



★ ACTIVITY & TRIP PLANNING GUIDE



girl scouts 
of michigan
shore to shore

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Activity & Trip Approval Chart

Trip	Forms to be Completed	Training Requirements
<p>Impromptu activity or trip during troop meeting (on-site only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Permission Form. • Leave note on door for parents telling them where you are, when you will return, and how to find you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training
<p>Day Trip Lasting <i>no longer</i> than 8 hours, including travel time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Permission Form or Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Suggested at least one adult volunteer who is certified in First Aid/CPR accompany when leaving their regular troop meeting place. Some activities require First Aid/CPR certification.
<p>Day Trip Lasting <i>more than</i> 8 hours, including travel time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Suggested at least one adult volunteer who is certified in First Aid/CPR accompany when leaving their regular troop meeting place. Some activities require First Aid/CPR certification.
<p>High Adventure/High Risk Activities Any activity in Safety Activity Checkpoints requiring GSMISTS approval.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in - such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Indoor Overnight/Multi-Night Trip Troop will sleep at a hotel, motel, lodge, Airbnb, or other like facility. Troop <u>will</u> have access to flush toilets. Troop <u>will</u> be cooking in a kitchen, eating at restaurants, or meals will be provided. A campfire <u>will not</u> be built.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Health Examination Record (needed for 4 or more nights) • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form • Sleeping Arrangements Form for Travel/Trips (if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in - such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Backyard Camping Trip No Campfire Located at a volunteer's house or private property. Troop <u>will</u> have access to flush toilets and <u>will be</u> cooking in a kitchen, or meals will be provided. Troop <u>will not</u> cook outdoors and campfire <u>will not</u> be built.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Permission to Meet in the Home Application and Approval Form • Parent Permission Form for Girl to Attend Meetings/Activities in the Home • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Troop Camp Preparation (TCP) Home Study • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in - such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Backyard Camping Trip with Campfire Located at a volunteer's house or private property. Troop <u>will</u> have access to flush toilets. Troop <u>will</u> cook outdoors and will build a campfire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Permission to Meet in the Home Application and Approval Form • Parent Permission Form for Girl to Attend Meetings/Activities in the Home • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Troop Camp Preparation (TCP) Home Study • Troop Camping Skills • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in - such as lifeguard, if applicable.

<p>Indoor Camping Trip Troop will sleep in an enclosed structure or cabin at an established camp or campground with safe, running water. Troop <u>will</u> have access to flush or pit toilets. Troop <u>will</u> cook outdoors and <u>will</u> build a campfire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Health Examination Record (needed for 4 or more nights) • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Troop Camp Preparation (TCP) Home Study • Troop Camping Skills • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in – such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Outdoor Camping Trip Troop will sleep in tents at an established camp or campground with safe, running water. Troop <u>will</u> have access to flush or pit toilets. Troop <u>will</u> be cooking outdoors and <u>will</u> build a campfire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Health Examination Record (needed for 4 or more nights) • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Troop Camp Preparation (TCP) Home Study • Troop Camping Skills • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in – such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Wilderness/Backcountry/ Primitive Camping Trip Troop will sleep in tents in a wilderness/backcountry/primitive setting. Troop <u>will not</u> have access to running water, flush toilets, or pit toilets. Troop <u>will</u> be cooking outdoors and <u>will</u> build a campfire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Health Examination Record (needed for 4 or more nights) • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • Troop Camp Preparation (TCP) Home Study • Troop Camping Skills • Wilderness Camping Skills • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult (higher level of training may be required depending on location of trip) • Certified adults in activities participating in – such as lifeguard, if applicable.
<p>Participating as a User Group at an Established Camp (ex. Camp Henry, a YMCA Camp, etc.) All activities and meals are provided by the staff of the established camp. The established camp provides the activity instructors, with certifications as listed in Safety Activity Checkpoints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Health Examination Record (needed for 4 or more nights) • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult (if not provided by established camp).
<p>International Travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History and Health Examination Record • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form • Intent to Travel Form • Authorization for Medical Treatment (adult & girl) • Permission for Minors to Travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult • Certified adults in activities participating in – such as lifeguard, if applicable • Global Travel Toolkit (supplemental)
<p>Multi-Troop/Service Unit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity/Trip Application Form – needed if participating in high adventure/high risk activities (any activity in Safety Activity Checkpoints that requires GSMISTS approval), day trips lasting 8 hours or longer (including travel time), or overnights • Girl Permission Form • Girl/Adult Health History Form • Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMISTS New Leader Training • First Aid/CPR Certified Adult, additional first aid/CPR certified adults may be needed based on attendance at event. • Training requirements based on activities that are taking place.

