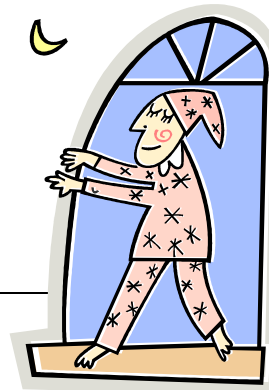


# BE SAFE, BE READY: Outings and Overnights



The online or independent studies

**BE SAFE, BE READY: Girl Planning** and

**BE SAFE, BE READY: Outings and Overnights**

constitute Level 1 of GSHNC's Outdoor Training, and are required to advance to higher levels of Outdoor Training.

Be Safe, Be Ready (BSBR) allows a Leader to take their Troop overnight to a site where girls sleep in enclosed facilities containing flush toilets. No fire building or outdoor cooking is allowed at this training level.

To read about further Outdoor Training levels and opportunities, please check the [Adult Development page](#) on our website.

## How To Proceed With This Course

Outings & Overnights is composed of nine chapters. Read the material and then complete the quiz linked on the [Adult Development page](#) on our website. You must score at least an 80% on the quiz to pass this section.

During your study or in the quiz, you may need to consult the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* and "Safety-Wise" in *Volunteer Essentials*, both of which you can find on the [Forms page of our website](#).

When you attend higher levels of Outdoor Training (such as Fire Building and Outdoor Cooking), you will be asked for the dates of your successful completion of **Outings and Overnights** and **Girl Planning**.

And now you're ready to move on to the learning session. Enjoy!



### Course Objectives:

By the end of this course the participant will be able to:

- ☐ list four values of Girl Scout outdoor experiences
- ☐ describe procedures for ensuring a safe trip and dealing with emergencies
- ☐ determine girl readiness for overnight adventures
- ☐ list seven principles of Leave No Trace

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## TROOP CAMPING AS A GIRL SCOUT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Like all Girl Scout experiences, camping, whether it is in a lodge or a tent, begins by focusing on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience where girls **discover** themselves and their values, **connect** by caring and teaming with others, and **take action** to improve themselves, their families, their communities and their world.

When girls become completely involved in every aspect of their camping trip, from planning to implementing, girls begin to gain a deeper knowledge of themselves, develop healthy relationships, connect with living the Girl Scout Law and have tons of FUN.

### Creating a Quality Experience

It is not just about what girls do, but how they participate in activities that creates a quality Girl Scout experience. All Girl Scout activities are built on three processes – **Girl Led, Cooperative Learning, and Learning by Doing**. These processes ensure quality and promote fun and friendship so important in Girl Scouting. Take some time to understand these processes and how to use them when planning and conducting a camping trip.

## GIRL-LED

Girl-led simply means that girls are playing an active part in figuring out the “what, where, when, how and why” of their activities.

**For overnights and troop camping this means:**

**Girls will choose** if they want to go camping, where they want to go camping, what they want to eat and what they will do on their camping trip.

**Girls will decide** the purpose of the camping trip. The focus may be on learning new camping skills or cooking methods, doing community service on a camping property, learning more about their outdoor environment or working on a badge.

### Food for Thought

Instead of asking a girl who has special dietary needs to bring her own special meal, have the troop work cooperatively to create a meal plan that suits everyone’s needs. Remind the girls to account for everyone’s dietary needs, food likes and dislikes.

## LEARNING BY DOING

Girls gain a deeper meaning and feel more accomplished when they are engaged fully in doing an activity.

Throughout the learning by doing process, it is important for girls to be able to connect these experiences to their lives and apply what they have learned to their future experiences.

**For overnights and troop camping you want to:**

**Allow time to stop and reflect** on their actions and think about the activities they’ve just done. *You can prompt discussions by asking questions like: What did you think about what we did? What was the purpose of what we just did? What will you do differently next time?*

**Acknowledge girls’ progress** and celebrate small milestones to keep them encouraged.

*The first time a girl lights a match is a small task, yet a milestone in her life.*

**Practice outdoor progression** by ensuring that each girl is ready for an activity so she can build skills with confidence.

**Nurture their curiosity** and answer their “whys?” *“Why are skunks only out at night?” “Why can’t I eat in the tent?”*

### Step Back and Let Go

As girls practice new skills and become comfortable with planning, consider “fading facilitation,” a process in which your role decreases as the girls are more prepared to increase their role. The more they do, the more confident they become. Your success is actually measured by how much you let go and let them do!

## 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. When girls work together and experience team work they experience a sense of belonging and commitment to the group.

**For overnights and troop camping you want to:**

**Direct girls** to help others, teach others, and not just focus on their own needs. *When rolling sleeping bags girls assist each other rather than focusing on their own needs.*

**Encourage girls** to share ideas and thoughts. *Have girls discuss what foods they like to eat, how their family prepares the meal at home and how they will prepare it at camp.*

**Negotiate a common ground** that includes everyone. Reaching consensus and seeking compromises are important life skills. *Negotiate the issue of not being in the same patrol as their best friend.*

Building girls of  
courage, confidence,  
and character,  
who make the world  
a better place.

Through everything we do, we work toward one goal:

## WHY OUTDOOR?

### The Value of Outdoor Adventures for Girl Scouts



The value of an outdoor experience in a girl's life is beyond measure. It is a time for creating memories that will last a lifetime. It has been an important component of Girl Scouting since the beginning of the organization. The outdoors provides the setting for girls to:

- stretch their minds and muscles;
- appreciate the uniqueness and beauty of the world in which they live;
- exercise leadership;
- learn a wide variety of new skills;
- be challenged as individuals and as groups working toward a common goal.

The outdoors offers many opportunities for girls to live in a community of caring adults who nurture girls in a different environment. Girls grow in areas such as self-confidence, independence, leadership, new skills and interests, comradeship, and decision-making ability.

Girls develop lifetime friendships; they live and participate in a community that recognizes differences; they discover the value of being in a safe, supportive environment. The outdoors and camping offer not only adventure and challenge—but they are FUN! They present a perfect setting in which to emphasize:

- **Discovering**—Girls develop a strong sense of self, gain practical and healthy life skills and strengthen their values
- **Connecting**—Girls form caring relationships, promote cooperation and team building and embrace diversity
- **Taking Action**—Girls feel empowered to make a difference, identify and solve problems they care about, and advocate for themselves and others

Camp and the outdoors are also a good place for reflecting on the Girl Scout Promise and Law.



Camping techniques and ethics have changed dramatically since Juliette Low first took girls on an overnight adventure along the Savannah River. In the early days of camping, the wilderness was conquered with little thought about human impact on the natural environment.

That way of thinking has changed! Later in this module, you will learn the principles of Leave No Trace camping—practical conservation techniques designed to minimize impact on the environment. LNT should become an important and integral part of all outdoor activities in Girl Scouting.

#### The Leader's "Secret Agenda"

Camping and outdoor activities present a whole new opportunity for learning for girls. Something as seemingly simple as playing a game or roasting marshmallows with friends can help shape a girl's life.

As adults in Girl Scouting, we want girls to learn more than just how to tie a knot or pitch a tent. We want our girls to grow with that knowledge, to gain confidence, to work with others, to see how her actions affect others and to make good decisions. That's a lot to expect from simply learning to tie a square knot, isn't it? As a Girl Scout leader, your challenge is to take the activities the girls want to do and direct those activities to meet this "secret agenda" for girl growth. Try it!

For instance, your girls want to go wading - while they are wading why not do some fun aquatic activities to learn about protecting the environment? Or your girls want to stay up all night... okay, grit your teeth, prepare for a sleepless night, and play team-building games or tackle a big service project or learn about the night sky and satellites.

Can you think of ways these activities help girls grow?

- Build a fire
- Go on a hike
- Roast marshmallows
- Sleep outside
- Catch frogs
- Pack clothing for a trip
- Do “kapers”
- Sing together



## More Fun

Have your Girl Scouts look through the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* guide – it includes activity guidelines for swimming, biking, archery, water sports, horseback riding, skating, challenge courses, fishing, and more! What activities are your girls interested in? What ones do they think they can work towards doing this year? Next year?

Find *Safety Activity Checkpoints* on our ‘Forms’ page at: <https://www.hngirlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/about-hornets-nest/forms-and-documents.html>

## Too Much Adventure?

Sometimes we have to rein in our girls’ rambunctious ideas, helping them to understand the limits of safety. Before planning an activity, check *Safety Activity Checkpoints* to make sure your girls are old enough to participate in an activity, and ensure that it is not a type of activity that is not permitted for Girl Scout groups, such as skydiving or hunting.

It is necessary to check with the Girl Scout Council before considering activities that are not listed in “Safety-Wise” in *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide* or the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* or other GSUSA resources.

Remember that safety information is updated on occasion, so you should always check before planning an activity.

The next chapter will guide you to use “Safety-Wise” in *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide* and the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* in planning activities with girls. Remember that you can find these documents, as well as other materials that will help you plan your trip, on the [‘Forms’ page](#) on our website. Helpful documents include:

- Safety Activity Checkpoints
- Volunteer Essentials
- Troop Trip Application
- Permission Form
- Trip Trainings Requirement Chart



# Girls' Activities

## My Dreams, Your Dreams

Leader(s): Prior to the meeting, make a list on poster board or newsprint of reasons you think Girl Scouts go camping. Be sure to include such things as developing self-potential, relating to others, developing values, and contributing to society. And don't forget "to have fun!"

