



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PROGRAM

The Basics

Q: What is the Girl Scout Leadership Experience?

A: The Girl Scout Leadership Experience engages girls in discovering themselves, connecting with others and taking action to make the world a better place.

Q: What are the three keys to leadership and how do they relate to the Leadership model?

A: Discover, Connect and Take Action. These three keys are defined as:

- **Discover:** Girls understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world.
- **Connect:** Girls care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.
- **Take Action:** Girls act to make the world a better place.

In Girl Scouting, Discover+Connect+Take Action=Leadership. All Girl Scout experiences are intentionally designed to tie to one or more of the 15 national leadership outcomes, or benefits, categorized under the three keys to leadership. The three keys to leadership replace Girl Scouting's "four program goals."

Q: What are the Girl Scout processes?

A: In Girl Scouting, it's not just "what girls do" (activities), but "how" (processes) they do them (activities). When used together, these processes—Girl Led, Cooperative Learning and Learning by Doing—ensure quality and promote the fun and friendship so integral to Girl Scouting. Here's how Girl Scouts defines these processes:

- **Girl Led:** Girl led is just what it sounds like—girls play an active part in figuring out the what, where, when, how and why of their activities. They lead the planning and decision-making as much as possible. This ensures that girls are engaged in their learning and experience leadership opportunities as they prepare to become active participants in their local and global communities.

- **Learning by Doing:** A hands-on learning process that engages girls in continuous cycles of action and reflection that result in deeper understanding of concepts and mastery of practical skills. As they participate in meaningful activities and then reflect on them, girls get to explore their own questions, discover answers, gain new skills and share ideas and observations with others. Throughout the process, it's important for girls to be able to connect their experiences to their lives and apply what they have learned to their future experiences.
- **Cooperative Learning:** Through cooperative learning, girls work together toward shared goals in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration that encourages the sharing of skills, knowledge and learning. Working together in all-girl environments also encourages girls to feel powerful and emotionally and physically safe, and it allows them to experience a sense of belonging even in the most diverse groups.

New Membership Levels

Q: What are the new grade levels?

A: The National Board of Directors approved these grade levels in 2006 to provide increased differentiation and advancement as girls experience Girl Scouting. Girls may transition to the new levels as early as the 2008/2009 membership year. Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council will work with leaders and parents to help choose the program level that best meets the girls' needs and interests.

- Girl Scout Daisies
(Grades K-1)
- Girl Scout Brownies
(Grades 2-3)
- Girl Scout Juniors
(Grades 4-5)
- Girl Scout Cadettes
(Grades 6-8)
- Girl Scout Seniors
(Grades 9-10)
- Girl Scout Ambassadors
(Grades 11-12)

Q: What changes will be made to the membership registration forms?

A: Currently, the dues summary registration form asks for "one grade level that represents the majority of the girls registering now" and displays the current grade levels. For the 2008/2009 membership year, all leaders are asked to attach a "note of intention" to the dues summary stating their programming level intentions for the girls'. Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council will work closely with Service Area Registrars to properly register girls at their desired level.

Q: Should my Daisy troop continue with a second year of programming at the Daisy level or transition to Brownies?

A: Ask the girls! The interests of the girls should drive their Girl Scout experience. They may choose to follow the new Daisy journey supplemented with additional activities for the 2008/2009 membership year or they may desire to pursue Brownie level programming and Try-Its. The choice is theirs.

Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council is also available to help through this process. You may contact council at (800) 400-GIRL.

Journeys

Q: What is a journey?

A. Journeys are the new framework for how girls participate in Girl Scouting. Each Girl Scout grade level—including the new highest level, Ambassadors—will have the opportunity to enjoy its own unique journey from the *It's Your World—Change It!* Series of journey books. In these premier journeys of the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience, Taking Action has a starring role. Each journey unfolds through a sequence of activities and discussions that add up to one giant adventure. Fun and challenging experiences mingle in that special way that makes Girl Scouting unique from school and other extracurricular activities. Journeys reach to the core of Girl Scouting and its mission of girl leadership. They also dip back into beloved Girl Scout traditions—and take time to create new ones. Journeys also reach forward, with cutting-edge information and design. When a Girl Scout journey comes to a close, girls and their adult guides truly feel a sense of accomplishment—and come to cherish the awards they've earned along the way.

