

Service Unit Event Planning Guide

Dear Service Unit Event Coordinator,

Thank you for volunteering your time and providing the girls in your Service Unit with program opportunities provided by your Service Unit.

Planning a Service Unit event requires organization, planning, and determination

Top Five Benefits of offering Service Unit Events

1. They are fun to plan and fun to have
2. They foster sisterhood
3. They create stronger connections
4. They are an important part of the progression
5. They give girls a comfortable place to explore new things

Why should a service unit host events?

- They complement council-wide events to support active and continued participation in Girl Scouting.
- They are a wonderful way to meet potential Girl Scout adult volunteers and interact with families.
- They present an opportunity for Girl Scouts to “bring a friend” by inviting a non-registered girl to explore new things and get excited about everything Girl Scouts has to offer.
- They present a terrific opportunity to young Daisy girls and leaders, newly joined Girl Scouts and Juliette Girl Scouts (Girl Scouts not associated with a troop) who may prefer going to local events - less travel and less stress for first-year outings.
- They excite and educate girls about other Girl Scout opportunities, such as camp, council-wide events, travel, the fall and cookie product sale program, traditions, and awards.

Not a One-Person-Show!

- Establish a Service Unit Event Committee, consisting of adult volunteers and girls across your Service Unit, or have each Troop take on an event
- Reach out to people in the community and invite them to come to share their skills with the girls.
- Planning Service Unit events can enrich the experience for Girl Scouts in your area and empower them to become more involved in every aspect of Girl Scouts.

*The most important part of the planning is to **ASK GIRLS** what they want to do.*

- The best events are those that have girl input.
- Invite girls in your service unit to vote on some of the Service Unit event ideas or even be on the planning committee with you.



Girl Scout Program

As a volunteer in Girl Scouts, you know first-hand how much girls need to be heard, respected, and understood to fulfill their potential. That is why girls for generations have enjoyed the Girl Scout program because Girl Scouts celebrates who they are as individuals.

The Girl Scout program centers around the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) to achieve the following outcomes:

National Program and Outcomes



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) allows girls to Discover, Connect, and Take Action. Therefore it is important to encourage girls to get involved in planning events and provide them with the tools and guidance they need to succeed.

Though it may be easier to plan an event yourself or with other adults, empowering girls to help plan them in partnership with you will give those girls the leadership experiences they need to grow. As the girls progress in their grade levels, they also will progress in the types and amount of planning they can accomplish.

Below are some examples of how to incorporate the GSLE when partnering with older girls.

DISCOVER: Girls can help in the planning stages by looking into facilities that may be host sites. They can help in setting the budget and researching past events' successes and failures. They are also a great resource for ideas of what girls want to do at an event.

CONNECT: Girls can communicate the event to the rest of the Service Unit by creating flyers, distributing them, and answering any questions regarding the event. They can connect with participating leaders through e-mail and relate event-specific information.

TAKE ACTION: Girls can shop for event materials with the money budgeted. They also can help in the actual setting up of the event with tables and decorations. During the event, they can run the stations and then help with the clean-up. They can help finalize paperwork from the event and report the evaluations.

Girl Scouts' programs are designed with a research-backed curriculum that centers around fun and friendship. To create engaging experiences, the Girl Scout program focuses on four (4) pillars, which are core program areas that spark girls' interests:



STEM

Computer science, engineering, robotics, outdoor STEM, and more



LIFE SKILLS

Civic engagement, healthy living, global citizenship, communication skills



OUTDOORS

Adventure and skill building, including through camping experiences for all age levels, from the backyard to the backcountry



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Girl Scout Cookie Program—the largest girl-led business in the world—teaches goal setting, decision making, money management, business ethics, and people skills.