Girls: At the meeting, use another piece of poster board or newsprint and ask the girls to list why they want to go camping.

All: Compare the lists and discuss. Think of things you can do while camping that will fulfill both sets of expectations.

## What a Beautiful World!

Encourage girls to draw pictures of their favorite outdoor spot, then share the pictures with the group.

Ask questions to help determine why this outdoor spot is important to the girl.

- Where is the spot and how did they find it?
- What is their favorite thing to do in this spot?
- Have they seen or heard or learned anything new about nature there?
- Who shares the spot with them—human and animal?
- How would they feel if they couldn't go to this spot?
- How would they feel if the spot changed?

Let the other girls ask questions, too.

## Troop Adventure Box

To encourage all girls in the Troop to submit their ideas, even if they're shy or think the group might not agree with their plan, you can create a 'Troop Adventure Box.' Have the troop decorate a suggestion box that you can have out at your meetings, and allow the girls time to add suggestions to the box at each meeting. Every few weeks, check the suggestions, and see if there are any that are popular with multiple members of the Troop. Discuss everyone's suggestions equally, and see if there are any your Troop wants to work towards!





## BEING SAFETY-WISE



- What are *Safety Activity Checkpoints*?
- Why are they important to me?
- How will they be useful to me in planning girl activities?

“Safety-Wise” in *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide* and the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* are our Girl Scout guide for planning safe activities with girls. As an adult volunteer, you will find these two documents to be some of your most valuable tools for responsible leadership.

Access these documents on the [Forms Page](#) on our website, and use them in conjunction with the Troop Trip Application, Permission Form, and Trip Trainings Requirements Chart to make sure your trip planning goes smoothly!

We are not able to cover ALL the activities you may want to do with your group, but in this chapter we have chosen a few areas to focus on. The following chapters will present critical information on adult supervision, emergency preparedness, and security and risk management.

To answer the questions on the quiz, you’ll need to open the web page for the *Safety Activity Checkpoint* being discussed. For more general information, see “Safety-Wise” in *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide*. Have fun exploring!

**TIP:** For older girls, have them choose an activity and tell YOU what skills they need to develop, what clothing and equipment they should pack, and what supervision is needed. Make it a Girl Led activity by making *them* the leader!

## ADULT SUPERVISION

Activities away from your regular meeting place, and especially for trips, need extra adult supervision. Remember to consult the girl/adult ratio chart when you leave your meeting place. How many adults will you need for YOUR troop?

| Level      | Grade        | At Your Meeting Location:  |  | For Events, Trips, and Camping:  |  |
|------------|--------------|--|--|--|--|
|            |              | 2 Non-Related Adults (at Least One of Whom is Female) can supervise the first ___ girls: | Each additional adult means you can supervise an additional ___ girls: | 2 Non-Related Adults (at Least One of Whom is Female) can supervise the first ___ girls: | Each additional adult means you can supervise an additional ___ girls: |
| DAISY      | K-Grade 1    | 12   | 6  | 6  | 4  |
| BROWNIE    | Grades 2-3   | 20   | 8  | 12   | 6  |
| JUNIOR     | Grades 4-5   | 25   | 10   | 16   | 8  |
| CADETTE    | Grades 6-8   | 25   | 12   | 20   | 10   |
| SENIOR     | Grades 9-10  | 30   | 15   | 24   | 12   |
| AMBASSADOR | Grades 11-12 | 30   | 15   | 24   | 12   |

Here is an example: If you have a group meeting with 17 Daisies, you need two non-related adults (in other words, not sisters, or mother and daughter), at least one of whom is female, plus one additional adult. But if you were to take them camping, you would need those two non-related adults, plus **three** more adults.

## Outdoor/Trip Training: Levels

**Level 1: Be Safe, Be Ready:** The course you are working on right now! It is split into two parts, Girl Planning and Outings and Overnights, and allows you to take your Troop on trips to a site where girls sleep in enclosed facilities containing flush toilets and has refrigerated food storage. No fire building or outdoor cooking is allowed at this training level.

**Level 2: Firebuilding & Outdoor Cooking:** Completion of this training allows participants to lead a troop in campfires and outdoor cooking, and to stay at indoor/cabin locations without on-site refrigeration. Sites must still have tested water and established bathroom facilities.

**Level 3: Overnight Camp Experience:** Completion of this training allows participants to take a troop tent camping at a facility with tested water and established bathroom facilities.

**\*\*Levels 2 and 3 are often offered in a combined event on the same weekend. You can take both together, or take Level 2 first and Level 3 separately later. Check the [Council Calendar](#) for the next training date(s).**

**Level 4: Primitive Camping:** This training prepares adults to work with groups at primitive camp-sites without established shelters, bathrooms, and/or safe drinking water. This is a 6-hour day class, and can often be taken with the Backpacking Preplan to make it an overnight experience. Check the [Council Calendar](#) for the next training date(s).

**Level 5: Backpacking Preplan & Overnight:** Before leading a group on an overnight backpacking experience through the wilderness, participants must acquire skills including equipment selection and packing, trail selection, backpacking safety, preventing and managing trail-side situations, and more. Check the [Council Calendar](#) for the next training date(s).

## Additional Considerations

- You'll need a first-aider when camping, and a wilderness first-aider when further than 30 minutes away from emergency services; check other activities in *Safety Activity Checkpoints* to see if they call for a first-aider.
- At least one adult trained to the level required for your trip must supervise the girls while you are camping. Additional adults to fulfil ratios (see previous page) do not need to be trained.
- It is recommended that, if adults attending the event do not have a current background check, you complete a check of the National Sex Offender Public Website ([www.nsopw.gov](http://www.nsopw.gov)) for each adult that has access to the girls.
- If non-registered adults are attending, make sure that you are completing the Supplemental Insurance Request [available on the forms page on our website](#), so that all attendees are covered in case of injury or accident.
- There may be trips when fathers or male leaders are part of the group. It is not appropriate for males to sleep in the same space with girls. They may participate only if separate sleeping quarters and bathrooms are available for their use. They may share sleeping quarters only with other males or members of their immediate family.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the tent or cabin with the girls. If an adult female does share a sleeping area with girls, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
- A vehicle and driver for emergencies, or other emergency transportation plan, should always be designated in advance, so that your group knows what to do in case they need to evacuate or transport an injured camper.
- All adults going on an outdoor activity or campout should be involved in planning and be informed of their roles. Use your extra adults, put them in charge of a group, and make sure they know Girl Scout camping procedures.
- Meet with all adults involved prior to the outing to inform them of rules and expectations, such as:
  - Rules on tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and behavior. (Never use illegal drugs. Don't consume alcohol, smoke or use foul language in the presence of girls. Reference the *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide*)
  - The event schedule; activities planned
  - Specific responsibilities of adults, and how each should relate to their own child
  - Safety rules for the site you are visiting, and the procedures for handling emergencies
  - Transportation safety policies
  - What to bring, and what **not** to bring



## EMERGENCY PREPARATION for OUTDOOR and OVERNIGHT EVENTS

Emergency Preparation is an essential part of planning for any trip, but doubly so for outdoor events, where you might be further away from emergency services. Prepare for an emergency before you leave home by:

- Completing the Outdoor Training required for your trip, and inviting parent helpers to do so as well, so that you have backup.
- Remembering your first-aid. For long hikes, backpacking, or camping trips where you will be more than thirty minutes from emergency services, a wilderness first-aid will be needed.
- Participating in Council-sponsored outdoor events that are similar to the event you plan to complete with your troop, to practice your skills.
- Double-checking the Trip Training Requirements Chart on the [forms page of our website](#) to make sure you have completed all the training and paperwork required for your trip.
- Making sure you have a plan for what to do in case of illness or accident, and sharing that plan with the other adults attending your event.
- With parent permission, share serious health issues of girls in the troop with chaperones (allergies, asthma, etc.)
- Preparing chaperones by reviewing what to do in a crisis, serious injury, or fatality:
  - Secure safety of the group and themselves.
  - Call emergency services (911)
  - Make sure first-aid stabilizes the injured person.
  - Station a responsible adult at the scene, and other adults to direct emergency services to the scene.
  - Report all emergencies to the Council by calling 704-731-6500 and either speaking directly to Customer Care, or pressing 2 after business hours. Be sure to provide as many details as possible about your location, the incident, the identities of the injured and witnesses, and your contact information.
  - **If approached by the media, do not offer any comments.** Simply say "When the emergency has been resolved and facts are known, a statement will be made by a Girl Scout Council representative."
  - **Once everything is resolved**, be sure to complete and Incident/Accident report and submit it to the Council office. This report is used to record all actions taken concerning any incident, including a behavioral problem, that affects the health and safety of the girls and in the event of medical emergencies, serious accidents, or fatalities. You can download the Incident/Accident Report on the [forms page of our website](#), and you should submit it to the Council via email at [customercare@hngirlscouts.org](mailto:customercare@hngirlscouts.org), or by mail or in person to 7007 Idlewild Road, Charlotte, NC 28212.



Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council  
7007 Idlewild Road • Charlotte, NC 28212  
704-731-6500, Outside Mecklenburg 800-868-0528  
Website: [www.hngirlscouts.org](http://www.hngirlscouts.org)



### CONFIDENTIAL INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT

This confidential report is used to record all actions taken concerning any incident, including behavioral problems, that concern the health and safety of the girls, medical emergencies, serious accidents or fatalities.

Submit to: **Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council, Membership Specialist, 7007 Idlewild Road, Charlotte, NC 28212** immediately following incident/accident. If needed add extra pages to this report. Forward any news releases, letters of concern, etc.

## Making Sure Adults have Important Information

Another way to make sure chaperones are prepared is to create travel packets for drivers, and for the troop emergency contact person who is staying home and will know your itinerary and contact information. Packets should contain:

- Names, addresses, and emergency contact info for everyone on the trip
- Girl Scout Council emergency contact information (see above)
- Contact information for campground/park/rental area
- Contact information for emergency services in the area you are camping in
- Emergency contact person's number (this person should be at home, available to call all the parents to let them know, for example, that you're going to be late getting home, or if there is an emergency)
- Parent permission forms for EACH girl
- Health forms for everyone on the trip (to be referred to only in an emergency)
- Special information/training needed for girls' or adults' special medical needs (diabetes, seizures, etc.)
- Location of First Aid Kit (one adult in each vehicle should have one)
- Map of the campsite
- Map or directions of travel route to and from site
- Directions from the site to the nearest hospital/urgent care
- General itinerary
- Vehicle identification information for all vehicle transporting girls on the trip.

## Girls' Activities

It is important to also make sure your girls are prepared for emergencies before a troop trip. Use these activities to help your girls think about possible emergencies, and learn how to plan for them.



### Practice Drills

- ❑ Plan and practice what to do in case of **weather emergencies and natural disasters** (like wildfire or flooding).

For instance, practice a "lightning drill" in case you are caught in a storm while on the trail. Spread the girls out about 10' from each other. Have them squat down into a ball. If they have a sit-upon or day pack, use it for insulation between feet and the ground. Talk about ways the group can stay calm while sitting out a storm in this position. Maybe they have favorite songs to sing?

- ❑ In a nearby park, **practice emergency drills**. Discuss what to do when lost, and create a search plan. Then make a game of finding a "lost camper." Practice a fire drill. Choose a safe gathering spot in case of wildfire and surprise the girls with a fire drill during the day. Later, when you reach your campsite, locate safe gathering places and hold an emergency drill.
- ❑ After the drills, ask the girls to discuss what they did well and how they can respond quicker/more reliably/with more confidence when a real emergency arises.

**Q: What process does this activity best demonstrate?**

*A: Learn by doing. It includes both an activity and follow-up reflection and evaluation.*

## SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

More and more in today's world, leaders need to consider not only how to keep the girls safe from accidents but also safe from other people. Use the following tips to train your girls and adults to ensure a safe trip.

- ❑ Girls should always use the buddy system (stay with a buddy at all times).
- ❑ Train the girls on how to react to a stranger in the site. Ask at your facility if they have a procedure for identifying and responding to strangers.
- ❑ Plan for proper adult supervision. Remember the girl/adult ratio when you leave your meeting place. In Chapter 2, you studied the chart which tells how many adults your troop needs on an outing or overnight.
- ❑ Train the extra adults! You let the girls know what is expected of them; do the same with the adults.
- ❑ If you are at a public facility or campsite, check with the supervisor or local law enforcement on the security history of the site. Would they stay there with girls?
- ❑ Before you go, inform law enforcement officials of where you plan to stay. Ask if they can increase patrols in the area.
- ❑ If at all possible, visit the site before you go with girls. Look for or ask about:
  - locking doors, fencing or other perimeter security
  - location of telephone and site manager's office
  - available lighting
  - availability of cell phone coverage at this site?
  - other public buildings nearby, and do they make you more or less comfortable with the site? (for example, would you feel safer knowing the sheriff's office was ¼ mile away?)
  - what other groups will use the site when you are there
- ❑ Later, when you have completed your skills courses and plan a camping trip with your girls, also check:
  - distance from tent sites to toilet facilities
  - whether tents can be pitched within sight of each other
  - how close tent sites are to roads or other boundaries
  - nearby parking so that you can safely store your equipment in your car
- ❑ Firearms are a danger to the girls. If you feel you need firearms for protection at the site, choose another site. Leave firearms at home. "Do not carry ammunition or firearms in the presence of girls unless given special permission by your council for group marksmanship activities." *Volunteer Essentials Reference Guide*.
- ❑ Leave pets at home. You'll want to focus on your Girl Scouts. Imagine how torn you'd be if something happened to your pet, but your responsibility was to your girls first.



- ❑ Develop an alarm system to signal your girls in an emergency.
- ❑ Design a plan to evacuate the girls if an emergency arises (flooding, tornado, or wildfire, for example). Do you have a central meeting place? Do you have enough cars? If not, how will you quickly arrange transportation?

- ❑ Establish clear limits for girls to roam within the property boundaries (for instance, within sight of the shelter...)
- ❑ If males accompany the group, they will need separate sleeping and toilet facilities.
- ❑ Girl Scout activities are for registered Girl Scouts. Bringing other children is inappropriate. Programs are developed for the members, and non-members are not covered by Girl Scout insurance. Extra insurance must be purchased for any attendees who are not currently registered Girl Scouts – complete the [Contact your council](#).
- ❑ In some instances, you may stay in a public facility such as a hotel, dormitory, or gymnasium. Some tips for hotel security and safety are:
  - Keep room doors locked; develop a special code word that must be spoken before the door is opened.
  - Share room numbers privately rather than by mentioning them in public.
  - Plan for emergency evacuation. Locate emergency exits, fire alarms, and gathering spots. Keep a flashlight, key, wallet and ID on the bedside table.
  - Ensure that inappropriate videos are not accessible through TVs in the girls' rooms.

## Girls' Activities

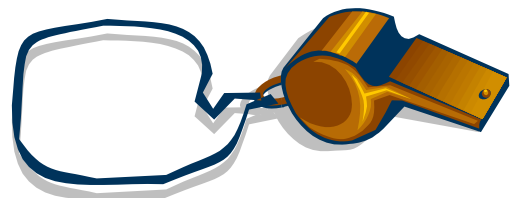
Be sure to prepare your girls for the specific type of location you will be visiting. Use these activities to make sure they know what to do in different scenarios that may come up during your trip.

### Safety Skits

- Use impromptu skits to discuss and practice ways to stay safe:
  - Staying with a buddy (the buddy system)
  - What to do if there's a stranger in the area
  - What is okay to tell to a stranger
  - Staying with the group, and what to do if you get separated from the group
  - How to help yourself be "found" (stay in the last place someone from the group saw you, or go to the troop's designated 'meeting area' if you can get there without becoming lost)

### Its Alarming!

- ❑ Develop an alarm system. An example is to give each girl a whistle to wear around her neck. (I know; you're rolling your eyes at the imagined racket! You might designate two full minutes for the girls to blow the whistles as soon as they get them. You know they want to, so roll with it!)
- ❑ Set up an emergency signal plan. For instance, two blasts from the leader may mean "it is time to gather together," while three blasts from anyone means "Emergency! Everyone come to the whistle!" Practice this a few times at your meeting, timing the girls' response time and rewarding them when they arrive promptly! Ask the girls to evaluate the signal plan. Are there ways they could improve it?



### Q: Which of the processes does this activity demonstrate?

*A: Learn by doing, when they realize how they can apply "safe practices" to non-Girl Scout events or as they create an alarm system, practice, and fine tune it. Cooperative Learning as they work together to create their emergency signal plan*

# GIRL READINESS FOR OUTINGS AND OVERNIGHTS

Girl Scouts need to be prepared emotionally and physically, have proven competency in skills involved, and, most importantly, *want* to go troop camping in order to have a successful experience. Use these readiness indicators as a checklist to determine if each girl in your troop is ready to go camping overnight.



## Emotional Readiness

- ☐ Is not afraid to be away from home and parents overnight
- ☐ Wants to go
- ☐ Is willing to sleep, eat, and play with all girls, not just with best friends.
- ☐ Can cope with strange place, darkness, woods and night noises, spiders, bugs, and worms
- ☐ Can manage with little or no privacy
- ☐ Doesn't always have to have own way
- ☐ Can function as a member of a group

## Physical Readiness

**(be sure to consider and accommodate girls with special needs)**

- ☐ Does not tire quickly
- ☐ Is strong enough to carry own gear, a bucket of water, pot of food, or armload of wood
- ☐ Has the strength and coordination needed for planned activities

## Has Necessary Skills and Knowledge

- ☐ Can plan a simple trip
- ☐ Can use a hand operated can opener, grater, peeler, paring knife
- ☐ Can read and follow a recipe and a kaper chart
- ☐ Can wash dishes, clean up, and store food properly
- ☐ Can build a fire and/or operate camp stove to be used
- ☐ Can dress properly for the weather
- ☐ Can sweep the floor and clean a toilet
- ☐ Knows how to operate a flashlight
- ☐ Demonstrates a concern for safety
- ☐ Can follow directions satisfactorily
- ☐ Has been on a series of day trips, cookouts, and sleep outs
- ☐ Can pack and keep up with gear and roll and tie or stuff a sleeping bag

## Has Necessary Skills and Knowledge

Knowing what is expected ahead of time will help the girls to behave in an appropriate way. As a troop, and with adult guidance, the girls should make their own behavior plan. This plan may include the following:

- ☐ Stay with the group; don't wander from camping area
- ☐ Use the buddy system
- ☐ If lost, stay where you are, and blow a whistle
- ☐ Avoid contact with strangers
- ☐ Report suspicious sounds, activities, or people to an adult
- ☐ Follow safety rules
- ☐ Do kapers on time
- ☐ Respect other campers' property
- ☐ Leave a place better than you found it
- ☐ Make no unkind remarks, and be a friend to all



## Handling Girls' Fears

You have used a progression of experiences to enhance the troop's readiness, prepared them with skills, and practiced those skills in your meeting. Some ways to deal with challenges for which the girls may not be ready:

- ❑ Create a safe, non-threatening environment.
- ❑ Recognize that girls come from different backgrounds.
- ❑ Set behavioral expectations (safety rules, no unkind remarks, all help)
- ❑ Let girls know what to expect (night noises, kapers, caring for own belongings, bathroom facilities)
- ❑ Plan activities to help girls get over their fears and build excitement for camping (for example: stargazing, night hikes, or a bug experience)
- ❑ Take troop to visit camp area prior to the trip, if possible.