Activity & Trip Application Reminders

GSMISTS approval must be obtained for the following activities and trips within the stated timeline:

Type of Trip	Timeline
<p>Day Trip lasting more than 8 hours, including travel time</p>	4 Weeks prior to trip*
<p>High Adventure/High Risk Activity any activity in Safety Activity Checkpoints requiring GSMISTS approval</p>	4 Weeks prior to activity*
Indoor Overnight Trip	4 Weeks prior to trip*
Backyard Camping Trip	4 Weeks prior to trip*
Outdoor Camping Trip	4 Weeks prior to trip*
<p>Participating as a User Group at an Established Camp (such as Camp Henry, a YMCA Camp, etc.)</p>	4 Weeks prior to trip*
Multi-Troop/Service Unit	4 Weeks prior to activity*
Extended trip of 3 or more nights	4 Weeks prior to trip*
International Travel	6 Months prior to trip*

***GSMISTS reserves the right not to approve activities/trips that do not follow the above timeline.**



To obtain approval for activities/trips complete the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#).

GSMISTS will review your [Activity/Trip Application Form](#) and will follow up on missing information and questions. Monitor your e-mail daily for follow-up questions. If all applicable information is not received **14 days** prior to the start date, the Activity/Trip Application will not be approved, and any pending GSMISTS property reservations will be cancelled.

When the review is complete an e-mail with one of three outcomes will be sent:

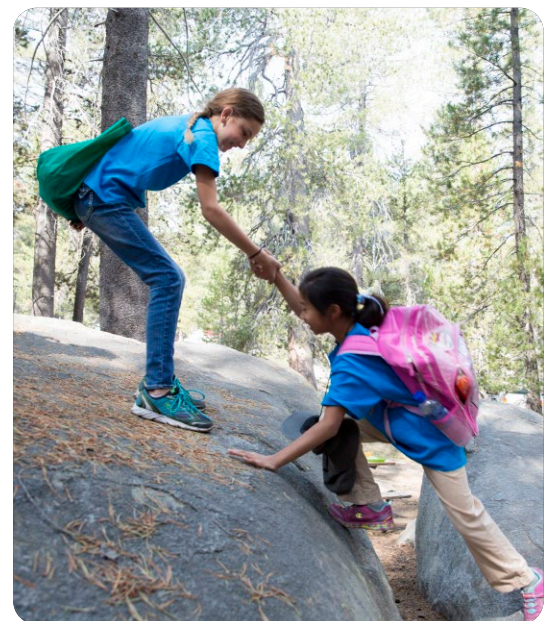
- 1. Activity/Trip is approved:** No further action is required.
- 2. Activity/Trip is tentatively approved:** The e-mail will describe additional information needed for the activity/trip to be approved.
- 3. Activity/Trip is not approved:** The e-mail will describe the reason(s) why the activity/trip is not approved.

After approval is received, planning the activity/trip can proceed.

There may be changes to your activity/trip between the time the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#) is approved and the actual activity/trip. Please e-mail any updates to girlsexperience@gsmists.org. Please include the troop number and troop leader's name in the e-mail.

Examples of information that may need updated:

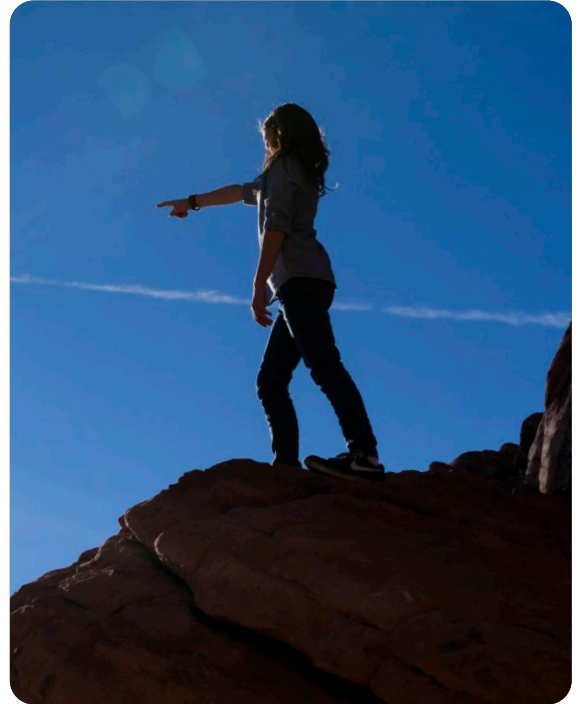
- **Location**
- **Times/Dates**
- **Additional Girl Scout/adult attendees.** Please note this may change the status of the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#) depending on the membership status of the additional Girl Scouts and adults.
 - All adults attending activities/trips must be listed on the Activity/Trip Application Form. Once the activity/trip has been approved, these are the only adults who are approved to participate. Attending adults cannot be swapped out without receiving approval by GSMISTS.