Q: What are the books for girls in the first series of leadership journeys?

A: The first books for girls are all part of the *It's Your World—Change It!* series of leadership journeys. This series features one new book for girls at each grade level in Girl Scouting:

- *Welcome to the Daisy Flower Garden*
- *Brownie Quest*
- *Agent of Change (for Juniors)*
- *aMAZE (for Cadettes)*
- *GIRLtopia: Toward an Ideal World for Girls (for Seniors)*
- *Your Voice, Your World: The Power of Advocacy (for Ambassadors)*

At every grade level, these books place great emphasis on inviting girls to “Take Action” on an issue they care about. The books also contain stories, inspirational material, Girl Scout history, traditions and values, facts and games, and open spaces for girls to fill in their own ideas and memories.

“How to” books have been created for adults corresponding to each of the girl books. These guides for adult volunteers offer plenty of support, including sample sessions to tailor with girls, to carry out the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Q: When will the first journeys be available?

A: All girl and adult books in the *It's Your World—Change It!* series are slated to be off the press in summer 2008. Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council will have all journeys available in the retail shops as soon as possible after press.

Q: How many other journeys will be developed and when will they be available?

A: There will be about three journeys for every grade level by 2010. A second journey series will roll out in 2009, and the third in 2010. Girls at each level will be able to choose the journey that most interests them or do them all.

Q: Will the journeys be translated into Spanish?

A: Yes! Work will begin while the English language books are at the printer this spring and will require several months to ensure accurate and relevant translation of the journeys. The Daisy, Brownie and Junior journeys (girl and adult books) will be translated first, and are slated for release by the end of October 2008. The materials for the upper grade levels will follow.

Q: How much will the books cost?

A: Girl Scouts of the USA is aware of the importance of being cost-conscious and has worked to provide excellent value. The cost will be \$7 per journey. It is important that every girl has her own book to fully experience the journey.

Q: What will happen to existing badge books, handbooks and STUDIO 2B books?

A: These books remain available and viable Girl Scout resources. Girls may continue using them based on their interests.

As Girl Scouting phases in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, GSUSA will be determining which resources might still be needed to supplement the new approach between 2008 and 2010, or which resources might be needed beyond 2010. Information will be provided with advance notice as decisions are made throughout the transition period. Girls will always have a chance to complete existing plans and transition to new materials.

Q: How will home-schooled or independently registered Girl Scouts use the journey materials?

A: Individually registered girls—and the adults who guide them—are encouraged to network with other Girl Scouts in their communities. One of our three critical processes of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is cooperative learning. Sharing some of the discussions and experiences with others will enrich the journey and provide girls with opportunities to increase team-building and networking skills.

Q: How will multilevel groups use the journeys?

A: Let's use *It's Your World-Change It!* series as an example. Girls at every level will be engaged in taking action. Taking action provides a unifying theme for multigrade level groups so girls at multiple grade levels can have their own grade-appropriate journey, yet they will be able to support each other in accomplishing goals. All the journeys encourage girls to share or "pass forward" some of what they are learning and experiencing with other girls. Multigrade groups offer a wonderful setting for this to happen.

Grade Level Specifics

Q: Is there enough program content to provide a meaningful experience for Daisies?

A: Adults guiding Daisies are encouraged to follow the many tips and suggestions in the “how-to” adult guide that accompanies the journey. They will quickly find that with a little imagination, this Daisy journey can extend far beyond the six sample sessions provided in the book. As new journeys continue to be developed, Girl Scout Daisies can continue using existing Daisy resources and earn Daisy Petals, if they choose.

Q: What will be special for the new Ambassador level? How will girls bridge?

A: The journey for Ambassadors, *Your Voice, Your World: The Power of Advocacy*, engages Ambassadors in an advocacy experience. When they have completed the steps to advocacy, they will earn the new Advocate Award created especially for girls at this level. Ambassadors are encouraged to “pass on” to younger girls some of what they learn on their journey. A bridging award will be available for Ambassadors in spring 2009, and girls who begin the Ambassador level in fall 2008 may earn this award retroactively.