## Girls' Activities

There are a lot of skills your girls will need to have a successful trip. Help them practice these skills in a safe environment at your troop meetings!



### The Clean Sweep Obstacle Course Relay

Make an obstacle course for each team to sweep around, under, and through. Scatter paper or, if outside, dry leaves along the course. Position one girl at the end of the course with a dustpan. The sweeper sweeps her leaves or paper into the dustpan, and the dustpan holder then runs to the trash can lined with a plastic grocery bag and empties the dustpan. There is another team member waiting at the trash can who takes the bag out of the can, ties it up, runs to a cardboard box labeled dumpster, and deposits the trash.

Another team member is waiting at the dumpster and, when the trash is deposited, she runs back to the starting place where there is a bucket of water, toilet brush and a squirt bottle of water. She squirts the water around the rim of the bucket, brushes the inside of the bucket then rings a bell. First team to ring the bell wins. (They have now learned to sweep the floor, empty the trash, and clean a toilet.)

## Bug Detective Walk

Divide your troop into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a magnifying glass, a notebook and pencil. Tell your girls that you are going on a hike to look for bugs; if they find a bug, they should stop, look at it through the magnifying glass, and record the number of legs, how many body sections it has, and whether it has antennae or wings.

Take a short walk around your meeting place or in a park. Make sure you define the boundaries of where the girls can go. After enough time has elapsed to observe a few bugs, blow a whistle for everyone to meet at a central place. Have insect identification books available for girls to look up their bugs. Then ask girls to share their observations.



**Q: Which of the processes does this activity best demonstrate?**

**A:** Cooperative Learning; Girls work in teams to help each other to find and identify insects.



## PROGRESSION IN THE OUT-OF-DOORS

Whether you are planning a hike, cook out, camp out, or more, you need to prepare your troop for the best experience. Progression in the out-of-doors is the Girl Scout way of helping you get your troop ready.

### Exploring Nature

#### Look Out

Your troop is just getting started to observe the out-of-doors. They do an activity that gets them looking out the window at nature.



#### Meet Out

Your troop steps out of your meeting place to observe the sights, sounds, and smells of nature.

They learn nature songs and games and learn about protecting and improving the world around them.



#### Move Out

The girls take a walk around the block to see what they can see. They do an activity to help them explore nature a short distance from their homes.



#### Explore Out

The girls are ready to plan a hike. They learn what to wear and take, make a snack, and how to stay safe out-of-doors. They plan and take a hike.



### Getting Ready to Cook Out

#### Cook Out

You've learned about fire building, stove use, and cooking outdoors. The girls are ready to plan a cook out. They learn about fire safety, lighting a stove, building and putting out a fire, using knives, and preparing a meal. They plan and cook a meal outdoors.



### Getting Ready for a Campout and More

#### Sleep Out

The girls are getting ready to sleep out. This is practice for going camping. They learn about camping gear and what to pack and eat. They plan an overnight close to home.



#### Camp Out

The girls are getting ready to camp out. They have done a sleep out. They learn about tents, knots, and fun programming. They plan and go on a camp out.



#### Travel Out

You will want more specialized and advanced courses for your girls to do more extensive outdoors travel such as backpacking.



Now you have a general idea of progression in the out of doors, let's look at specific skills each grade level should master:

|                         | <b>Girl Scout Daisy</b>   | <b>Girl Scout Brownie</b>   | <b>Girl Scout Junior</b>  | <b>Cadette, Senior and Ambassador</b>   |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Walks and Hikes</b>  | Learn safety rules: stay together, use buddy system, say on walking path<br>Learn what to wear<br>Learn to recognize poison ivy and ticks<br>Take a walk near meeting place<br>Visit a nearby park or camp<br>Know what to do if you are lost | Learn safety rules: buddy system and staying together<br>Learn good outdoor manners<br>Learn to dress for the weather<br>Learn to recognize poison ivy and ticks<br>Follow a trail at a park or camp (max 2 mi. round trip)<br>Practice Leave No Trace (LNT) skills | Review safety rules<br>Learn basic first aid<br>Review what to wear<br>Review plants and animals to avoid<br>Take a half day hike carrying items for a meal<br>Take an all day hike (max 8 mi. round trip)                                | Learn safety rules for extended hikes<br>Know how to dress for weather<br>Plan and go on an all day hike carrying items for two meals<br>Backpack: Plan routes, meals, equipment  |
| <b>Find Your Way</b>    | Walk around a neighborhood<br>Draw a large dimensional map of the neighborhood  | Learn Trail Signs<br>Practice laying and following trails<br>Learn N, S, E, W on a compass  | Learn and practice trail signs<br>Find directions by sun and stars<br>Learn your pace<br>Make a simple sketch map<br>Advanced Skills: Use compass to find degree leadings<br>Use a compass to give directions<br>Learn to read a road map | Use trail signs<br>Practice finding directions from sun and stars<br>Use a compass to find degree readings<br>Orient and read a topographical map<br>Learn to use a compass with a map to determine direction, distances and terrain.<br>Try Orienteering or Geocaching |
| <b>Eating Outdoors</b>  | Take a snack on a hike<br>Keep up with your own dishes/dunk bag<br>Help clean up after a cookout  | Take a snack on a hike<br>Take a "nosebag" lunch on a hike<br>Make a one pot meal<br>Learn to wash and sanitize dishes  | Learn about nutritious meal planning<br>Plan and cook simple meals: One pot, aluminum foil, box and Dutch ovens, stick<br>Know how to wash and sanitize dishes and to dispose of dishwater  | Plan, pack and cook meals that take more preparation or cooking time<br>Take charge of a cook out<br>Learn to make a box oven, buddy burner/vagabond stove<br>Be proficient in many types of cooking<br>Learn about backpacking foods<br>Learn about survival foods     |
| <b>Fires and Fuels</b>  | Make an edible fire snack<br>Learn safety around propane camp stoves  | Learn fire safety rules<br>Learn to light a match<br>Learn and practice LNT firewood gathering<br>Know how to choose a safe place to set up a camp stove  | Review safety rules<br>Learn to make fire starters<br>Know how to light a match and safely use a propane stove<br>Build and extinguish fire<br>Build a charcoal fire  | Wood fires: Build and use different types of fires<br>Build, use, and extinguish charcoal fires<br>Be able to teach fire and stove safety<br>Learn to use backpacking stoves safely<br>Build and use a LNT mound fire   |
| <b>Using Tools</b>      | Learn to use:<br>Broom<br>Hammer<br>Scissors<br>Flashlight  | Learn first aid for cuts<br>Learn to use: peeler, paring knife, shovel, flashlight<br>Learn pocket knife safety with paper knife  | Know how to use a can opener<br>Pocket Knife: Use, clean, pass, sharpen, whittle a point  | Pocket Knife: Review skills and whittle<br>Learn to use saw, hatchet, axe   |
| <b>Gear and Shelter</b> | Take care of coats, hats, mittens<br>Sleep at home in a sleeping bag  | Learn how to roll or stuff a sleeping bag<br>Camp out in a building in town or at camp<br>Help decide what personal things to take camping<br>Camp out in a cabin/platform tent at Girl Scout camp  | Help decide what troop equipment to take camping<br>Camp at Girl Scout camp for 2 days  | Learn how to pitch, strike and care for a small tent and a dining fly.<br>Camp for three or more days at Girl Scout camp or other location<br>Learn primitive camping skills or survival skills<br>Try canoe camping  |
| <b>Knots</b>            | Learn to tie shoes  | Know how to tie shoes<br>Tie a square knot and a larks head knot  | Learn to tie and use:<br>Square knot<br>Half hitch<br>Bowline<br>Tautline   | Practicing tying and using knots<br>Learn to coil a rope.<br>Learn to lash camp furnishings   |

# Girls' Activities

## Map Our Course

Draw on large paper, chalk on the sidewalk, or in the dirt, a long, wiggly line—the “road on your map.”