Trip Progression

Girls love trips and Girl Scouts is a great place for them to learn how to plan and take exciting trips. Travel is built on a progression of activities – that is, one activity leads to the next. As girls grow in their travel skills and experience, they can better manage the planning process and progress to longer trips.

- **Short trips to local points of interest (Daisies and older):** A walk to the nearby garden or a short ride by car or public transportation to the firehouse or courthouse is a great first step for Daisies.
- **Day trip (Daisies and older):** Attending a GSMISTS event or visiting a local attraction —younger girls can select locations and do much of the trip-planning, while never being too far from home.
- **Overnight camping (Daisies and older):** A Daisy troop may participate in an occasional overnight camping experience. They should have prior day trip experience. Daisies who have completed kindergarten may independently participate at day camp and in resident camp experiences lasting up to three nights. Daisies who have completed first grade may independently participate in resident camp experiences lasting four or more nights. Travel camping is not recommended for Daisies and Brownies.
- **Short trips (Brownies and older):** One to three nights away to a state or national park, historic city, or nearby city for sightseeing, staying in a hotel, motel, or campground. These short trips are just long enough to get girls excited about traveling, but not long enough to generate homesickness.
- **Extended trips (Juniors and older):** Three or four nights camping or a stay in a hotel, motel, or hostel within the girls' home region (for example, New England, the Upper Midwest, the Southeast, the Pacific Northwest, and so on).
- **National trips (Cadettes and older):** Travel anywhere in the country, often lasting a week or more. Review [Girl Scouts Guide to U.S. Travel](#) for helpful tips and information on planning longer trips.
- **International trips (Cadettes and older):** Travel around the world, often requiring one or two years of preparation. International trips are available to Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors who have successfully participated in a progression of overnight trips with Girl Scouting. When girls show an interest in traveling abroad, contact GSMISTS to get approval to plan the trip and download the [Global Travel Toolkit](#). Adult volunteers should ensure that girls are mature enough to participate in the trip. Factors to consider are adaptability, good decision-making, previous cross-cultural experience, group dynamics, team capability, language skills (where applicable), and specific skills and interests related to the trip. Visiting one of the [five World Centers](#) is a great place to start.



***GSMISTS reserves the right to not approve an activity/trip that does not follow Trip Progression standards.**

Daisy Field Trips—Get Out and Explore!

Taking one or two field trips during your first Daisy year is an exciting way for Daisies to learn new things about their community, practice new skills, and gain confidence.

Planning a Field Trip

- Consider attending a local council event! Or find inspiration by thinking about places in your community that connect to a petal or badge. For example, visit a fire station to complete your Respect Authority petal.
- Involve your Daisies in planning! Talk as a troop about how you'll travel to the location, what you'll need to bring, and what questions you will ask the people you meet. Daisies can also help make their packing list.
- Plan to cover the cost of the field trip using troop dues or product program proceeds. Deciding on a field trip is a great way to help Daisies set a cookie sales goal.

Safety Checklist

- **Discuss safety with Daisies before your trip.** Adults are responsible for safety, but Daisies are part of the plan, too! Talk about how Girl Scouts always use the “buddy system” (every Daisy always has a buddy), and why it’s important to listen to troop leaders and other adult helpers during the trip.
- **Keep parents/caregivers informed.** You may choose to invite all parents/caregivers on your first few field trips to build community among the troop. You could also ask just a few parents/caregivers to be chaperones.
- **Review Safety Activity Checkpoints.** Ask your local Girl Scout council for this document. Be sure to read the *Introduction—Standard Safety Guidelines*, especially the *Checklist for Drivers*, if troop volunteers will be driving anywhere. If you are doing an activity that has its own checkpoint (e.g., Community Clean Ups, Hiking), skip to that checkpoint for additional guidance.
- **Plan for health.** Make sure you have a trained first-aider attending, and plan to bring all completed parent/caregiver permission forms and health history forms on your trip.
- Ask your council if there are any other steps you'll need to take.