Awards

Q: What new awards can girls earn with the *It's Your World-Change It!* journeys?

A: Girl Scouts at each of the six grade levels have a chance to earn new official awards as they complete steps along the journey. The awards are designed to be worn on the Girl Scout uniform. Daisies, Brownies, Juniors and Cadettes have the chance to earn several badges along the journey. Seniors and Ambassadors can mark the completion of their journey with a pin or badge.

The steps for earning the awards are clearly explained in the “how-to” books for volunteers created for each journey. Girls have information about the awards in their books, too. The journey books for girls and adults also have suggested reflection and ceremony ideas related to earning the awards. The goal is to provide opportunities for girls to fully understand the achievement and growth the awards represent.

Q: Can girls still earn badges, apart from journeys?

A: Girls are welcome to continue choosing and earning badges that represent their varied interests. Earning badges is an important tradition in Girl Scouting and it is here to stay! As adults and girls become more familiar with the elements of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, they will even be able to see how the Discover, Connect and Take Action leadership keys can be integrated into earning badges.

Of course, no matter what activities girls do in Girl Scouting, the experience is always best when it incorporates the Girl Scout processes: Girl Led, Learning by Doing and Cooperative Learning.

Q: What is the future of badges?

A: Over the next several years, Girl Scouts of the USA will be updating some badges to ensure the learning experiences tie to the national leadership outcomes intended for girls. As new or refreshed badges become available and “old” badges are phased out, girls will have time to transition. They will not “lose out” on activities they have begun or planned.

Girl Scout members have expressed interest in the availability of badges online and GSUSA is considering and analyzing this possibility. Further information will be available from GSUSA in 2009.

Q: What about local badge activities?

A: Locally created badge activities remain an important way to respond to the interests and needs of girls. By using the Leadership Experience as the “engine” for all programming, Girl Scout San Gorgonio Council will be able to begin adjusting local offerings, purposefully planning them based on the leadership outcomes intended for girls.

Q: How do the Girl Scout Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards fit into the Girl Scout Leadership Experience?

A: Girl Scouts of the USA is working to update the requirements for earning the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards and new guidelines will be available online in spring 2009. During the transition years (2008-2010), girls may continue earning the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards based on existing standards.

Q: How can we prepare for the future of the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards?

A: Girl Scout communities eager to begin planning for the updated approach to the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards prior to spring 2009 may note the following:

Grade Levels for Earning the Awards

Bronze Award:	Earned by Juniors	(4 th -5 th grade)
Silver Award:	Earned by Cadettes	(6 th -8 th grade)
Gold Award:	Earned by Seniors or Ambassadors	(9 th -12 th grade)

Anticipated Pre-Requisite Steps

The *It’s Your World-Change It!* journeys have been intentionally designed to engage girls in a critical thinking process related to identifying and researching issues they care about, developing community networks and creating and implementing plans to take action. Upon completion of the journeys, girls will be prepared to carry out substantial award projects. Based on this, Girl Scouts of the USA anticipates that when girls complete the journeys in this series, they will have completed the prerequisites, at the relevant grade levels, for Bronze, Silver and Gold Award projects and ultimately earn the awards.

Options for the 2008-2009 Membership Year:

- Girls may earn the Girl Scout Bronze, Silver or Gold Awards following *existing* guidelines.

OR

- Girls may complete a journey and, upon release of the new guidelines in spring 2009, begin work toward the Girl Scout Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

Uniforms

The National Board of Directors approved a new uniform policy, to begin in fall 2008. Based on this policy, girls at each level will have one official uniform item (e.g., tunic, vest, sash) so they can display the pins and badges they earn. Girl Scout Juniors and older program age groups will wear their vests and sashes with white shirts and khaki pants, making it easier for more girls than ever before to show their pride as Girl Scouts. Daisies and Brownies may also wear “khaki and white” or choose to wear full uniform ensembles for their grade level. The Daisy tunic remains available. There will also be a variety of casual uniform components available for those times when official dress uniform is not required.

