Short & Snappy—Learning Opportunity for Volunteers

Girl-Led Troops and Girl-Led Progression

Girl-led simply means that girls are playing an active part in figuring out the “what, where, when, how and why” of their activities. This means girls are more engaged in playing a critical role as decision-makers in the planning and implementation of their activities. As part of a girl-adult partnership, volunteers can use this process to strengthen girls’ empowerment and decision-making roles in activities. Adults provide age-appropriate facilitation, ensuring that planning, organization, set-up, and evaluation of all activities are done jointly with girls.

10 ways to tell if you’re a leader who encourages a Girl-Led troop:

1. You know that every girl's opinion counts, and you actively encourage them to speak up and share their ideas.
2. You show respect for what girls say and value their opinions regardless of their age.
3. You actively encourage girls to follow the Girl Scout Law, which includes the statement: “Be a sister to every Girl Scout.”
4. The girls suggest how they want to spend their time in Girl Scouting and where they want to take trips and your response is something along the lines of: “How can we make that happen?” or “How can I help?”
5. Girls are not afraid to disagree with your suggestions, but they are also open to your ideas.
6. Your first reaction to an outrageous suggestion, such as a year off from school to cruise around the world is not “That’s impossible!” but rather “Why are you interested in doing that?” as an attempt to figure out what’s behind the statement. Probing the suggestion could lead to another idea that might be a little more realistic.
7. If you’re not comfortable with an activity suggested by girls—maybe you’d rather not go snow-tubing—you help them find an adult who can make their ideas a reality—as long as those ideas are okay, according to Safety Activity Checkpoints.
8. You share your ideas with the girls in your group, but you don’t expect or need them to jump up and down with great excitement each time they hear one of them.
9. Girls know they can come to you for help whenever they decide they need it.
10. You are always ready to offer support and encouragement.
As the leadership ladder begins, the Daisy Girl Scout is present but the adult volunteer is in the dominant role. She has a say and does make decisions but the adult volunteer guides. As the Girl Scout gets older, she starts to take a more dominant role in the leadership of the troop and the adult volunteer steps back to allow her to lead. By the time the Girl Scout is in her teens, she is taking an even more dominant role and the adult volunteer steps even further back. She never leaves completely but she is there to lend a hand when necessary.

Activity:
Ask volunteers to act out the following situations (or come up with your own). Split into groups of 4 to 5 people or if in a smaller service unit, split into 2 groups or even stay as one group.

- A troop leader facilitates a trip planning discussion with a brand new Senior Troop (with no previous travel experience) that wants to go to Hawaii as their first troop trip.
- A troop leader who hates the outdoors refuses to take her Juniors to anything beyond a backyard cook-out.
- A troop leader decides that the troop will earn the WOW Wonders of Water Journey because the council is offering a program on this Journey.

After each role play, have a short discussion of the situation, including ways to:
- Determine girl readiness, helping adults who may be undermining the girls’ progression, and preparing girls for a new step in progression, e.g. from cookouts to campouts or from day trips to overnights.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Condicioning</th>
<th>Ambassadore</th>
<th>Senior</th>
<th>Cadette</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Brownie</th>
<th>Daisy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posse questions</td>
<td>9 (a)</td>
<td>7 (a)</td>
<td>7 (a)</td>
<td>6 (a)</td>
<td>5 (a)</td>
<td>4 (a)</td>
<td>3 (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tres larms (b)</td>
<td>8 (b)</td>
<td>7 (b)</td>
<td>6 (b)</td>
<td>5 (b)</td>
<td>4 (b)</td>
<td>3 (b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>