Reflection

- Talking about what they experienced after the trip helps Daisies learn and build confidence. Ask questions like,
 - *Did we follow our plan?*
 - *Did we have to make any changes to the plan?*
 - *What went well?*
 - *What might we do differently next time we take a field trip?*
 - *Did you do anything for the very first time?*

Going and Growing

- After your Daisies are expert day-trippers, you can start to plan an overnight experience for next year, giving them more responsibility for planning.
- Your field trip is the first step of the Girl Scout Travel Progression, which offers a world of possibility for your Girl Scouts!



Visit [girlscouts.org/travel](https://www.girlscouts.org/travel) to learn more.



girl scouts

Travel Progression



Individual Travel

Individual Girl Scouts can sign up for independent travel and meet new Girl Scout friends through council-offered travel opportunities or GSUSA's Destinations program.

Recommended for: Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Cadette (with Extended Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

International Trip

Travel the world! These life-changing trips usually take two to three years to save for, plan, and prepare.

Recommended for: Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Cadette (with Extended Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

Extended Trip

Travel the country! Extended trips last four or more nights OR take place more than a six-hour drive from home.

Recommended for: Cadette, Senior, Ambassador

Minimum age: Junior (with Short Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

Short Trip

Spend two to three nights in your region, up to a six-hour drive away from home. Girl Scouts plan budget and schedule.

Recommended for: Junior, Cadette

Minimum age: Brownie (with Overnight experience in Girl Scouting)

Overnight

Help Girl Scouts plan their first single overnight—maybe at a council event, camp, or nearby attraction.

Recommended for: Brownie, Junior

Minimum age: Daisy (with Day Trip experience in Girl Scouting)

Day Trip

Plan an all-day trip. Try a council event or local attraction.

Recommended for: Daisy, Brownie, Junior

Minimum age: Daisy

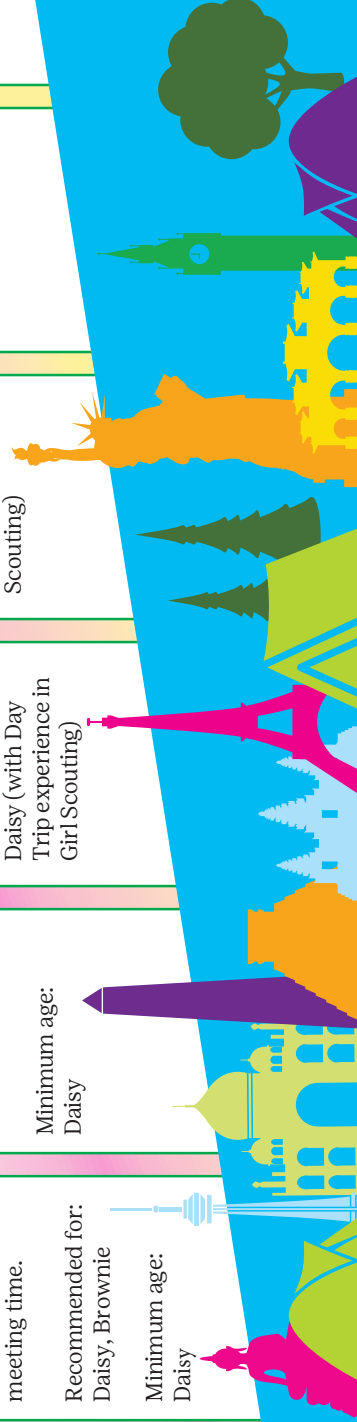
Local Field Trip

Visit a nearby spot, possibly during your regular meeting time.

Recommended for: Daisy, Brownie

Minimum age: Daisy

When moving up to the next step, consider each Girl Scout's independence, ability to work well in groups, flexibility, and experience with cultures other than their own.



Through progression, Girl Scouts build skills to become lifelong travelers and global citizens. Girl Scouts take the lead in planning a new adventure at every level.

Girl Led Trip Planning

Girls of all ages have ideas of places they want to go. Through the progression of experience and skills they can research, plan, budget, earn money, and put together an itinerary for the trip.

Start a discussion with girls using these questions:

- What is something that is interesting to all of us?
- Where could we go?
- When?
- How will we get there?
- How much will it cost?
- How should we get ready?
- What will we do along the way?

The **girls** should plan the trip, not the adults. Even Girl Scout Daisies can brainstorm a list of ideas. Girl Scout Juniors can find out admission fees and hours of operation. Girl Scout Seniors can make airline reservations. Let the girls take on the leadership roles in planning and carrying out their trip.

