Short & Snappy—
Learning Opportunity for Volunteers

What to Do Instead of Screaming

(This can be used as a handout. Discuss briefly with leaders different scenarios where this could come in handy and do one or two of the activities listed.)

Sometimes things can get a little out of hand during Girl Scout troop meetings and activities. Girls are squirmy, giggly, arguing with each other, not paying attention, or maybe just not participating. Here are some active and quiet games to help re-focus the group and expend some excess energy.

Active Tranquilizers

Laugh In
Throw a handkerchief in the air (or another object that will float down). Players must laugh loudly as long as it is in the air, and become totally quiet the instant it touches the ground. Repeat 3-5 times.

Panic!
Everyone is seated in chairs in a circle. Everyone numbers off (including the girl who has chosen to be IT). IT stands in the center of the circle and is blindfolded. Everyone changes seats, but keeps the same number. IT calls out any three (3) numbers. The players whose numbers are called must switch places without being tagged by IT, who is guided by the sounds of their motion. All three must end up in a different chair. Anyone who is caught becomes IT. If it hasn’t caught anyone after several tries, she may call “Panic!” and EVERY-ONE must find a new seat.

Wiggle Bug
Players stand in a circle. A small object is passed around the circle from hand-to-hand as music plays. The leader starts the object saying “This is a Wiggle Bug.” If you get caught with it, it bites—and it gives you the wiggles.” When the music stops, the girl caught with the Wiggle Bug must choose some kind of motion, and must continue doing that motion for the duration of the game. If she is caught another time, she chooses a new motion and adds it to the first one. (If no music is available, let someone close her eyes and call “stop!”).

Island
Place a few Frisbees (or pieces of paper) on the ground and have everyone start prancing around them while clapping or singing. When the Referee signals “Islands”, everyone runs to touch a Frisbee. The last person touching a Frisbee is out. When the group gets smaller, remove an “Island”. VARIATION: If any two people touch while running to an “Island,” they are out also.

Squirrel in a Tree
Arrange all but one (IT) of the players in groups of three around the area. Two girls in each of the groups face in and hold hands high to form a tree. The third stands inside the raised hands and becomes the squirrel. IT wanders among the “trees.” At a signal, all the squirrels and IT must run to get into a new tree. The one left out becomes IT. And the game continues. Squirrels must find new trees, they cannot return to a tree they just left. After several rounds allow the squirrels and trees to change places.
Quiet Tranquilizers

**Collective Art**
Have each girl fold a sheet of paper from top to bottom enough times to make eight sections between fold lines. Each girl draws her portion, folds the paper over, then passes the paper to the next girl. In order, they draw: 1) a hat, 2) top part of a face with eyes, 3) lower face with nose and mouth, 4) neck and shoulders, 5) waist, 6) hips, 7) legs, 8) feet. When everyone is finished drawing, unfold the paper and see the results.

**Murals**
Unfurl a large piece of newsprint or butcher paper. Let the girls each raw a part of a large mural scene. They might want to draw themselves at camp, marching in a parade, or other Girl Scout activity.

**Identification Game**
Put mysterious items (from outdoors, the room, your pocket, or your (purse) in a bag. Have girls in turn close their eyes and try to identify the items by feel.

**Word Association**
Each girl takes a sheet of paper and numbers from 1 to 20. The leader calls out a category, such as a color, a food, a girl’s name, a flavor of ice cream, an amusement park ride, a TV program, a foreign country, etc. For each category the girls write the first thing that comes to mind. After all the categories are finished, the leader calls them out one-by-one and each girl reads her answers. Girl enjoy seeing how long one answer is given who breaks the chain, etc. There is no judging of answers, just a lot of fun in sharing.

**Gossip**
Players are sitting around the circle and the leader whispers a brief sentence to neighbor on the right who passes it on and this goes around the circle until it reaches the leader again. The leader then says it aloud and gives the original gossip.

**Rain**
Everyone sits in a circle with their eyes closed (optional). The leader starts by rubbing her hands together. The person to the right of the leader listens for this sound and then joins in, then the next person to the right, until everyone is doing it. The sound this rubbing makes is much like a soft spray of rain. When all are rubbing their hands, the leader than starts a new sound—finger snapping. The rain is gaining in intensity. Each player must continue to rub hands until she hears the person on their left change sounds. After finger snapping has gone all the way around, the leader starts the next sound—hands slapping thighs. Finally hands slapping thighs plus stomping feet. To end the rain storm, completely reverse the activities. The last sound to be passed is a silence as each person, one by one stops rubbing hands.

**Alphabet Search**
Either play in teams or individuals. Girls (or teams) will have paper and pencil. As sign a letter of the alphabet. Girls will have 5-8 minutes to look around and list items they see that start with that letter. See how many unique items can be found.