Give the girls pictures of the eight stick figures used to illustrate the progression steps in this chapter. Number them in order and label with the progression step. (For example, 1. Look Out, 5. Cook Out, etc.) Ask girls what they think each one means, clarify if they are confused.

Let the girls arrange the pictures along the road in order, spacing them along its length. These are the “towns” along your way. Ask girls to each stand on the “road” at their experience level. They might be in a town or on the road between towns. (Adults can play, too!)

Let those farthest up the road share some of their adventures. Would the others like to move up the road and enjoy similar adventures? What do they need to learn/do/practice to get to that spot on the road?

Begin planning your outdoor adventure now!



## Save the Day!

Review simple first aid. Let the girls practice making slings and bandages for treating wounds, breaks and sprains.

You might create cards with “Serious Scenarios” on them. (Example: Jeannie fell playing tag and now her ankle hurts and she can’t walk on it. Perform appropriate first aid.) Draw one from a bag and challenge the girls to perform proper first aid.

*There are many more hikes, rainy day and evening activities for girls included in the Be Safe, Be Ready: Girl Planning course. Use them to facilitate progression in outdoor skills.*

# INTRODUCTION TO LEAVE NO TRACE ETHICS

How many times have you been in a park or forest and seen garbage? Or been disturbed by noise from other campers or picnickers? Do things like this detract from your enjoyment of the outdoors?

As Girl Scouts, we want to leave a place looking better than we find it and don't want to disturb other people around us. These things are considered in Leave No Trace ethics. Leave No Trace is a program of outdoor ethics. It teaches principles and skills that encourage outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy the outdoors without loving it to death. In 2006, GSUSA partnered with Leave No Trace to make these ethics part of Girl Scouting.

Leave No Trace consists of seven principles:

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find



- Minimize Campfire Impact
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

## Plan Ahead and Prepare

Planning ahead is doing all those things that help you enjoy your outdoor activity, keep you out of trouble, and keep you off the 6:00 news! Some level of planning is needed for every activity. Planning helps ensure safety of the group, reduces the chances of needing rescue, prepares the girls for a fun outdoor experience, and prepares the girls to "leave no trace." Plus, proper planning reduces the chances you'll make an impact when dealing with an emergency.

Preparations include but are not limited to:

- Making reservations
- Checking on facilities at the site
- Checking on restrictions or regulations for the site, including group size allowed
- Preparing the proper food, clothing, and equipment for the outing
- Getting permission slips and checking health forms
- Getting approval from your Membership Services Manager
- Checking weather forecasts
- Preparing an emergency plan

When planning an activity or choosing a location, consider the skill level of your girls (remember the Progression in Outdoor Activities). Select destinations that match the goals, skills, and abilities of the girls.

Check with the land manager for the area to which you will be going. He or she can answer your questions and may have helpful ideas about where to go or what to do. Ask about regulations, permits, reservations, group size or other restrictions, and any hazards.

## Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Generally, Girl Scouts use established trails and campgrounds. The big exception is when backpacking, but you will learn about that in your Backpacking training!



What is a durable surface?

- Durability refers to the ability of the surface or vegetation to withstand wear or to remain in a stable condition.
- It can take as little as 12-15 days' use in one year to damage a site, and as much as 2-15 years to recover.
- Examples of durable surfaces include rock, sand, gravel, established trails, snow, dry grass, pine needles, dirt, and hardened areas (an area that is already impacted and will not suffer further damage).

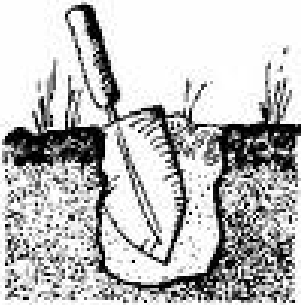
Guidelines for traveling and camping:

- When hiking, stay on trails - avoid taking shortcuts or cutting switchbacks because they cause erosion.
- It's best to go through a mud puddle rather than making a new trail on the edge.
- If you go off a trail, try to keep to durable surfaces such as rocks, sand, gravel, leaves, and pine straw.
- When camping, if there is a tent pad, use it. If not, look for a site for a location with a durable surface or a previously impacted/disturbed area. Good surface choices include gravel, pine straw, dirt, leaves and short grass.
- Don't make a new site. Don't cut plants, move large rocks, or rake the site. Moving small branches and pine cones is okay. Replace anything you move.
- Unless sites are designated near water or a trail, choose a location at least 200 feet from water sources and trails.
- Locate your camp kitchen either on the most durable surface or in an impacted area.
- Keep to footpaths or sidewalks when going to bathrooms, faucets, etc.

## Dispose of Waste Properly

You've probably heard the saying "Pack it In, Pack It Out" before. This applies even to day trips in the out-of-doors.

### Cooking and Clean-up



- Repackage foods to reduce the number of containers and reduce waste.
- Taking only the food needed for an activity so you don't need to pack out or dispose of waste.
- Choose foods with limited packaging—bulk items in a single bag for instance.
- Bring reusable water bottles rather than purchased bottled water (cheaper too!).
- Carry out **all** garbage and food scraps, even orange skins and apple cores.
- When washing dishes, either dispose of water at the place designated by the campground or disperse it in a wide area at least 200 feet away from any water source. Make sure all food scraps are removed from the water first.

### Human Waste

- Properly dispose of human waste to avoid water contamination - use toilets or outhouses if provided.
- On day hikes away from toilet facilities, take a trowel with you and dig a cathole (a small hole dug 6 inches deep in which feces are buried. Choose a location at least 200 feet away from water and trails).
- Pack out all toilet tissue and sanitary supplies. If sealed inside two sealable bags, these won't smell. They can then be disposed of properly when returning to the trailhead.
- Do not burn toilet paper. Not only is this ineffective, there is the very real risk of causing a wild fire.
- Holes do not need to be dug for urine, but toilet paper should still be carried out.

## Leave What You Find

This principle can be a difficult one to apply for youngsters. Everyone wants to take home that special rock or to pick just one flower. However, if everyone picks a flower, pretty soon, there are none left for others to enjoy.

Ask the girls how they could remember this experience. (Take photos? Sketch?)

- Leaving objects of beauty/interest is especially important. Objects like antlers add to the interest of the outdoors.
- Removing historical objects is illegal. Many old home sites exist in this area. While it is okay to explore them, avoid causing damage or removing any objects.
- Minimize site alterations. Don't construct furniture from branches or rocks.
- Avoid damaging trees by cutting branches or hammering in a nail.

The one exception to leaving what you find: trash! Take home all you can find.

# Minimize Campfire Impacts

(NOTE: You will practice these in the outdoor skills courses; do not attempt building fires before you complete the Fire Building course.)

Fires and the outdoors go together. While no longer needed for cooking or warmth, a campfire is still very much part of Girl Scout camping. Even so, consider how to lessen the impact of any fires you have.



## Cooking

- With the use of camp stoves, it is no longer necessary to have a fire for cooking. In fact, cooking on a stove is faster, cleaner, and more reliable than cooking on a fire; most camp cooking should be done on a stove.

## Campfires

- When you have a campfire, use an existing fire ring.
- Bring your own firewood if allowed by the facility (some areas prohibit bringing wood due to risk of insect infestation). Most campgrounds are heavily used, and firewood may be difficult to find. Plan an alternative to campfires if wood is not available.
- Check for restrictions on fire building due to fire danger or air pollution concerns.
- Keep your fire small and allow it to burn completely to ash.
- Put fires out with water. Scatter the cold ashes or dispose of them in a metal trash can.
- Never throw trash of any kind in the fire. Foil and cans don't burn. Paper can cause embers that fly out of the fireplace. Burning plastics can emit toxic fumes.
- To minimize impact in an area without a fire ring, build a mound fire or use a fire pan.

## Collecting Firewood

- If collecting firewood, use wood that is "dead, down, and dinky," about 1 inch across or smaller.
- Both standing and fallen trees provide bird and animal shelter and should be left in place. Leave branches on trees.
- Gather wood over a wide area to avoid depleting the supply in the immediate campsite area. Afterwards, scatter any unused wood.

Instead of having a campfire every night, spend one without! Listen to the noises, take a night hike, or look at the stars.

# Respect Wildlife

"Look at that cute squirrel!" "Can I go pet the deer?" Or even better, "Take a photo of me next to the bear!" Have you heard any of those before?

When outdoors, your actions can disturb wildlife. In extreme cases, you can cause an animal to abandon its young or to attack you to protect its young. While most wildlife adapt to humans, it's best to learn about wildlife through watching quietly.

- Observe animals through binoculars. If you notice an animal reacting to you, for instance, by looking up or moving away, you are too close and should move away yourself.
- Travel quietly and in small groups. Do not follow animals or force them to flee.
- Allow animals easy access to water by camping at least 200 feet from water sources.
- Feeding animals may sicken them.