Trip Planning Guidelines

Taking trips is one of the many ways troops can Discover, Connect, and Take Action. Traveling with your troop is a progressive experience. Your experiences may begin with a hike outside your troop meeting place and then progressing to overnight camping, a visit to a city in another state, and ultimately a long excursion to one of the five World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts World Centers (India, Mexico, United Kingdom, Switzerland, or Africa). When planning a trip, it is important to keep the following points in mind:

- The trip should meet the needs and interests of the girls and be appropriate for their grade level. A Girl Scout Daisy troop might visit a local farm or take a behind the scenes tour of a local restaurant. A Girl Scout Cadette troop might plan a weekend trip to a different city.
- GSMISTS [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#), [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) all must be reviewed. Be sure you are familiar with policies and procedures before venturing out.
- Ensure all Girl Scouts participating are registered members. Ensure all adults who are assuming a supervising role during the trip/activity are both a registered adult member of GSUSA and a volunteer of GSMISTS. All adults accompanying troop/group meetings or activities on a regular basis (more than 1 time); or attending any overnight activity; or who at any time assume care, custody, or control of girl members and/or Girl Scout money must be both a registered adult member of GSUSA and a volunteer of GSMISTS. This includes trip chaperones and drivers. Everyone staying overnight at a GSMISTS property must be a registered member of Girl Scouts.
- The troop should discuss and agree on “ground rules” for the activity/trip, including cell phone use. These decisions need to be shared with the families of the Girl Scouts.

Service units follow the same activity/trip requirements as if a troop was planning the activity/trip. One [Activity/Trip Application Form](#) is submitted by the activity/trip coordinator, including a roster of all participants. Individual troops participating do not need to turn in the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#).

Approved Adults

Troops must maintain proper volunteer to girl ratios during all Girl Scout activities. Please refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for volunteer to girl ratio information. Troops use the Events, Travel, and Camping ratios when planning activities, overnights, and travel. Adult volunteers accompanying a troop should be chosen for their patience, flexibility, and good judgment. They need to understand their responsibilities during the activity/trip. Any adult participating in a field trip, overnight, or trip including drivers and other parents must be registered members and approved volunteers.

This means the following conditions are met:

- Has completed adult member registration with GSUSA
- Has completed a Criminal Background Check with GSMISTS

An adult volunteer with First Aid/CPR certification is required for all activities that involve risk. Please refer to Safety Activity Checkpoints for detailed information.

Safety

The most important factor in having a safe and successful outing is good planning. Let girls do as much of the planning as possible. When girls have been included in planning, they will take responsibility for enforcing safety procedures. The troop leader needs to guide the group to ensure that the plans are appropriate to the girls' experience and skill level. Part of the planning process is to learn and practice the basic skills that girls will need to carry out the trip.

Before planning any trip, the troop leader is responsible for reviewing the following resources:

GSMISTS Activity & Trip Planning Training: This training, available on demand in gsLearn, provides guidance on planning activities and trainings.

GSMISTS [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#): This document contains important policies and procedures specific to GSMISTS. All volunteers must review the information annually.

[Safety Activity Checkpoints](#): These provide specific instructions for staying safe while participating in various activities. They are activity specific and should be reviewed before engaging in activities with girls. Read Safety Activity Checkpoints to determine when an adult volunteer with First Aid/CPR certification is required.

[Volunteer Essentials](#): Think of Volunteer Essentials as your encyclopedia to Girl Scout volunteering. It includes basic policy and procedure information, health and safety guidelines, and information about Girl Scout basics, volunteer tips, Girl Scout activity resources and traditions, and ideas for ways to engage girls.

To ensure the safety of sleeping areas, use the following guidelines:

- Overnights can only take place on private property or in homes if a [Permission to Meet in the Home Application and Approval Form](#) has been completed and approved by GSMISTS.
- Each participant has her own bed. Parent/guardian permission must be obtained if girls are to share a bed. Use the [Sleeping Arrangements Form for Travel/Trips](#) for to obtain permission.
- Adults and girls never share a bed.
- It is not mandatory that an adult sleep in the sleeping area (tent, cabin, hotel room, or designated area) with the girls. However, if an adult female does share the sleeping area, there should always be two unrelated adult females present.
- If males are participating, a separate sleeping area and bathroom facilities must be provided for them.

Upon Girl Scout membership, registrants agree to adhere to all abuse prevention policies and procedures as set forth by Girl Scouts of the USA and GSMISTS.

GSMISTS maintains and supports environments that are free of child abuse and neglect as defined by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. Child abuse and neglect are unlawful acts and it is against GSMISTS policy for any volunteers or employed staff, male or female, to physically, sexually, or mentally abuse or neglect any child.

