

Annual Troop & Caregiver Meeting

Meeting One
Starting the Year
Estimated length: 45 min



Purpose: Girl Scouting provides the best opportunities for girls when families step up and play an active part in their girl's Girl Scout experience. Planned and meaningful communication needs to take place each year in order to maintain healthy relationships between the troop volunteers and troop families, set expectations for the girls and adults, recruit additional volunteers, and build support. Plus, girls feel a sense of pride when their loved ones show special interest or take part in what they are doing.

Meeting Preparations

Materials Needed:

- Annual Permission Forms*
- Personal Health & Medical Forms*
- Girl Scout Family Interest Form
- Writing utensils
- Girl activity
- Print/make copies of Caregiver Meeting Agenda located at the end of this document

*Personal Health and Medical Forms are to be completed upon registration and then reviewed annually for all girls and adult volunteers. A new form should be completed every 3 years, and the original form can be initialed by the parent/caregiver or adult member in subsequent years.

How does this help improve your troop?

- Families and caregivers will have a better understanding of what Girl Scouts can do for families.
- Families, caregivers, and leaders are able to identify ways to work as a team to support the troop.
- Families and caregivers and leaders are able to agree on how the troop will earn funds and how those funds will be spent.
- Fill key troop positions - You never know when a volunteer may need to step down or what specific qualifications a caregiver may have to offer!
- Decisions regarding how to communicate about upcoming events, schedule changes, troop needs, etc. can be made together.
- Leaders can ensure all families are aware of potential financial obligations expected of them for troop dues, uniforms, etc.

Important Planning Reminder

When planning, ensure families are notified far enough in advance that they can make adjustments to their work/personal life schedule or inform you they are going to miss the meeting so you can plan how to approach any follow ups that may be needed. Caregivers may need to bring their girl and other children to the meeting due to lack of child care, so please plan accordingly (older girls/children may be able to participate in a self-directed activity while younger girls/children may need a volunteer to lead an activity for them).

Troop Leader Meeting Agenda and Script

Introduction

- Collect all required forms and provide copies to those who forgot.
- Introduce all volunteers that will be active in the troop for the Girl Scout year.

All About Your Troop

Review details about your troop:

- Your troop's program age level and troop number.
- Your troop meeting dates, times, and location.
- Pick-up and drop-off protocol. Review expectations for how girls will be dropped off and picked up. Go over what to do in case parents/guardians are late dropping off or picking up their girl(s).

Troop Finances

1. Review the general costs for a Girl Scout year and how troop money will be earned and managed.
2. If you'll be collecting troop dues from families, decide on the amount and frequency. Explain what these dues will be used for. Families may ask why they need to pay troop dues if they've already paid membership dues.
 - Explain that membership dues are paid directly to Girl Scouts of the USA and covers liability insurance, while troop dues help cover the cost of project supplies, badges, etc.
3. Financial Aid & Scoutship
 - Financial Aid is used to pay for girl membership when there is a need as deemed by the parent/caregiver. Financial Aid can be applied to girl membership registration during the registration process by the parent/caregiver only. If families need assistance with this, please have them contact Customer Care or the Community Membership Executive (CME) for your service unit.
 - Scoutship awards are based on household income and size, previous product program participation, and may be requested when personal circumstances are an obstacle to fully engage in Girl Scout events, activities, or programs. It can be used towards uniforms, books, and participation in council-sponsored events. Caregivers should reach out to Customer Care or your CME for additional information.
4. Product Sales (Magazine & Snack Program and Cookie Program)
 - Explain that these are two programs that girls can participate in to build financial literacy and leadership skills. The money that girls earn from these programs can also help cover troop costs (like field trips, camp, etc.).



INCLUSION:

Troops are not allowed to exclude girls in any way if their family is unable to pay troop dues. Do not single a girl or family out during the meeting. Inform everyone at the meeting if they have additional questions or concerns, they can talk with you privately.

Caregiver Expectations and Communication

1. Explain that there are many ways that families can be involved with the troop. Let parents/caregivers know that you expect them to play an active role in supporting the troop—when troops have family support, girls have a better overall experience.
2. Review the troop's specific volunteer needs (transporting girls, bringing in a snack, other volunteer roles like troop treasurer, troop cookie manager, etc.). Remind parents and caregivers that any adult who has regular contact with girls, handles money, or drives girls must be a registered member and complete a background check. They can fill out the Family Interest Survey for you to learn a bit more about them and the ways they feel they can support the troop! Let them know they can help welcome new Girl Scouts to the troop and share our resources with them.
3. Review how you will keep in touch with families to relay information about upcoming meetings, activities, and troop business. Remind families that it's their responsibility to read any information and get back to you (if needed) in a timely manner.

Wrapping Up

Thank families for attending and ask if they have any questions.

Caregiver Meeting Agenda: Starting the Year

Caregiver Meeting Information:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Troop Leader & Volunteer Contact Information

Troop Leader Name:

Phone:

Troop Leader Name:

Phone:

Troop Product Sales Manager

Name:

Phone:

Additional Troop Volunteers

Troop Role:

Name:

Phone:

Troop Role:

Name:

Phone:

Troop Details

Service Unit:

Troop Number:

Troop Program Level:

Meeting Day/Time:

Regular Meeting Location:

Troop Finances

Troops Financial Status at beginning of year:

Dues:

Magazine & Snack Sale Troop Profit:

Cookie Sale Profit:

Next Annual Troop & Caregiver Meeting:

Cookie Meeting:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Notes:

INCLUSION:

Girl Scouts are not excluded from troop activities based on a family's ability to pay troop dues. If you have additional questions or concerns, please speak with troop leadership privately.