Hosting a Girl-Led Event

If you are working with girls who want to host an event--large or small--be sure girls are leading the event planning. To get girls started, ask them to think about the following questions:

- What sort of event do we have in mind?
- Who is our intended audience?
- Do we need specific invitations, or can anyone come?
- What is our main topic or focus?
- What is our objective--what do we hope to accomplish at the end of the day?
- Are we inviting a speaker? If so, who? How can we find our speaker?
- Where will the event take place?
- Is there a charge for this venue?
- Is the venue large enough to accommodate the audience?
- Do we have to obtain permission to use this venue? If so, from whom?
- Are there adequate facilities for the audience? If not, how much will extra portable toilets cost, and how many do we need?
- Is there adequate parking space or a drop-off point for girls?
- Do we need tables? Chairs? Podiums? Microphones? Speakers?
- What sort of entertainment will we provide?
- Will we provide or sell refreshments? If so, what kinds?
- How many chaperones will we need? Who will we ask?
- What emergency care do we need to plan for? If the event is large, does my city/town require to notify the local police and/or fire department?
- Do we need to purchase additional insurance for non-Girl Scouts?
- How will we advertise the event?
- What decorations will we use?
- Will we give away any keepsakes?
- Will we charge for the event?
- Who will clean up after the event?
- How will we determine whether the event was a success?



Health and Safety Guidelines

Meeting the health and safety needs of ALL participants at an event must be the number one priority of any event planner. Before beginning your Service Unit events, consider your resources, such as safety guidelines, necessary forms, and Council policies.

<u>Safety Activity Check Points:</u> includes Safety standards and necessary precautions for girl activities, such as adult-to-girl ratio, etc.	<u>Volunteer Essentials:</u> Review this document for travel forms and documents needed for events
<u>Forms:</u> Travel form, Intent to Hold a Service Unit Event, Accident/Incident Report (submit forms to Council's Customer Care within 24 hrs.)	<u>Insurance:</u> No additional insurance needs to be obtained.
<u>First Aid/CPR:</u> Preferably one (1) or more persons with the First Aid/CPR training have been assigned to the event	<u>Permission Slips:</u> All troop leaders attending the event with their girls should have signed permission slips on hand
<u>Health History Forms:</u> The Service Unit Event Coordinator should have Health History forms on hand for all the girls and adults working at the event. Troop Leaders attending the event should have Health History forms on hand for every girl attending the event with their troop.	<u>Training:</u> Overnight and camping events require special training for adults. Ensure that every adult attending these events has the required training.

TIPS & TRICKS:

Organizing an Event and Setting a Calendar:

Some Service Units make a schedule at the beginning of the year and have each troop lead an event. The Service Unit Event Coordinator follows up with each troop to ensure that the event follows the guidelines. Some have each older girl troop in their Service Unit take on the planning of an event. The Service Unit Event Coordinator follows up with the older girls and the troop leaders to ensure that the event follows the guidelines. Smaller Service Units often join in organizing events. The Service Unit Event Coordinator of each Service Unit meets and forms a committee with representatives of each of the Service Units.

Taking pictures at the event:

Make sure to get pictures of all the stations, and participants, who have agreed to photo releases. This is a fantastic way to document the event for future planning. Submit pictures to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org for media or social platform use.

Survey after the event: Always survey and debrief after an event. This will be a great resource when planning a similar event in the future.

Checklist: 3 Months Prior to event

Who?

- ☐ Form a committee to plan the Service Unit event and decide the responsibilities of each person in the group.
- ☐ Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for planned activities.
- ☐ Determine pre-event details:
 1. Who is eligible to attend? Are we inviting troops/girls from other Service Units? Are we inviting non-Girl Scouts?
 2. Can this event be used as an “Invite-A-Friend”?
 3. What are the minimum and the maximum number of participants?
 4. How will troops and Juliette (Individual) girls register?
 5. What is the registration deadline?
 6. Who is the contact person on record?

What?