Youth violence or bullying is not tolerated in Girl Scouts. Youth violence occurs when young people intentionally use physical force or power to threaten or harm others. Bullying is a form of youth violence. Volunteers should become familiar with the signs, risk factors, and preventive measures against this type of behavior. If you witness or experience any behavior of this nature, notify the appropriate GSMISTS staff for guidance.

GSMISTS has adopted the “GSUSA Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Course” training. The 50-minute on demand training prepares supervising adults of Girl Scout youth to recognize, respond to, and report concerns of child abuse and neglect. Additionally, supervising adults will be empowered to prevent abuse by learning.

According to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), GSMISTS volunteers are not mandated reporters. If any GSMISTS volunteer reasonably suspects or reasonably believes a girl member is being abused, they should report these suspicions to MDHHS, by calling 855-444-3911. Reports to MDHHS can be anonymous. The reporting GSMISTS volunteer should also complete and file a GSMISTS [Accident/Incident Report Form](#).

General Health and Safety and Infectious Disease Safety in Girl Scouts

The health and safety of our members is always Girl Scouts’ highest priority.

Recognize that communicable diseases, including COVID-19, have always presented risks for Girl Scout members to handle. The following of Centers for Disease Control standards along with guidance from local jurisdictions is expected. Be prepared to monitor evolving health matters.

Girl Scouts or volunteers should not participate in troop meetings or other Girl Scout activities when they appear to be ill, have an undiagnosed medical issue, have lice/nits, or have bed bugs on their clothing, bedding, at home, etc.

If a Girl Scout appears to be ill when she arrives at an activity or becomes ill during the activity, their parent/guardian will be asked to pick them up early from the activity at their own expense, and it is at the troop leader’s discretion whether to refund any fees paid for the activity.

First Aid/CPR Training

It is best practice to have at least one adult volunteer who is trained in first aid/CPR accompany the troop any time they leave their regular meeting place. For many activities, GSMISTS requires at least one adult volunteer be first aid/CPR certified. More information on which activities require an adult volunteer who is first aid/CPR certified can be found in Safety Activity Checkpoints.

Volunteers can take advantage of first aid/CPR training offered by chapters of the American Red Cross, National Safety Council, EMP America, American Heart Association, or other sponsoring organizations approved by GSMISTS. First aid/CPR training opportunities are offered by GSMISTS.

First aid/CPR training that is available entirely online does not satisfy GSMISTS requirements. Such courses do not offer enough opportunities to practice and receive feedback on your technique. If taking a course not offered by one of the organizations listed in the previous paragraph, or any course that has online components, get approval from GSMISTS First Year Troop Support & Volunteer Training Coordinator prior to enrolling in the course.

High Adventure/High Risk Activities

High adventure/high risk activities require approval from GSMISTS before participation. Please refer to the Activities at a Glance section of Safety Activity Checkpoints to see which activities require GSMISTS approval.

You can also find a list of activities in Safety Activity Checkpoints that are not approved for a Girl Scout activity.



Emergency Contact Person

Designate an emergency contact person who will remain home during the duration of the activity/trip. The Emergency Contact Person does not need to be a registered member of Girl Scouts.

- Leave a list of names, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and other vital information of all people participating so that they can contact you or the girls' families in an emergency.
- Provide the designated emergency contact person with a complete activity/trip itinerary including contact numbers for hotels, campgrounds, and attractions you plan to visit.
- Leave your route of travel with the emergency contact person along with basic vehicle information.

Airbnb and VRBO

These are permitted however because these are privately owned properties, it can be difficult to qualify safety and credibility. For these reasons, additional steps for Airbnb and VRBO are required. Confirm the following ahead of time:

- The rental is for exclusive use of the home. No other renters will have access to the home during the rental period.
- The space has smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers (these are noted as amenities on booking sites).
- The home and host have substantial, positive visitor reviews. Do not book places with negative, few, or no reviews. Look for Superhost status on Airbnb.
- The liability insurance from the host covers premises for commercial use, with a minimum of one million dollars General Liability insurance.
- Check the host's profile or identity verification. You may be asked to do the same, as a renter.
- The local host or manager contact info is available for immediate needs. Share this information with an in-town contact (a person not on the trip).



Check state laws to see if Airbnb and VRBO are mandated to meet hotel laws and standards so you know there is an extra layer of protection.

Sensitive Issues

Girl Scouts welcomes and serves girls and families from a wide spectrum of faiths and cultures. When girls wish to participate in discussions or activities that could be considered sensitive—even for some—put the topic on hold until you have spoken with parents and/or received guidance from GSMISTS.