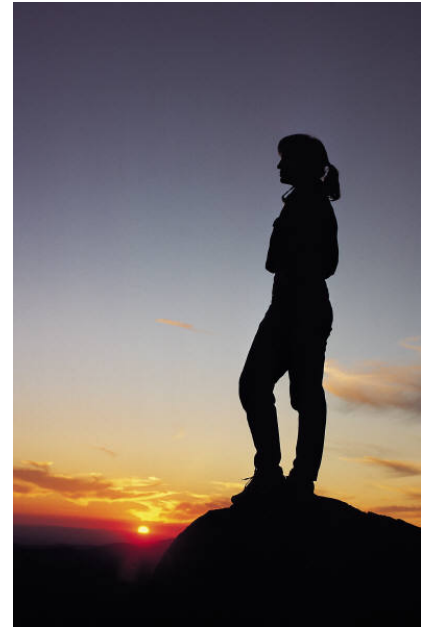


- Animals sometimes carry diseases such as rabies. If you find a sick or injured animal, leave it alone. Notify a game warden or ranger.
- Make sure animals can't get into your food. Animals that have become accustomed to humans can become nuisance animals and may have to be relocated or destroyed. In North Carolina, store food overnight in a closed car or provided food locker.
- If food storage rules are followed, bears are not a big problem when camping. If a bear does come into the campground, retreat and notify a ranger or the campground manager.

## Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Girl Scouts promise to be considerate. Not only are we there to enjoy the outdoors but so are other people. There are many ways that a group can minimize its social impact on an area:

- Travel in small groups, go in the off-season or during the week when possible, and avoid holiday weekends.
- Be courteous when you meet other groups on the trail. Yield the right of way to other hikers and to all horse riders.
- Take rest breaks off the main trail.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Try not to be too noisy in campgrounds and maintain quiet hours so other campers can sleep.
- Leave radios and other music players at home.
- Choose colors that blend into the background. Bright colors attract the eye and may make an area seem more crowded.
- If you are concerned about being able to spot your girls in an emergency, have each one carry a red bandanna or carry a white or orange trash bag (which can double for emergency shelter/rain gear) rather than wear brightly colored shirts or jackets.
- Respect both public and private property. Leave gates as you found them. Don't leave any signs that you have passed through.
- Pick up trash when you see it.
- Be courteous when you meet other visitors.



Make Leave No Trace part of your outdoor experience, part of your attitude, and part of your life!

For more information on Leave No Trace, including free downloadable teaching materials, go to [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org).

### Books

**Activity Guide, Teaching Leave No Trace** Illustrations & activities to help share the Leave No Trace message  
**Soft Paths, 4th Edition** A practical guide to minimum-impact recreation techniques and ethics.

**101 Ways to Teach Leave No Trace** Leave No Trace activities for all ages, organized under one of the seven principles or general outdoor ethics categories. Each activity will walk you through the necessary preparations, applicable audiences, and the required amount of time.

**Skills and Ethics Booklets** The Leave No Trace Skills & Ethics booklet series (each approximately 24 pages) offers techniques for specific regions or outdoor activities, although the general Leave No Trace principles are universal across all environments.

**Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting--Updated May 2013** GSUSA information on camping and environmental skills and activities.

**PEAK Pack and Teen Pack** Packages of activities with all materials and directions included. The PEAK Pack is for younger girls, Teen Pack for teenagers.

### Plastic Reference Cards

The plastic reference cards list and explain the seven Leave No Trace principles. These waterproof 3" x 5" cards can be hung from jackets and backpacks. Different versions are available.

# Girls' Activities

## Ten Essentials

Materials: selection of items one might take on a day hike. Must include all the essentials listed below, but should also include unnecessary items.

**Ten Essentials List** (yes, there are more than 10 items. It's a handy name.)

- |   |   |                                  |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| -Flashlight                                       | -Whistle  | -Bandanna                        |
| -Weather Protection (rain gear, warm jacket, etc) | -Knife  | -Sunglasses and Sunscreen        |
| -First Aid kit                                    | -Food and Water                                 | -Toilet paper/tissues and trowel |
| -Map and Compass                                  | -Fire starter and Waterproof Matches or Lighter |                                  |

Have group split up into groups of 3-4. Let them look at the selection of items available for the day hike. Each group will list which items they feel should go on the hike.

Have each group call out an item they feel is necessary and why. Pack the daypack with that item. If the item is not needed, explain why.

Feel the weight of the pack at the end. Discuss how to lighten the load. Explain that more than 10 items might be needed in some circumstances.

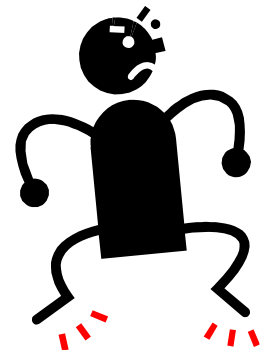
**Q: Which of the processes does this activity best demonstrate?**

*A: Cooperative Learning; the girls work together, listening to each other's opinions, as they create their team lists.*

## Stomp on the Surface

Materials: small resealable bags, each containing a sample of a different surface. Use materials such as gravel, wood chips, dry grass, moss, pine needles, mud, a Twinkie (to simulate a soft surface with a crust and also for fun).

1. Give one bag to each participant. Ask each one to step on the bag—not too vigorously so as not to break the bag.
2. Discuss the results—how did the surface look after being stepped on? How might camping or hiking on such a surface affect the surface? How will this activity help you to leave no trace?



**Q: Which of the processes does this activity best demonstrate?**

*A: Learn by doing. The girls will experience what happens when they step on different surfaces. Their findings will tell them which surfaces are most durable/where to walk without causing damage to the environment.*

## How Long Does it Last?



Collect samples of commonly found garbage such as a drink can, plastic bottle, paper, cigarette butt, apple core or banana skin, glass jar.

Ask the girls to guess how long it takes for the various items to disintegrate in nature.

- |                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Paper: 2-4 weeks                  | Plastic bottle: 20-30 years      |
| Apple core/banana skin: 3-5 weeks | Tin can: 80-100 years            |
| Wool Cap: 1 year                  | Aluminum can: 200-400 years      |
| Cigarette butt: 2-5 years         | Plastic 6-pack holder: 450 years |
| Disposable diaper: 10-20 years    | Glass jar: basically forever     |

## Dig a Cathole

Before going on a day hike away from toilet facilities, practice digging a cathole with your troop.

### Selecting a site:

Select a site at least 200 feet (60-70 adult paces) from water sources and trails. Select as inconspicuous a site as possible—on a hillside or behind a tree. Try to find a place with deep organic soil, for example with lots of leaf mulch.

### Digging a cathole:

Use a small trowel to dig a hole 6-8 inches deep (about the length of a trowel blade) and 4-6 inches in diameter. After use, fill the cathole with the original dirt and disguise it with the leaves and sticks you removed before digging it.

## A Puzzling Find

Materials: three simple picture puzzles. Break the puzzles into their pieces. In a yard, sandlot, or playground, scatter all the pieces of one puzzle in a small area. In another location, scatter just two or three pieces, and in another location, leave just one piece

1. Ask participants how scientists know what dinosaurs looked like. (They find fossils and reconstruct the skeletons.) It is important for scientists to find the pieces in their original positions (relative to one another) so that they can see how the pieces fit back together. The same is true for cultural human-made artifacts.
2. Split your group into three teams and have one group at each location recover the pieces. Ask each group to try and reconstruct the puzzle or describe the picture based on the pieces they found.
3. Ask each group how easy it was to reconstruct the puzzle. Was it frustrating if some pieces were missing? Discuss the importance to scientists of finding fossils or artifacts where they were originally deposited. Discuss the impacts of intentional vandalism or theft of fossils or artifacts. Discuss the effects of unintentional impacts, i.e.; driving off-road, hobby collecting, campsite construction. Ask the group if they can think of other ways in which fossils and artifacts can be lost or damaged. Discuss ways in which these resources can be viewed and enjoyed on-site without damage. Remind the group that it is against the law to remove or destroy these resources.



## A Cold Dinner

Share this scenario with your troop.

1. Imagine you are camping in the mountains. The air is a bit chilly as your group begins preparation for the evening meal. You plan to build a fire to cook hot-dogs and heat up cans of chili. The fire will also take the chill out of the night air. As you begin to pile sticks inside the fire ring, a ranger approaches your group and informs you that there is a ban on fires due to dry weather. You will not be able to build a fire.
2. Write each question below on an index card. Let the girls draw cards and discuss how they'll solve the challenge.
  - What will you do about dinner?
  - How will you deal with the chilly air?
  - How will not having a fire change your night time activities?
  - How could you have avoided this problem?

### **Q: What parts of this activity are girl led?**

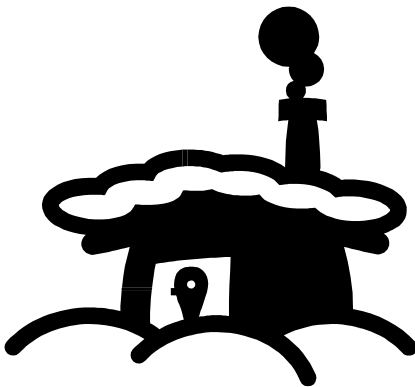
*A: Girls lead the discussion to solve the challenge*

## Building a Mound Fire

(Save this one for when you've completed the Fire Building class)

Try making a mound fire on a lawn or sidewalk. When done properly, you won't be able to see that you've had a fire there at all!

1. Collect mineral soil, sand or gravel (about enough to fill a 5-gallon bucket) from an already disturbed source. Mineral soil is soil without too much organic material like leaves and pine needles in it.
2. Lay a ground cloth or garbage sack on the ground. Spread the soil on it, piling it into a flat top mound at least 6 inches thick.
3. Build your fire on top of the dirt. Use small sticks and allow them to burn down to ashes rather than using water to put them out.
4. When the ashes are cold, spread them widely or put them in a metal trash can. Return the dirt to where you find it and disguise the site.