Adult uniforms will consist of a scarf worn with the membership pins for women and a tie for men. The scarf/tie and membership pins will be worn with navy blue business attire.

OUTCOMES AND TRANSFORMING LEADERSHIP

Q: What is *Transforming Leadership*?

A: *Transforming Leadership* is a GSUSA publication that defines the specific outcomes (benefits) of the new Girl Scout Leadership Experience for girls. The book describes the outcomes for each of the six grade levels within Girl Scouting. The outcome is defined in developmentally appropriate ways for each grade level; examples of measurable signs that show whether girls are making progress are provided as well. *Transforming Leadership* will help orient volunteers, staff and the general public to the model underlying the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. It is the next step in Girl Scouting’s effort to develop today’s generation of girl leaders.

This is a pivotal time in the history of Girl Scouting. This new publication will serve as an essential resource now and into the future. *Transforming Leadership* is available in the council retail shops.

Q: How do I use the *Transforming Leadership* outcomes reference tables?

A: One way to think of the outcomes reference tables (beginning on page 23) is to view them as the Girl Scout equivalent of dictionary entries – reference tools to use as needed. These tables orient the Girl Scout community toward the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience outcomes and can be useful in selecting and implementing program, writing funding proposals, helping volunteers and parents understand the objectives of the Girl Scout program, as well as recruiting girls and volunteers.

For your convenience, the tables have been organized in two easy-to-use formats: the first set of tables “unpacks” each outcome across the six Girl Scout grade levels and the second set of tables shows all the outcomes by each specific Girl Scout grade level. The first set of tables is useful for showing progression across grade levels. The second set of tables will be useful to anyone working with a specific grade level.

The outcomes in *Transforming Leadership* apply to the new journeys, which will be released later this summer, as well as to existing Girl Scout program materials. The development of the new journeys was tied closely to these outcomes.

Q: What is the difference between outcomes and indicators/signs?

A: Outcomes describe general benefits (behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, condition, status, or other attributes) for participants as a result of involvement in the Girl Scout program. Outcomes are the *intended benefits* girls should reap as a result of the program. Indicators/signs are specific observable characteristics or changes that represent achievement of a specific outcome at each grade level. Page 17 of *Transforming Leadership* displays a guide to reading the tables. If you look at one of the reference tables, you will note the differences between outcomes—general descriptions of the intended benefits—and indicator/signs—what a girl would be doing, saying, or feeling if she had achieved the intended outcome that came as a result of her involvement in the Girl Scout program. Please note that indicators/signs in these tables are examples—you will be able to imagine others.

The Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI), in partnership with Girl Scout councils, is currently developing measurement tools using *Transforming Leadership* as a guide.

Q: I can think of more indicators/signs for each outcome than *Transforming Leadership* lists. What do I do now?

A: The indicators/signs included in *Transforming Leadership* offer a starting point. You will think of more indicators/signs that would capture the meaning of each outcome. The Girl Scout Research Institute is eager to hear from you, so please provide feedback and suggestions to gsresearch@girlscouts.org.

Q: Can we just take indicators on the tables and measure outcomes from them?

A: The signs of outcome achievement are *not* ready-to-use measurement tools, although they will inform our efforts in developing measurement tools (survey and interview questions, focus group discussion guides, observation checklists, etc.). Now that we have begun to chart the benefits of the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience and orient volunteers and staff to those benefits, the next step is to develop these types of measurement tools.

In spring 2008, the GSRI will pilot these instruments in collaboration with selected Girl Scout councils and an external research firm. Stay tuned for more exciting details.

Q: Council is beginning to bring its program offerings in line with the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Does that mean each of our troop level program activities should achieve all 15 outcomes?

A: No single program activity is expected to target all 15 outcomes defined in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Over time, through accumulated experience, girls will reap the benefits described in *Transforming Leadership*. Achieving the mission -- Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character to make the world a better place -- is a long-term process.

Keep in mind the Girl Scout Leadership Experience has three keys to leadership: Discover, Connect and Take Action. So it is important that program incorporates outcomes from each of the three leadership keys to be consistent with the new approach. It is equally important to incorporate the three Girl Scout processes: girl led, learning by doing and cooperative learning.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Q: How will we prepare volunteers for the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience?

A. Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council will be hosting We Believe in Girls Summit 2008 on August 16, 2008 to introduce and prepare volunteers to use the new Girl Scout Leadership Experience. The day-long event will feature two sessions. In the morning session, volunteers will have an opportunity to complete the new volunteer training and learn to navigate the new journey for girls. The afternoon session, titled "Speaking Up: A Bold Voice for Girls" will feature several keynote speakers and frank presentations about the current world that girls must navigate. Their informative insights will help volunteers learn about key issues facing girls today.

We Believe in Girls - Summit 2008

Saturday, August 16, 2006

9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Ontario Convention Center

Adult Member Registration Fee: \$35 (a \$135 value)

Session 1: *Navigating the New Journey for Girls*

- Presentations by Susan Swanson, Vice President of Membership and Volunteerism, GSUSA; Samara Kaufman, Membership and Volunteerism Consultant, GSUSA; and Jessica Lawrence, CEO, Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council
- Leadership Essentials training session with official roll-out of the new age-level journeys for girls (Leadership Essentials will be required of all leaders, co-leaders, and assistant leaders in 2009 membership year) – you will receive a journey/facilitator guide set with your summit registration
- Lunch with FAQ session to receive answers to your questions

Session 2: *Speaking Up: A Bold Voice for Girls*

- Confirmed keynote presentations by:
 - Cheryl Charles, nationally respected authority on environmental education programming and President of the Children and Nature Network
 - Carol Platt Liebau, author of *Prude: How the Sex Obsessed Culture Damages Girls (and America Too!)*
 - *And more to come!*
- Meet the author and book signing opportunities available after the keynote presentations

For more information about We Believe in Girls, please contact Linda Tailleart at (800) 400-4475 ext. 229 or ltailleart@gssgc.org

In addition, GSUSA will be launching the following nationally consistent learning components to support volunteers working directly with girls:

- Volunteer Orientation
- Leadership Essentials course
- Troop (and other Pathways) packets

These three components, in conjunction with the *Guide for Adult Volunteers* which accompanies the girls' journey book, will provide volunteers with all they need to know to successfully work with girls. These components will replace the current Leader 1, Leader 2 and Leader 3 training. This transition will take place on or before August 16, 2008.

Q: Will all volunteers have to take training again?

A: The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is exciting and new, and we want to ensure all girls have the opportunity to benefit. We urge you to attend "GirlSpeak" on August 16, 2008 to have a thorough understanding of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. For those unable to attend, Girl Scouts of San Geronio Council will offer regional training opportunities.

Q: Will there still be a role for trainers in a council?

A: Absolutely! We are shifting our focus from "training" to a much broader focus on "adult learning." In councils today many trainers are facilitating content. In moving to a Learning Support Team we see multiple roles including Adult Learning Facilitators and Coaches. Adult Learning Facilitators may facilitate content face to face or online. Coaches would provide ongoing support particularly to new volunteers.

Q: What is happening with adult recognitions?

A: The adult recognitions booklet is under revision for future years. The pins will still be available until at least 2010 during this period of transition. Detailed information about adult recognitions for the current membership year can be found online at www.gssgc.org.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Girl Scouts of San Geronio Council will offer a teleconference hosted by Jessica Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer, to discuss this list of FAQs and to help answer any additional questions. The teleconference will be offered on Tuesday, July 8 at noon and again at 7 p.m.

You can call in from any phone and do not need to drive to a council service center. If you are unable to call in, a podcast of the call will be available online in the days following. To dial into the call, please follow the instructions listed below. Although we will be answering questions on the call, if you already know of questions that you would like to have answered, please e-mail them in advance to feedback@gssgc.org.

Conference Call Instructions:

1. At the specified time, dial the Access Number (800) 704-9804
2. When prompted, enter your Participant Code followed by #
3. Your Participant Code is 746339#

Participant Conference Call Commands (if needed):

- *4 - Volume - Pressing *4 will increase/decrease the volume.
- *6 - Mute - Participants can mute/unmute their own lines by pressing *6.
- *1 - to ask question
- # - to remove question