Parents/guardians make all decisions regarding their girl's participation in Girl Scout programming that may be of a sensitive nature. The troop leader must receive written parental permission for any locally planned program offering that could be considered sensitive. Included on the permission form should be the topic of the activity, any specific content that might create controversy, and any action steps the girls will take when the activity is complete. Be sure to have a form for each girl and keep the forms on hand in case a problem arises. For activities not sponsored by Girl Scouts, find out in advance (from organizers or other volunteers who may be familiar with content) what will be presented, and follow GSMISTS procedures for obtaining written permission.

GSMISTS has a [Sensitive Issues Permission Form](#) to use to receive written parental permission for any locally planned program offering that could be considered sensitive.

GSUSA/GSMISTS does not take a position or develop materials on issues relating to human sexuality, birth control, or abortion. We feel our role is to help girls develop self-confidence and good decision-

making skills that will help them make wise choices in all areas of their lives. We believe parents and caregivers, along with schools and faith communities, are the primary sources of information on these topics.

When Girl Scout activities involve sensitive topics, your role is of a caring adult volunteer who can help girls acquire skills and knowledge in a supportive atmosphere, not someone who advocates a particular position.

All media inquiries are to be handled by GSMISTS, particularly about sensitive issues. Refer requests to GSMISTS Director of Marketing & Communications or Chief Executive Officer.

Parent Permission

Parent permission is required for all activities and trips outside of the normal troop meeting.

1. [Annual Permission and Health History Form](#)

This form is used for activities/trips that fall into the three categories listed below:

- Located within GSMISTS council jurisdiction
- Not exceeding 8 hours (including travel time)
- Not considered high risk/high adventures activities as outlined in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and GSMISTS Activity and Trip Planning Guide (any activity requiring GSMISTS approval).

2. [Girl Permission Form](#)

This form must be used for activities/trips that fall into the three categories listed below:

- Located outside of GSMISTS council jurisdiction
- Exceeds 8 hours (including travel time), this includes all overnight activities
- High adventure/high risk activities as outlined in [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) and GSMISTS Activity and Trip Planning Guide (any activity that requires GSMISTS approval).



Health History and Health Examination Record

Troop leaders need to collect a complete, accurate, signed [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) from each girl in the troop annually. Adults in the troop should also complete the form. Troop leaders should have this form with them during all meetings, trips, and activities. The following are best practices regarding Health History Forms:

- Discuss with families who will have access to the [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) and under what circumstances they will have access. For example, a driver on a trip may need to refer to a girl's [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) in an emergency.
- While on a trip the [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) for each girl travels in the same vehicle as the girl (in case of an emergency).
- At the end of the Girl Scout year, the [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) should be returned to the girl or shredded.
- Obtain a completed and signed [Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form](#) for each girl which documents necessary medication, treatment, food, and care that needs to be provided.

A record of a health examination by a licensed physician, a nurse practitioner, a physician's assistant, or a registered nurse within the preceding 24 months is required for [girls](#) and [adults](#) for trips of more than four nights. The following are best practices regarding Health Examination Records:

- Discuss with families who will have access to the Health Examination Record and under what circumstances they will have access. For example, a driver on a trip may need to refer to a girl's Health Examination Record in an emergency.
- While on a trip the Health Examination Record for each girl/adult travels in the same vehicle as the girl (in case of an emergency).
- At the end of the trip, the Health Examination Record should be returned to the girl/adult or shredded.
- Obtain a completed and signed [Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form](#) for each girl which documents necessary medication, treatment, food, and care that needs to be provided.



Accident/Incident Reporting

If an emergency occurs during a Girl Scout troop meeting, activity, etc., Girl Scout volunteers must follow the GSMISTS Emergency Procedures. These procedures ensure safety is the number one concern in any emergency and volunteers are guided to seek help, and report the incident, efficiently and effectively.

GSMISTS Emergency Procedures

1. Provide all possible care for the injured person.
2. Call for help: 9-1-1 (Police, Fire, EMS).
3. Move non-injured people away from the scene.
4. In the event of a motor vehicle accident, serious accident, or fatality always notify the police. Unless victim is in immediate danger, do not allow the disturbance of the victim or surroundings until first responders arrive.
5. Call emergency contact(s) of injured.
6. Speak only to police or other first responders.
7. Report emergency to GSMISTS:
 - Business Hours Emergency Phone: 844-476-4787
 - After Hours Emergency Phone: 616-204-1456

GSMISTS will provide you additional support on how to handle the emergency.

