

Volunteer 411

Family Connection

*A Guide to Welcome Families
to Girl Scouts*

The Girl Scout Family Connection is an introduction to all things Girl Scouts. It is provided in new troop packets for every new Girl Scout. A digital copy is available for returning troops at:

bit.ly/ManitouFamilyConnection.

Use this guide at your first parent meeting to introduce Girl Scouts to families.

There are sections about:

- The Girl Scout Promise and Law
- Badge and patch placement on sashes and vests
- Girl Scouting's Highest Awards to which girls aspire
- The Girl Scout Cookie Program
- Summer camp
- Family involvement and how to help out the troop leaders
- Financial assistance
- Council contact and shop information
- A yearly calendar



To Reregister Your Troop:

Troop leaders should have received an email listing all girls and adults in your troop. If you need it sent again, send an email with your troop number to nate@gsmanitou.org.

1. Review the information. Note where there are changes (addresses, email addresses, grades, schools attending, members not returning, etc.) to **reregistering** members so you can mark those on the registration form. Gather the names and corresponding email addresses for **new** girls and adults joining your troop. (You will not be paying for new girls or adults with this form, however.)
2. Click on the link provided in the email. Complete the information, and submit it with the \$50 girl membership dues and \$30 adult membership dues for each **reregistering** member, in the form of credit or debit card, PayPal, or program credits (you will need the program credit code for each girl using program credits).
3. Once we receive your reregistering information, we will send you an email to send to all new girls and new adults joining your troop. (Be sure to include your name, email, and troop number when you send it to them, as they will need this info to register!) The email you send them will include a link where they can submit all necessary information, along with their membership dues. You will receive confirmation when they have done so. That's it!

To Register a New Troop:

Troops of all new girl and adult members will need to have parents (of girl members) and adult members complete the appropriate registration form provided in your troop packet, collect the membership dues (\$50 for girls, \$30 for adults) for each person, and mail or deliver the membership forms and membership dues to the Girl Scout Center. This can also be completed online.

Congratulations, Amber!

Girl Scout Amber from Manitowoc recently received a \$5,000 scholarship from Girl Scouts of the USA for her Gold Award. Amber's project focused on providing students with real-world business skills through an internship program at her high school. [Read more about her Gold Award & story on our website!](#)

Preparing New Troop Leaders

We want all new troop leaders to feel confident, prepared, and ready to lead their troop. Girl Scouts of Manitou Council requires a five-part learning requirement for all new troop leaders to set them up for success.

Step One: In-person orientation with troop organizer or staff member (Approximately one hour)

New leaders will learn about the basics of Girl Scouting, the activities Girl Scouts do, how to access the information they need, how to get assistance, how to access the vital tools in MY GS (the Volunteer Toolkit, gsLearn), and how to access the following onboarding trainings there.

Step Two: New Leader Onboarding: Online Courses (self-paced)

- **New Leader Onboarding — Your First Troop Meeting:** This course guides you through planning a successful first meeting that welcomes girls and sets the tone for the year.
- **New Leader Onboarding — Safety:** Learn essential safety protocols to keep your troop safe during activities and outings.
- **New Leader Onboarding — Funding the Fun:** Explore options for financing troop activities, including budgeting, fundraising, and the Girl Scout Cookie Program.
- **New Leader Onboarding — What Girl Scouts Do:** Uncover the exciting world of Girl Scouts, exploring the program for each age level and the amazing experiences it offers girls.
- **Child Abuse and Neglect Training:** This training provides essential knowledge and tools to identify, report, and prevent child abuse and neglect, fostering a safer environment for all children.

Following completion of each of these courses, you will receive a confirmation email from Hope Spies, our Director of Program Quality, telling you a few additional bits of information about that particular topic in Manitou Council. The entire training must be completed by new leaders within three months of appointment.

First Aid/CPR/AED Certification

We are offering blended learning (in-person & online) First Aid/CPR/AED classes this fall and winter at the Girl Scout Center in Sheboygan. This American Heart Association course contains step-by-step, hands-on training that allows participants to respond effectively in emergency and life-threatening situations. There will be an online portion you will need to complete before attending one of the in-person skills trainings. Once registered, you will receive an email with the requirements. Upon completion, you will receive a two-year certification through the American Heart Association. If you can't attend any of these classes or have questions, please contact Program Specialist, Abby Weber, at abby@gsmanitou.org.

Dates:

- Saturday, August 16
- Saturday, September 20
- Saturday, October 18
- Saturday, November 15
- Saturday, December 13

Cost: \$60 per person

Please note: The cost includes all materials needed, including an adult/child & infant CPR Mask in a soft case.

All classes are 8:00 a.m. to Noon

REGISTER AT:
bit.ly/3U73uSM

Online Outdoor Adventure Training

Outdoor Adventures Training is required for at least one registered adult volunteer of a troop before bringing a troop camping in tents or cooking over a fire. This training is available for troops of all levels. This is an online training and is available on gsLearn. All you need to do is search for it in your assigned trainings. You must complete every course in the learning path and the final assessment to meet the requirements of the training. If you have any questions about the online training, please contact Director of Program Quality, Hope Spies, at hope@gsmanitou.org.