## Role Reversal

Ask the girls to imagine they have had a guest in their house who ate all the food, left trash on the floor and dirty dishes in the sink, walked on the carpet with dirty shoes, etc. How would they feel? What would they think about that guest?

Explain that, when we visit the outdoors, we have a responsibility to treat animals' homes with respect.

Have each girl pick a favorite wild animal. Give girls a minute or two to describe how they (the animal) would feel if it were shown disrespect by humans, like that sloppy house guest. Have them verbalize what an animal would say if it could speak its mind. Examples: A bear that had all its berries eaten, a beaver that had its lodge destroyed.

Then ask how humans could have behaved in a way that would have shown respect. How will they be respectful the next time they're in a place where animals live?

## Solitude Sit

The purpose of this activity is to increase personal awareness of solitude and quiet. If possible, have two sites available—one quiet with natural qualities and one in a busy area. You may have to do the activity at two different times. If you can only do the activity at one site, use a quiet place since most people are more familiar with civilized sites.

1. Have each participant sit quietly in the selected site. Have the girls record their impressions - what sights, sounds, smells, and touches are there? What would you expect? What did you actually observe?
2. After experiencing each type of surrounding, ask participants:
  - How did your perception of solitude change in each area?
  - How were your expectations different from what you actually experienced?
  - Did anything seem out of place in either site?
  - From the point of view of solitude, how might a group of Girl Scouts affect each environment?

## Q: How can you make Solitude Sit utilize all three processes?

A: One idea: have the girls work together to plan and carry out a Girl Scout's Own based upon information gathered from Solitude Sit.



## TROOP CAMPING AT GSHNC CAMPS

### General Information

So, your troop has decided that they want to camp! In Chapter 5, you learned to assess your girls' readiness for troop camping, and in Chapter 6, you learned about progression and determining what type of troop camping experience is most appropriate for your troop. Now, it's time to plan your trip!

One of the easiest ways to complete a camping trip is to go camping at a Girl Scout Council property, which are prepared for troop camping, and often have staff available to help you make sure you have a good experience. All rental properties operate on a 24-hour schedule, from noon on your check-in day to noon on your check-out day.

GSHNC has three rental properties to pick from:



### POD Village at the GSHNC Service Center in Charlotte, NC

This site offers four heated/air conditioned PODs for rent, each with a rolling cart of mattresses for sleepover-style overnights, a full kitchen including sink, microwave, and refrigerator/freezer, a bathroom with three toilets and showers, and tables and chairs for programming. PODs 1-3 sleep 15, and POD 5 sleeps 25. There is also a large communal field for activities, and an archery area (only available for rent if you have a certified Archery Instructor in your rental group). This site also hosts our Summer Day Camp, so reservations may be limited during those months.





### **Camp Holly Hut in Dan Nicholas Park in Salisbury, NC**

Located inside exciting Dan Nicholas Park in Rowan County, Camp Holly Hut is the perfect camp to visit for a weekend troop getaway! With access to activities inside the park like gem mining, paddle boating, mini golf, and visits to the aquarium or barnyard, your troop will have plenty to do.

Stay in the heated/air conditioned Lodge for access to a rolling cart of mattresses for sleepover-style overnights for up to 25 participants, a full kitchen including sink, microwave, and refrigerator/freezer, a bathroom with three toilets and showers, and tables and chairs for programming.

Or, stay in one of our six smaller heated/air conditioned cabins, which sleep eight each on four bunk beds, for a simpler experience! Troops staying in the cabins will have access to the bathhouse toilets and showers, but will need to cook food over a campfire or the picnic area grill, and so leaders should plan to have an adult with Firebuilding and Outdoor Cooking training attend.





### **Dale Earnhardt Environmental Leadership Campus at Oak Springs in Statesville, NC**

Also the site of our Summer Overnight Camp, this camp has everything!

Heated/air conditioned cabins can accommodate between eight and sixteen each on bunk beds, and are seasonalized for use in all weather. Two unit shelters are available in each unit of six cabins, and each contains a communal fireplace and picnic tables and, coming winter 2019, a fully screened-in porch with a full kitchen! This means that even troops who have only completed Be Safe, Be Ready will be able to camp here and take advantage of the many activities it offers.

Activities include archery, swimming, boating, high and low ropes cooperation courses, and all sorts of sports and games at our specialized sports area. Bring your own certified instructor, or we can provide one for your group for a small fee. Visit the fairy villages, go on a beautiful nature hike, or stomp through the many creeks on the hunt for interesting wildlife with your Troop as you explore the outdoors!

**With so many options, we have a camp for Troops of all experience levels! Learn more and reserve your weekend trip today at [our website!](#)**

Properties are seasonalized and available to rent year round, except for holidays and dates during our Summer Camp sessions. The POD Village and Camp Holly Hut can be rented a year in advance, and the Dale Earnhardt Environmental Leadership Campus at Oak Springs can be rented six months in advance!

## Additional Information

### Who Can Camp?

Girl Scouts of all ages are able to go camping! Consulting the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* section on troop camping for specific questions about eligibility.

Non-Girl Scout children or siblings (also called, “Tag-a-Longs”) are permitted on camping trips. If there is a possibility of a Tag-a-Long attending a trip, additional insurance must be purchased at least two weeks in advance of the trip. To purchase additional insurance, download and submit the [Supplemental Insurance Request](#) form.

Adult males (18 years old and older) may accompany the troop during camp experiences. Accommodations must be made for separate sleeping areas, restrooms, and showers. In the ‘Participants’ section of your online reservation, there is an option to indicate how many men will be participating in the troop camp experience with your troop.

### Confirmation

You will receive a confirmation via email two weeks before your camping trip. The confirmation will include:

- Specifics about the camp, including amenities, emergency information, and contact info for Council staff.
- Physical address of the camp for use with mapping software or GPS
- Other important information for your trip

If you have not received a confirmation by the Monday less than two weeks prior to your trip, please contact Customer Care at 704-731-5600 or [customercare@hngirlscouts.org](mailto:customercare@hngirlscouts.org)

### Cancellation and Refund Policy

Usage fee is non-refundable unless written cancellation is received 4 weeks in advance. If a refund is due, a 25% processing charge will apply. A \$25 transfer fee applies to any changes to the reservation date or location. Requests for transfers must be received in writing at least 4 weeks in advance of your reservation date. Reservations can be transferred once, and thereafter cannot be transferred or canceled for a refund.

### Certifications

An adult with current CPR and first aid is required to accompany the troop for any day or overnight trips to a camp property. Take a copy of the CPR and first aid certifications with you on your trip. At least one adult is required to have completed a level of Outdoor Training equivalent to the type of activity your troop is planning to participate in – for example, Firebuilding or Tent Camping. You will be asked for both of these training dates and the name of your trained adults during the reservation process.

In addition, take copies of certifications for any certified facilitators that your troop is providing for High-Risk Activities requiring certified facilitators.

### Troop Camp Preparation

Make sure to carefully read the camp and unit descriptions when determining what needs to be packed. All sites provide paper products like paper towels and toilet paper, but most sites do not provide cooking supplies, so please plan to bring your own.

Have the outdoor trained adult to work with the girls to prepare them for the troop camping experience. This trained adult should help them understand what the unit and camp will look like and help them to learn how to pack appropriately.

### Arrival and Departure Tips

Rental periods are from noon on your check-in day to noon on your check-out day. Please do not plan to arrive early or stay late. Troops are responsible for cleaning the unit and areas they use prior to departing. If a unit is damaged or left unclean, the troop will be billed for necessary repairs and clean-up.

# KNOW YOUR NATURE

## Poisonous Plants of North Carolina



**Poison Ivy**

Poison Ivy grows abundantly in western North Carolina. Help the girls learn to recognize it or follow the adage "Leaves of three, let it be!" Poison ivy may be a shrub or vine; beware of "hairy vines." Touching poison ivy vines can also cause a reaction.

Poison oak is less common than poison ivy and grows as a small shrub in the East and South. Leaves are said to resemble oak leaves.

Poison Sumac, more common in the eastern half of North Carolina than in our council, prefers bogs and low-lying areas. Its

leaves are compound, with 7 to 13 leaflets.

**Prevention:** Wear protective clothing, tuck pant legs in socks when hiking. The best preventive is to recognize the plant and avoid it.

**Symptoms:** Intense itching, rash with tiny red bumps that tend to run in lines. The rash usually begins 24-48 hours after exposure.

**Care:** If a child comes into contact with poison ivy, gently wash her skin within 5 to 10 minutes or cleanse with rubbing alcohol and flush with cold water. Have her wash under her fingernails. Also, wash contaminated clothing and equipment. Products such as Technu Poison Oak and Ivy Cleanser are designed to remove urushiol, the oil found in this plant that causes an allergic skin rash on contact. Rashes can be treated with cold cloths, oatmeal baths, or with the parent's permission, calamine lotion.



**Poison Sumac**



**Copperhead**

## Poisonous Snakes of North Carolina

Copperheads, timber rattlesnakes, and cottonmouths are the poisonous snakes of our area. All three have triangular heads, but color may vary, especially in the rattlesnake, which can range from tan to black.