- ☐ Develop a schedule for the event. Consider alternating between stationary and active events.
- ☐ Plan specific activities for the event. Invite input from all program levels of girls.
- ☐ Plan event food and drink needs:
 1. Will we serve snacks or a meal?
 2. Will we sell any food at the event? If so, have we checked local food handling regulations?
 3. Have we made provisions for allergies and special dietary needs?

When?

- ☐ Select a date for the event. Consider checking Holidays, the local community and school calendars, and the Council events calendar for other events, which may impact participation.
- ☐ Select a time for the event. Consider the age of the participants when selecting the time and length of the event
- ☐ Inform your Council’s Membership Manager of the Service Unit event date. The event will be added to the Council’s event calendar. Determine with your Council’s Membership Manager if the registration will flow through the online GS events platform. If

so, when will the event registration go live?

Where?

- ☐ Reserve the site. Consider touring the site to examine exits, restrooms, cooking and serving areas, equipment that may be used, handicap accessibility, etc.
- ☐ Determine traffic flow to avoid congestion and safety issues.
- ☐ Establish if the site requires a Certificate of Insurance. Confirm the name and address of the site or organization that needs to appear on the Certificate of Insurance.
- ☐ If your event requires a signed contract, submit it to your Council's Membership Manager for Council approval by a Council's Senior staff member.

How?

- ☐ Submit the "*Intent to operate a Service Unit event*" form and submit it to customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org.
- ☐ Advertise the event
 1. Is a flyer needed? If so, who will design, print, and distribute the flyers? Reserve the site. Consider touring the site to examine exits, restrooms, cooking and serving areas, equipment that may be used, handicap accessibility, etc.
- ☐ Create a budget for the event.
 1. What will be paid by the Service Unit? Food, facility rental, materials, awards?
 2. What is the cost of the event for each participant? Will we need a minimum and maximum number of participants?
 3. Will we use the event as a fundraiser? Complete the Money Earning Application. If you are soliciting donations, contact your Council's Membership Manager for additional information on donation guidelines.
 4. Will the Council provide funds for this event? For example, Council may provide funds for local cookie rallies, adult/girl recognitions, etc. Contact your Council's Membership Manager to confirm.
- ☐ Schedule your next meeting and determine what needs to be completed by then.

Checklist: 2 Months Prior to event

Who?

- ☐ If necessary, alert local fire and police departments. Some local towns may require a uniformed firefighter and/or police officer present when the participants exceed a certain number.

What?

- ☐ Develop a crisis management plan. Consider planning for a snowstorm or any other unforeseen event and determine how participants will be notified if the event must be postponed or canceled.
- ☐ Determine who is responsible to bring the First Aid kit and review the First Aid/CPR certifications of those who will be present to ensure the certifications are still current.
- ☐ Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for all the activities offered at the event.
- ☐ Designate who is responsible to track emergency contacts and health forms for all who are working at the event.
- ☐ Designate who is responsible for checking the Photo Release agreements of the participants. Troop leaders should have this information about their troop girls. This is important when taking pictures at the event.
- ☐ Determine the awards, patches, or certificates participants will earn based on the planned events. Order custom patches from Council's retail store if applicable.

When?

- ☐ If the GS events platform is used to track registration, ensure with your Council's Membership Manager that the event is live.

How?

- ☐ If required by the event location, obtain a Certificate of Liability by emailing customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org, providing the confirmed name and address that needs to be displayed on the form.
- ☐ Schedule your next meeting and determine what needs to be completed by then. Follow up via email and text to ensure event planning is on schedule.

Checklist: 1 Month Prior to event

Who?

- ☐ Secure specialized volunteers and/or speakers. Confirm event details (time, date, location, expectations) with all volunteers.
- ☐ Delegate tasks that can be completed by other volunteers.
 1. Recruit troop leaders, parents, and girls to volunteer during the event.
 2. Confirm event details (time, date, location, and expectations with all volunteers).

What?

