures.
- Regularly communicate with council staff regarding new leaders' experience.
- Follow Girl Scout branding guidelines.
- Ensure positive visibility and awareness of Girl Scouting in the community.

Training and Support:

- SU Manager and the Troop Engagement Specialist support SU Volunteer Mentor.
- Training and networking opportunities provided online and in person.
- Volunteer resource library and Volunteer Mentor Guide on our website.

Benefits:

- Make a difference in the lives of girls and be an integral part of the Girl Scout movement.
- Network and make friends with adult volunteers throughout the council and nationally.
- Build your resume and develop transferable leadership, business, and project management skills in a fun and supportive environment.

Volunteer Mentor Expectations

Extend a Warm Welcome into the Service Unit

As soon as you receive the new co-leader's contact information from the council or service unit, reach out to your mentee to introduce yourself and provide a warm and friendly welcome to the service unit! Be sure to invite them to the next service unit meeting. Share the ways the service unit communicates (email, Facebook, website, etc.).

Assist with Troop Start Up

As the new troop is getting started mentors can offer assistance with

- Holding the first family/parent meeting
- Holding the first troop meeting(s)
- Finding a meeting location
- Using the Volunteer Toolkit for meeting plans and resources
- Building a troop leadership team and recruiting parents to help

Monthly Check In's

Once you have made a connection with your mentee, discuss both of your preferred methods of communication. Phone calls? Texts? Email? Social media?

Decide how you will communicate and be sure the mentee has your preferred contact information as well. Consider meeting with your mentee in person or over a video call at least quarterly.

Below are some ideas of what topics you can check in with the new leader about each month.

- How are troop meetings going?
- Are they using the Volunteer Toolkit to plan and keep track of troop meetings?
- Do they have any questions about troop meeting management?
- How are communications between troop volunteers and troop families going?
- Have they scheduled any troop field trips? Do they need help with ideas?
- Are they aware of the upcoming council or service unit events? Do they know how to register?
- Be sure they know about the next service unit meeting and plan to attend.

Remember, you are not expected to know all the answers! If you are unsure or don't know the answer to a question, please refer them to the appropriate resources.

Member Services is available to help and is the best place for members to get answers fast!

Member Services

1-800-666-4141

help@gsdakotahorizons.org

FALL

Offer support with their first **Fall Product Program**.

- Ensure the new co-leader is aware of the fall product program and its benefits to their troop and girls.
- Ensure they have received fall sale training information from the Service Unit's Fall Product Manager. If the troop also has a Troop Fall Product Coordinator ensure they have received information about the training and be sure your service unit has both troop volunteer's contact information.
- Offer to meet them at training and sit together so they feel welcome.
- After training check-in with them to see if they have any questions.
- Check-in at least once during the sale.
- Offer assistance with finalizing sales in the fall product management system.

WINTER

Offer support with their first **Cookie Program**

- Introduce them to the Service Unit Cookie Manager. Be sure they know how to contact them.
- Ensure they receive Troop Cookie Program training info from the Service Unit Cookie Manager. If the troop also has a Troop Cookie Coordinator ensure they have received information about the training.
- Offer to meet them at training and sit with them.
- Offer assistance navigating eBudde.
- Offer guidance in signing up for council secured booths and setting up troop secured booths.
- Offer assistance with their Cookie Family meeting.
- Offer guidance with placing their troop's initial order.
- Check-in regularly throughout the sale.
- Offer assistance with the end-of-sale wrap-up.

SPRING

- **Spring renewal** - Encourage them to renew troop members in the spring so the troop will be ready to go in the fall.
- **Bridging** - If the troop is bridging to a new level, assist with learning about bridging awards and ceremonies. Share information about the Service Unit Recognition Event or Bridging ceremony.
- **Finance Report** - Do they need any help completing their troop financial report through the Volunteer Toolkit?
- **Camp** - Ask if they know about the camps available for their grade level girls and if they have any questions about camping with Girl Scouts.