A group may request an Outdoor Adventures session at either Camp Evelyn or Camp Manitou by contacting hope@gsmanitou.org.

Women in Technology Event for Girls

Save the date for the WIT for Girls (Women in Technology for Girls) free virtual event! WIT for Girls will be hosting a free virtual event on **Thursday, October 2, 3:15-4:45 p.m. for girls in 6th grade and up.** The theme is "The Places You Can Go!" Girls will hear from real-life STEM role models and learn how girls can start their journey in technology. We will send out more information as it becomes available. However, if you have any questions about this event or how to get involved, please reach out to info@witwisconsin.com.

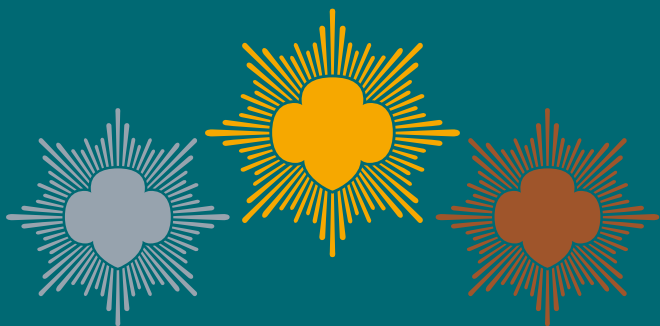
Girl Scout Teen Advisory Board

Shout out to all Girl Scouts in 6th grade and up! We would love for your teen Girl Scouts to be a part of our Teen Advisory Board. This opportunity will allow girls to help make informative decisions on programming and more. We will be selecting 10 girls throughout our council area to serve a one-year term. Most Teen Advisory Board meetings will be held virtually. Get ready for your voice to be heard and take your experience to the next level! Apply at: bit.ly/ManitouTeenAdvisoryBoard by November 1st!

After the review of your application, you will be contacted for an interview. Please note that current members will not need to reapply.

If you have any questions about the Teen Advisory Board, please contact the Program Specialist, Abby Weber, at abby@gsmanitou.org.

Girl Scouting's Highest Awards



Do the girls in your troop want to earn their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award but do not know where to start? Our Program Specialist, Abby Weber, would love to meet with your troop to talk about these wonderful Highest Awards in Girl Scouting and all the opportunities they bring. Contact Abby at abby@gsmanitou.org to schedule a meeting.

Destinations



Girl Scout Destinations are the ultimate adventure for individual girls in 6th grade and up! With different trips every year, there is something amazing for everyone. Not only will girls have life-changing experiences on their Destination, but they will also meet new friends from across the country and maybe even the globe. Girls apply and submit reference forms for Destinations online. Girl Scouts of Manitou Council helps pay the cost of Destinations and aids girls in planning for money earning, so do not let the cost be a deterrent to girls applying. Destination information can be found at girlscouts.org/travel.

Have questions or want more information? Contact the Program Specialist, Abby Weber, at abby@gsmanitou.org.



Girl Scouts Love State Parks 2025 is September 13 & 14. Girl Scouts, troops, and families are encouraged to get out and explore Wisconsin's beautiful, and many, state parks during this weekend. We will have a limited number of the special Girl Scouts Love State Parks patches to give away for free! To receive a free patch from us:

1. Get out at a state park during Girl Scouts Love State Parks weekend!
2. Parents or troop leaders take pictures of their Girl Scout(s) at the park.
3. Send the photos to communicationsintern@gsmanitou.org.

We will continue to share more information and reminders leading up to the event. Last year was our biggest year yet with over 160 girls participating. Let's make it another big year for Girl Scouts Love State Parks!

Ghostly Ghou Scout Trail Walk at Camp Evelyn

Come out to Camp Evelyn for a special Ghostly Ghou Scout Trail Walk. Our Girl Scout troops have created special exhibits throughout camp for your viewing. Each exhibit includes a spooktacular scene with a Girl Scout twist. All exhibits will be kid-friendly so feel free to bring the whole family along. Warm refreshments will be available. Our camp store will be open for shopping during the event so you can score some discounted camp gear. Costumes are welcome! Make sure to cast your vote for your favorite scene before you head out.

When: October 11 from 5:00-8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5/person in advance

\$10/person at the gate or after October 8th at 8:00 a.m.

REGISTER at bit.ly/GhoulScoutWalk2025 by October 8th at 8:00 a.m. for the \$5/person price

Does your troop have what it takes to create a spooky Girl Scout scene? We're looking for troops to participate in creating scenes for the Ghostly Ghou Scout Trail Walk at Camp Evelyn. One group from each Girl Scout level will win a free stay at one of our camp buildings. This will be based on votes received during the trail walk. There will be a limited number of spots available so **register at bit.ly/3Dh3NSt** soon! The full set of rules is available on the registration form.