- ☐ Identify supplies needed for the event
 1. Consider cost-effective measures, such as ordering in bulk, Dollar Store, etc.
 2. Can any supplies be borrowed from the Girl Scout Leadership Center? For example, a bridge for the traditional Bridging ceremony?
- ☐ Ensure (custom) patches, badges, awards, and certificates are ordered, and the delivery date is known.

Where?

- ☐ Determine how the facility will be set up and draw a diagram.
 1. Consider chairs, tables, decorations, food, first aid station, check-in table, recruitment table if necessary, and parking.
 2. Brainstorm potential challenges and implement changes.
- ☐ Confirm the location reservation. Decide on details:
 1. Who will open and close the facility?
 2. If special equipment is needed, is it available on-site, or will it need to be rented?

How?

- ☐ Check the event budget as supplies are being purchased and obtain receipts. Make changes as needed.
- ☐ Ensure the event is properly promoted and collect registrations.
- ☐ Schedule your next meeting and determine what needs to be completed by then. Follow up via email and text to ensure that event planning is on schedule.

Checklist: 2 Weeks Prior to event

Who?

- ☐ Confirm all committee members are on schedule for completing the designated tasks.
- ☐ Confirm the total number of expected attendees.
- ☐ Confirm specialized volunteers and/or speakers.
- ☐ Send out confirmation details to all participants. This should include:
 1. Date, start & end time
 2. Site name, address, and directions
 3. Any additional costs
 4. Supplies participants should bring if applicable
 5. Clothing requirements if applicable, i.e., weather, activity-related, etc.

What?

- ☐ Make final plans for event activities and assign volunteers.
- ☐ Purchase non-perishable foods and supplies for the event.
- ☐ Order food, if applicable.
- ☐ Determine games or activities that need to happen while girls are checking in, i.e., coloring sheets, etc.

How?

- ☐ Confirm appropriate security.
- ☐ Determine which doors will remain open for attendees and which ones will be locked
- ☐ If door monitors are needed, confirm who will be a door monitor and where they will be placed
- ☐ Develop a check-in procedure that incorporates measures in case of emergency, i.e., accounting for every person at the site in case of an emergency. Attendants' lists can also be great when planning future events.
- ☐ If applicable, secure cash advance and payment checks for the day of the event from the Service Unit Treasurer.
- ☐ Schedule your next meeting and determine what needs to be completed by then. Follow up via email and text to ensure that event planning is on schedule.

Checklist: 1 Week Prior to event

Who?

- ☐ Send out a second (2nd) confirmation to all participants. This should include:
 1. Date, start & end time
 2. Site name, address, and directions
 3. Supplies participants should bring if applicable
 4. Clothing requirements if applicable, i.e., weather, activity-related, etc.
- ☐ Confirm the total number of expected attendees.

What?

- ☐ Confirm supplies are purchased and confirm for pick-up – who and when
- ☐ Confirm games or activities that need to happen while girls are checking in, i.e., coloring sheets, etc.

How?

- ☐ Confirm the total number of participants attending the venue and ensure this is shared with speakers, other volunteers, caterers, etc., if applicable.
- ☐ Check the budget, obtain receipts, and adjust if needed.
- ☐ If applicable, have cash advance and payment checks on hand for the day of the event.
- ☐ Have a post-survey available to be completed by participants and determine who will oversee collecting the survey.
- ☐ Schedule a post-event meeting to review the event and celebrate the event's success.

Checklist: Day of the Event

Who?

- ☐ As participants arrive, hand out any check-in materials like schedules or nametags. *Printed schedules and station names on large posters or displays can be helpful for volunteers and parents.*

What?

- ☐ Buy any perishable supplies.
- ☐ Ensure you have at least two (2) copies of the ***Accident Report*** form and confirm extra copies of rosters, health forms, emergency contacts, and permission forms.
- ☐ Ensure you hand out an evaluation to each participant or send a survey to receive feedback about the event.

When?

- ☐ Arrive early to set up for the event. It is recommended to begin setting up at least 90 minutes before the event is scheduled to begin.