**Prevention:** Avoid sticking hands where your eyes can not see. Teach girls to respect all wildlife. Step slowly and calmly away from snakes. Never provoke a snake in any way.

**Symptoms:** fang marks, pain, blurred vision, dizziness, fainting and excessive sweating.

**Care:** Immediately take person to hospital. Call ahead to alert hospital staff of the snake bite so they are prepared when you arrive. Remove any jewelry from wound area. Do not cut and attempt to suck the venom out.



**Timber Rattlesnake**



**Cottonmouth**





### Poisonous Spiders of Carolina Peaks to Piedmont

The female Black Widow is shiny black, usually with a reddish hourglass shape on the underside of her spherical abdomen. Her body is about 1.5 inches long. The black widow spider is shy and nocturnal, and usually not aggressive.

**Prevention:** Don't put hands where you can't see.

**Symptoms:** A Black Widow bite can cause abdominal pain similar to appendicitis, pain to muscles or the soles of the feet, alternating salivation and dry-mouth, paralysis of the diaphragm, profuse sweating and swollen eyelids.

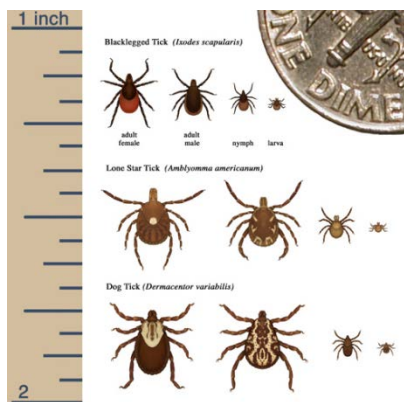
**Care:** If bitten, clean with soap and water. Apply a cool compress and keep the affected limb elevated to about heart level. Seek medical assistance and/or call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222.

The Brown Recluse spider has a well-defined dark violin marking. Its leg span is about the size of a quarter. The Brown Recluse spider is not aggressive, and bites only when crushed, handled or disturbed.

**Symptoms:** Initially, the bite may feel like a pinprick or go unnoticed. Others feel a stinging sensation followed by intense pain. Infrequently, some victims experience general systemic reactions that may include restlessness, generalized itching, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, or shock. In some cases, the bite of the Brown Recluse spider can result in a painful, deep wound that takes a long time to heal. With a severe reaction to the bite, the site can erupt into a "volcano lesion" (a hole in the flesh due to damaged, gangrenous tissue). The sunken, ulcerating sore may heal slowly up to 6 to 8 weeks. Full recovery may take several months and scarring may remain.



**Care:** If bitten, seek medical attention (contact your physician, hospital and/or poison control center). Apply an ice pack to the bite to relieve swelling and pain. Collect the spider (even a mangled specimen has diagnostic value), if possible, for positive identification by a spider expert. A plastic bag, small jar, or pill vial is useful, and no preservative is necessary, but rubbing alcohol helps to preserve the spider. Although fatalities are extremely rare, bites are most dangerous to young children, the elderly, and those in poor physical condition.



### Insect Bites and Stings

A bite by a Tick could infect you with one of several diseases. Encourage all campers to do a thorough daily tick-check of themselves and each other.

**Prevention:** Wear light colored clothes and long pants tucked into socks. A scarf or hat offers some head protection.

**Symptoms:** Seeing or feeling a tick on the skin or scalp. Remove a tick by pulling it slowly and smoothly away from the skin.

**Care:** Wash thoroughly and make note of the date. See a doctor if flu-like symptoms develop within 10-14 days.

Three common ticks' life stages are shown above—at twice life size! You can see how important it is to know your every freckle! The Blacklegged Tick, also known as the deer tick, the Lone Star Tick, and the Dog Tick are all found in North Carolina.

More common than any of the "dangers" above are stings from bees, yellow jackets, hornets... Girls with allergies to stings should bring medications. Allergies can develop over time, so always monitor someone who has been stung. Watch for trouble breathing or severe swelling. Cold cloths may help lessen the pain of a sting.

## Critters in Camp! What to do?



Teach the girls to respect all wildlife. Do not touch any wildlife.

Teach girls to look first – DO NOT put their hands where their eyes can't see. Looking first reduces the chances of an unpleasant encounter with a bug, spider, or snake.

Be aware that in the fall months of the year bears are possible in camps in North Carolina. In many public campsites, the host will alert you if there have been any bear sightings and will give you specific instructions on how to handle this situation.

Rabies is a growing problem in North Carolina. Raccoons and bats are animals of the night; seeing them about in the daytime could indicate rabies or other illnesses. Any wild animal that seems tame or friendly is acting abnormally. Notify authorities.

Food is the number one thing that attracts animals to your camp. Follow your campsite's rules for food storage. Never leave food or garbage where wildlife can find it.

## HEALTH ISSUES RELATED TO OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

### First-Aiders

Many sports, outdoor, and water activities require the presence of a First-Aider. A First Aider is someone with current certification in first aid and CPR, such as you receive from the American Red Cross.

Higher-risk activities such as extended hiking, backpacking, travel camping and activities where medical help is more than 30 minutes away require a Level 2 First-Aider, a course that involves 8 or more hours of training.

The following health care providers may also serve as First-Aiders for Girl Scout groups at level 1 or level 2: physician, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, paramedic, military medic, or emergency medical technician.

Always consult the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* to find what first aid coverage is needed for your activity.

### Administering Medicines

- ☐ First-Aiders should be aware of allergies in the group.
- ☐ The First-Aider keeps and administers all over-the-counter and prescription medications (except medicines such as asthma inhalers which might be needed quickly)
- ☐ First-Aiders know to give children **ONLY** medicines approved in writing by their parents/guardians on their health form
- ☐ Keep a written record of any medicine given, the time, and the reason it was given. A small notebook in your first aid kit will be handy for this record.

## Common First Aid Concerns in the Outdoors

Dehydration causes headaches, exhaustion, difficulty concentrating.

Prevention: Drink water. Take frequent breaks to “offer a toast” for something. The girls will all take a drink and have fun at the same time.

Treatment: Drink water.

Heat Exhaustion/Heat Cramps cause complaints of headache, upset stomach, cramping, sweating, and cool, moist skin.

Prevention: On hot days, take frequent rest breaks in the shade.

Treatment: Move to a cool place and sip cool water.

Heat Stroke shows a high body temperature and red, dry skin. Breathing may be shallow and rapid.

Prevention: On hot days, take frequent rest breaks in the shade.

Treatment: This serious emergency requires immediate medical attention.

Hypothermia is indicated by shivering, numbness, listlessness, decreasing pulse and breathing rate, and may become serious if not treated early.

Prevention: Be aware that hypothermia may occur even when the temperature is in the 50s or 60s, especially if the person is wet or the day is windy. Change out of wet clothes and enjoy warm drinks.

Treatment: Remove wet clothing and warm the body slowly.

Scratches and Abrasions may become infected if not cleaned thoroughly.

Prevention: Pay attention to surroundings; look for hazards. Dress appropriately and avoid running.

Treatment: Wash thoroughly with soap and water. Cover with clean dressing. With parental permission, you may use an antiseptic.

Blisters are sore, fluid filled pouches under the skin caused by continued rubbing by shoes, canoe paddles, or other camp tools. If not treated, they may break and become infected.

Prevention: Wear dry socks and shoes that are broken in and comfortable. Work gloves may help prevent blisters on the hands.

Treatment: Treat a blister as soon as you notice it beginning to hurt. You might put a “donut” of moleskin around the blister, coat it with Vaseline, cover it with an adhesive bandage or blister pad, or even apply duct tape! Because breaking the blister opens the skin to infection, it is better not to drain the fluid.

Sprains/Strains are indicated by pain, swelling, and bruising.

Prevention: Wear appropriate footgear. Look carefully. Be aware of hazards in the area. Continuous motion or heavy lifting may cause strains.

Treatment: Broken bones may appear to be sprains, so treat any sprain as you would a broken bone, which you can remember with the acronym RICE.

Rest—stop using the injured part

Ice—cool injury to limit swelling

Compress—wrap the injury tightly to support it and remove swelling

Elevate—above heart level, if possible

Minor Burns are a special hazard when inexperienced girls work around a campfire or in the kitchen. Minor burns are indicated by hot, red skin, possibly with small blisters.

Prevention: Have kitchen mitts or gloves available. Limit the number of people in the kitchen/fire area. Train the girls in safe behavior around fire and hot foods.

Treatment: Cool the area immediately with clean, cool water. Cover loosely. Any serious burn should receive medical treatment.



# REMINDER!

## To receive credit for this course, you must:

Return to the 'Outdoor Trainings' section of the [Adult Development page](#) on our website and click on the Outings and Overnights Quiz – you must complete the quiz and receive at least an 80% to pass this section.

ADDITIONALLY, please make sure you study the PDF and complete the quiz for the Girl Planning portion of the Be Safe, Be Ready training as well. You must complete that quiz as well and receive at least an 80% on it, too, in order to receive credit for the full Be Safe, Be Ready training. Links to both the PDF and the quiz can be found on the [Adult Development page](#) on our website.

If you have questions, problems, or concerns, please contact Customer Care at 704-731-6500, or at [customercare@hngirlscouts.org](mailto:customercare@hngirlscouts.org)