Girl Scouts National Convention 2026: Girl Scouts Unite



Your Girl Scout troop or Girl Scout family can join 10,000+ Girl Scouts at the 2026 Girl Scout Convention in Washington, DC, July

23-25, 2026, as we celebrate the spirit, individuality, and self-confidence that make Girl Scouts shine.

This special gathering happens only once every three years and will take place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. From July 23-25, Girl Scouts from all over the country will stream into our nation's capital for a multi-day event featuring interactive workshops, inspiring speakers, and once-in-a-lifetime adventures that spark forever friendships.

4-person entry for the 3-day convention is \$1,600-\$2,000/or \$440-\$550 per person depending on timing of registration. The 4-person pass includes:

- Entry to the event for 3 days with at least one scheduled session a day, although many activities go on all day and are unlimited
- Transportation from the convention center to/from one of 17 Girl Scout hotels
- Admission to the national Gold Award Celebration
- Admission to the National Bridging Ceremony and fun patch

There are 17 hotels to choose from that are roughly \$250/night for hotel rooms with 2 queen beds or one king. Some have roll-away bed opportunities.

Earlier in the week (July 20-22) our 58th National Council Session Business Meeting will be held in Washington DC where delegates from around the country and overseas gather to vote on and discuss issues important to our Movement and elect leaders for the next triennium.

Learn more and join the Convention Insider List to receive more information as it becomes available by scanning the QR Code. If you decide you want to learn more about attending with your troop, contact Abby Weber at abby@gsmanitou.org to get guidance on national travel.



New Girl Scout Programming

Leadership Award Suite

Personal Leadership
True North Award

Build confidence and courage to lead your way.

Available for Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors/Ambassadors

Peer Leadership
Silver Torch Award & Gold Torch Award

Be an awesome teammate + learn to guide a group.

Available for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors

Teaching Leadership
Junior Aide, Program Aide, Volunteer-in-Training, Counselor in Training I & II

Share your skills and inspire younger kids with hands-on leadership.

Available for Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors/Ambassadors

Community Advocacy
Take Action & Global Action Awards

Turn your passions into action by making change locally or globally.

Available for Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors/Ambassadors

These new and modernized Leadership Awards recognize the many ways Girl Scout Juniors-Ambassadors lead themselves, others, and their communities. They are now available in the Volunteer Toolkit. Girls can use one of these Leadership Awards as a pre-requisite for earning the Highest Awards. Please note: Journeys will be retiring and these awards are taking their place. Journeys will officially retire on October 1, 2026.

Body Appreciation Badge Line

Daisy: Fun with Movement
Moving your body for fun, including the development of gross and fine motor skills

Brownie: Me Time
Using your amazing body as a tool to help you feel your best

Junior: Uniquely Us
Learning to appreciate differences, celebrate similarities, and accept your unique self

Cadette: Outside the Mirror
Question beauty standards to find and appreciate your authentic self

Senior: Mind, Body, Me
Supporting overall well-being

Ambassador: Cheers to Every Body
Appreciate and celebrate uniqueness in yourself & others

The Body Appreciation badges are brand new! There is one badge per level. These badges are designed to transform the ways girls think about their body. They guide Girl Scouts to appreciate the many functions and abilities of their bodies through fun, age-appropriate, and progressive activities.

Solutions Superstar

Earn the patch. Choose your challenge.

The new Solutions Superstar patch program invites Girl Scouts of all grade levels to tackle hands-on challenges through six fun activities. They'll build skills like creative thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving.

2026 Girl Scout Cookie Sale



With each new cookie season, Girl Scout entrepreneurs know it's about more than just the cookies — it's about being **BRAVE** enough to make their pitch, **FIERCE** enough to smash their biggest goals, and having loads of cookie **FUN** while doing it!

Important Cookie Sale Dates

- **January 1:** Digital Cookie open for all orders. Door-to-door sales begin.
- **January 26:** Deadline for all troop initial cookie orders to be submitted.
- **February 6 - March 15:** Booth sales.
- **February 12-23:** Cookie delivery to communities.



Introducing Exploremores!



There's a new cookie this cookie season! Introducing Exploremores! These rocky road ice-cream inspired sandwich cookies are filled with flavors of chocolate, marshmallow, and toasted almond crème. They will sell for \$6.

But shhh...let's keep these a secret for the time being! Girl Scouts of the USA plans to officially announce the new cookie in early September. But as a key volunteer, we wanted you to be one of the first to know!



Troop Cookie Manager:

Please register a Troop Cookie Sale Manager as a member when you register your troop.



Cookie Awards

While you are planning your Girl Scout year, don't forget about the Cookie Business and Financial Literacy badges, and the Cookie Entrepreneur Family Pin, that Girl Scouts can earn each year they run their own cookie business. These badges are perfect for girls to earn during cookie season and help them take their skill building to the next level. Check out this flyer at bit.ly/4lry0my for more details about the badges available for each level.

