

# Girl Scout Safety Guidelines

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, available on [gsneo.org](http://gsneo.org) resources. Read the checkpoints, follow them, and share them with other volunteers, parents, and girls before engaging in activities with girls.

## 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, depending on the size of the group and the ages and abilities of girls. Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old and must have completed the adult screening process and have taken the appropriate adult learning courses before volunteering. One lead volunteer in every group must be female. In addition, GSNEO expects volunteers to be fully capable of performing their duties. Volunteers are not permitted to use or be under the influence of any substance which may impair their physical and/or mental skills at any time when they are supervising girls as part of the adult-to-girl minimums, even if girls are not in the same room or are sleeping, including alcohol or prescription medications, medical marijuana, or illegal drugs.

## 3. Get parent/guardian permission.

When an activity takes place that is outside the normal time and place, advise each parent/guardian 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 are forbidden. Physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of girls is also forbidden. Follow GSNEO's guidelines on page 79 of Volunteer Essentials 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 handy a well-stocked first-aid kit, girl health history forms, 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, a valid license, and a registered/insured vehicle. Insist that everyone is in a legal seat and wears her seat belt at all times, and adhere to state laws regarding booster seats and requirements for children in rear seats.

## 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 parent-daughter 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. Alcohol is not permitted at an event where the main objective is girl program. If girls are present where alcohol is served at an adult-only event (sponsored and run by adults), they must be supervised by an adult who is not consuming alcohol who is responsible for the girls' safety and well-being. (If alcohol is being served at a Girl Scout event, the participants will not be covered by Girl Scout insurance unless prior approval has been obtained from the insurance carrier.) Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls unless given special permission by GSNEO for group marksmanship activities.

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## 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 or sexual orientation. When scheduling, helping plan, 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 or Facebook groups, publish girls' first names only and never divulge their contact information. Teach girls the Girl Scout Online Safety Pledge [girlscouts.org/help/internet\\_safety\\_pledge.asp](https://www.girlscouts.org/help/internet_safety_pledge.asp) and have them commit to it.

## 12. Keep girls safe during money-earning activities.

Girl Scout cookies and other council-sponsored product sales are an integral part of the program. During Girl Scout product sales, you are responsible for the safety of girls, money, and products. In addition, a wide variety of organizations, causes, and fundraisers may appeal to Girl Scouts to be their labor force. When representing Girl Scouts, girls cannot participate in money-earning activities that represent partisan politics or that are not Girl Scout-approved product sales and efforts.