Checklist: Post-Event

Who?

- ☐ Meet with committee members to review event evaluations.
- ☐ Celebrate successes and make recommendations for improvements.
- ☐ Send thank-you notes to all speakers, facility staff, any donors if applicable, and volunteers who made the event possible.

What?

- ☐ Turn in any required forms to GSSSC Council, i.e. In-Kind forms, accident report forms, program credit reimbursement forms, etc.
- ☐ Pay outstanding bills
- ☐ Create a final budget report and event summary with detailed notes for future reference. A ring binder containing all Service Unit event reports and notes will be a valuable resource for future event planning.
- ☐ Submit receipts, final budget worksheet, and monies, if applicable, to the Service Unit Treasurer.

When?

- ☐ If this event is repeated next year, recommend a date to the Service Unit team, so it can tentatively be set on next year's Service Unit calendar.

Planning Worksheet

This will help you plan the basics for your event, and the information can be used to confirm all necessary details that will be used in marketing materials, i.e., flyers, newspaper announcements, etc.

Event Planning Committee Members: _____

Event Date: _____ Event Time: _____ Registration deadline: _____

Event Location: _____

Event Name: _____ Event Theme: _____

Age Level: _____ Service Unit only or other _____

Cost: _____ Included in cost: _____

First Aid/CPR Representative: _____

Event Volunteers: _____

Activities during the event: _____

Supplies: _____

Marketing: _____

Schedule Planner

Here are two schedule templates. The top one can be used for events where all participants complete the same activity at the same time. The bottom one can be used for events if girls will be rotating through stations.

Template 1:

Event date: _____ Event location: _____

Start time for load-in/ set up: _____ Start time for check-in: _____ Start time for event: _____

Event schedule:

Start time for opening activities:

Start time for activity 1: _____ Activity title: _____

Start time for activity 2: _____ Activity title: _____

Start time for activity 3: _____ Activity title: _____

Start time for activity 4: _____ Activity title: _____

Start time for activity 5: _____ Activity title: _____

Start time for snack and break: _____

Start time for closing activities: _____

Time of parent meeting: _____ End time for event: _____ End time for cleanup/load-out: _____

Template 2:

Event date: _____ Event location: _____

Start time for load-in/ set up: _____ Start time for check-in: _____ Start time for event: _____

Time of parent meeting: _____ End time for event: _____ End time for cleanup and load-out _____

Fill in the activity titles in the left column. Fill in the time ranges for each station in the top row. Keep in mind, for rotations to work, each activity needs to be the same length of time.

	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:	Time:
Open Activities	All					
Activity 1		Group 1	Group 5	Group 4	Group 3	Group 2
Activity 2		Group 2	Group 1	Group 5	Group 4	Group 3
Activity 3		Group 3	Group 2	Group 1	Group 5	Group 4
Activity 4		Group 4	Group 3	Group 2	Group 1	Group 5
Activity 5		Group 5	Group 4	Group 3	Group 2	Group 1
Closing/ Evaluations	All					

Budget Worksheet

Event Name: _____

Of girl participants: _____ #of adult participants: _____ # of event volunteers: _____

1. Site:

2. Printing & Mailing:

Rental \$	Flyers \$
Cleaning Fee \$	Schedules/site maps \$
Admission Fees \$	Confirmations \$
TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$

3. Food:

4. Program Supplies:

Meals \$	Crafts \$
Snacks/drinks \$	Nature \$
Other \$	Presenter Fees \$
	Other \$
TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$

5. General Supplies:

6. Miscellaneous:

Soap/Sanitizer \$	Thank-you gifts \$
Paper Towels \$	Patches/pins/T-Shirts \$
Toilet paper \$	Folders/paper \$
Trash bags \$	Pencils, pens, tape, etc. \$
Plates/cups/utensils \$	Name tags \$
Napkins \$	Other \$
TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$

