

Just -in- Time

Knowing your Safety Responsibilities

Adult volunteers, caregivers, and the girls themselves share the responsibility for staying safe. The next three sections provide more details on everyone's responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Volunteer

Every adult in Girl Scouting is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of girls and we all demonstrate that by agreeing to follow these guidelines at all times.

- 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, caregivers and girls before engaging in activities.
- 2. Arrange for proper adult supervision of girls.** Your group must have at least two unrelated, approved adult volunteers present at all times, plus additional adult volunteers as necessary. Adult volunteers must be registered adult members, and successfully complete a background check screening before volunteering. At least one adult volunteer in every troop must be female. Review the [Adult to Girl Ratio Chart](#) for the minimum number of volunteers needed to supervise a specific number of girls.
- 3. Get caregiver permission.** When an activity takes place that is outside the normal time and place, advise each caregiver 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, as well as physical, verbal and emotional abuse of girls is strictly 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 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 normal time and place, every driver must be an approved adult volunteer and have a good driving record, valid license and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears their seat belt at all times and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats. Make sure to follow council processes to [request approval](#) for travel for 1 or more overnights.
- 7. Ensure safe overnight outings.** Prepare girls to be away from home by involving them in planning, so they know what to expect. Avoid having men sleep in the same space as girls and women. During family or caregiver-girl 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 welcomes all members, regardless of race, ethnicity, background, disability, family structure, religious beliefs and socioeconomic status. When scheduling, planning 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 websites, publish girls' first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#) and have them commit to it.
12. **Keep girls safe during money-earning activities,** including the fall product and cookie program. During Girl Scout product programs, adult volunteers are responsible for the safety of girls, money and products.

Responsibilities of Caregivers

You want to engage each caregiver to help you work toward ensuring the health, safety and well-being of girls. Clearly communicate to caregivers that they are expected to:

1. Complete an annual Health and Permission Form for their girl(s)
2. Provide permission for their girl(s) to participate in Girl Scouting as well as provide additional consent for activities that take place outside the scheduled meeting place. This can include such activities as: product programs, including Digital Cookie, overnight travel, the use of special equipment or sensitive issues.
3. Make provisions for their daughters to get to and from meeting places or other designated sites in a safe and timely manner, and inform you if someone other than a parent or guardian will drop off or pick up their child.
4. Provide their daughters with appropriate clothing and equipment for activities, or contact you before the activity to find sources for the necessary clothing and equipment.
5. Follow Girl Scout safety guidelines and encourage their girls to do the same.
6. Assist you in planning and carrying out program activities as safely as possible.
7. Participate in caregiver/family meetings.
8. Understand what appropriate behavior is for their daughters, as determined by the council and you.
9. Assist volunteers if their girls have special needs or abilities and their help is solicited.

Responsibilities of Girls

Girls who learn about and practice safe and healthy behaviors are likely to establish lifelong habits of safety consciousness. For that reason, each Girl Scout is expected to:

1. Assist you and other volunteers in safety planning.
2. Listen to and follow your instructions and suggestions.
3. Learn and practice safety skills.
4. Learn to “think safety” at all times and to be prepared.
5. Identify and evaluate an unsafe situation.
6. Know how, when and where to get help when needed.