7. Safety:

8. Transportation & Equipment

First Aid Supplies \$	Transportation \$
Additional Insurance \$	Equipment Rental \$
TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$

1. Total Site	\$
2. Total Printing & Mailing	\$
3. Total Food	\$
4. Total Program Supplies	\$
5. Total General Supplies	\$
6. Total Miscellaneous	\$
7. Total Safety	\$
8. Total Transportation/Equipment	\$
A. TOTAL PROJECTED COST (add 1 thru 8)	\$
B. NUMBER OF PAYING PARTICIPANTS	\$
C. PROJECTED EVENT FEE (A+B)	\$

Event Evaluation

This form is to be filled out by the event lead and brought to the Service Unit meeting following the event for evaluation and further discussion by the Service Unit team.

Event: _____ Date of Event: _____

SU Event Planner: _____ E-Mail: _____

Number of Girls on the committee: _____ Age Group: _____

Number of Adults on the committee: _____

Number of girls attending: _____ Age Group: _____

Number of adults attending: _____ Additional attendees: _____

Were you pleased with the event and the plans?

Describe what went well:

What would you change? _____

What was the favorite activity amongst participants? _____

Have you sent thank-you notes to groups, people, or organizations who helped?

Circle: Yes No

Other suggestions?

Please attach a summary of participant surveys and any site-specific information like schedules, contact information, shopping lists, etc.

Participant Evaluation

Event Name:

Date:

Troop/Individual:

Level:

Level: Things I liked:

Things to change:

Other Suggestions:

Participant Evaluation

Event Name:

Date:

Troop/Individual

Level:

Things I liked:

Things to change:

Other Suggestions

Event Ideas

Don't know where to get started? Find inspiration from Girl Scout Holidays, traditions, and partners.

Celebrate Juliette Gordon Low's Birthday

October 31

Learn more about the Founder of Girl Scouts

Cookie Rally

December/January

Prepare for the Cookie Program and learn essential entrepreneurship skills

World Thinking Day

February 22

Celebrate the global Sisterhood of Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts Leader Day

April 22

Celebrate outstanding Girl Scout volunteers!

Bridging Ceremony

April/May

Cheer on the girls who are proceeding to the next program level

Financial Institutions

Credit Unions and banks can host financial literacy badges for girls

Florists

Flower shops make great mom & me workshop locations. Junior Girl Scouts can even earn the flower badge!

Local Restaurants and Grocery Stores

Earn Cookie badges or make meals for those in need with the experts

Mechanics

Teen girls can learn basic car maintenance before hitting the road

Sewing shops

Take lessons or make gifts for the Holidays

Animal Shelters

Brownies can earn the Pet badge and learn basic pet care or create a service project

KEY CONTACTS

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Council

Reach council staff for expert info.

Customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org

208-377-2011

Marketing

Share troop photos and refer media inquiries.

Customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org

Email

Our council team sends a monthly newsletter.

Update emails to keep you informed.

Social Media

[Facebook.com/GirlScoutsofSilverSage](https://www.facebook.com/GirlScoutsofSilverSage)

[Instagram.com/gsssc](https://www.instagram.com/gsssc)

[Twitter.com/gsssc](https://twitter.com/gsssc)

[Pinterest.com/gsssc](https://www.pinterest.com/gsssc)

Volunteer Toolkit

The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is a digital resource that supports Troop Leaders, making the process of running a troop easier and more efficient.

Access the VTK at www.girlscouts-ssc.org by clicking My GS.

gsLearn

Find volunteer training opportunities.

Contact customercare@girlscouts-ssc.org for course selection

Volunteer Essentials

Information, policies, and procedures to guide volunteers. Access in the VTK or at

www.girlscouts-ssc.org/volunteer/volunteeressentials

Safety Activity Checkpoints

Everything you need to know to be prepared to keep girls safe during activities. Access in the VTK or at

www.girlscouts-ssc.org/volunteers/volunteeressentials/safety