8. Complete a GSMISTS [Accident/Incident Report Form](#) and e-mail the completed form to customercare@gsmists.org.
9. Volunteers should not make statements of any kind to the media. Refer requests to GSMISTS's Director of Marketing & Communications or Chief Executive Officer. Volunteers must also refrain from posting and/or sharing pictures or comments on social media related to the emergency.
10. Do not discuss the incident with media/witnesses, release names, place blame, or accept liability.
11. If an automobile accident, share insurance information with the other party, do not sign any accident report, except for the police report.
12. Keep a record of the order of events, treatments, calls, etc.

Activity Accident Insurance

Girl Scouts provides Activity Accident Insurance underwritten by Mutual of Omaha to support Girl Scouts participating in Girl Scout approved and supervised activities and events.

Activity Accident insurance is automatic upon membership registration and applies to all adult and youth members who may become injured during a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity.

This coverage works like supplemental medical/health coverage and is intended to help with out-of-pocket medical expenses that may not be covered by personal insurance.

Activity Accident insurance extends to non-members who are invited to participate in a Girl Scout approved and supervised activity, whether an adult volunteer for the day, or a friend of a Girl Scout who is joining along to try out scouting.

Activity Accident coverage applies to day events, overnight trips (including camp), and international travel. A summary of these coverage types for each category can be found here:

	CLASS 1 ACTIVITY ACCIDENT	CLASS 2 ADDED SICKNESS	CLASS 3 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND INBOUND
Eligibility	All members and *nonmember participants of Girl Scout sponsored and supervised daylong events and activities. (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest or visitor.	All members and *nonmember participants of Girl Scout sponsored and supervised overnight events, lasting one night or greater. (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest or visitor.	All members and *nonmember participants of Girl Scout sponsored and supervised international travel or inbound international travel. (100% participation) *Nonmember participants are those personally invited by a registered member (adult or youth) to participate in a Girl Scout activity as a guest or visitor.
Coverage (Any Approved and Supervised Girl Scout Activity)	Day Events	Overnight Events	International Travel
Premium Rates	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops.	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops.	No cost to Girl Scout councils or troops.

Effective | October 1, 2025

Car Rental and Bus Service Agreement

It may be necessary for a troop to rent a car for activities and trips. Since the majority of car rentals are reserved online, volunteers may sign car rental agreements after the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#) has been approved. A copy of this paperwork must be submitted to GSMISTS prior to the trip.

Keep the following in mind when renting cars:

- GSMISTS troops are not allowed to rent or use 15-passenger vans.
- Troops are permitted to rent 12-passenger vans only if the drivers have proven experience using these vehicles.

The following types of insurance for the car rental will need to be purchased through the car rental company:

- *Loss Damage Waiver*
- *Additional/Supplement Liability*

Please note these names can vary by car rental company. Talk with GSMISTS if you need clarification. The car rental confirmation and insurance must be submitted to GSMISTS before you leave.

Bus Service Agreement

If you would like to rent a charter bus you must submit the [Bus Service Agreement](#). Bus rentals must be approved, and contracts signed by a GSMISTS designee.

The charter company will need to meet the following requirements:

1. Vehicles are current in their registration.
2. State mandated safety inspections have been completed and passed.
3. A system of regular maintenance and safety checks on vehicles is in place and obvious defects (such as bald tires) are not present.
4. Vehicles are provided in safe operating condition, and the vehicle or driver will be replaced if problems develop.
5. All vehicles are equipped with first aid kits, emergency lights/reflectors, and fire extinguishers.
6. Vehicles are equipped with two-way communication devices in good working order and phone numbers for appropriate contacts are readily available.
7. A current certificate of insurance has been received and is on file with Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore, including worker's compensation and minimum limits of auto liability in compliance with DOT.
8. CNT verifies that the drivers are properly qualified, trained, and licensed and familiar with the vehicle and have an acceptable driving record and experience driving.
9. The vehicle has sufficient seating; luggage will not be transported in this vehicle.

Activity & Trip Planning Checklist

- ❑ Troop leader reads the GSMISTS Activity & Trip Planning Guide and completes the GSMISTS Activity & Trip Planning Training in gsLearn.
- ❑ Girl Scouts is girl led so find what interests your troop or Girl Scout! Brainstorm ideas for things they would like to do. Discuss activity/trip opportunities and research ideas. Girls vote or use troop government to choose an activity/trip.
- ❑ Girls consider costs and money earning potential and develop a budget.
- ❑ Adults read applicable sections of GSMISTS [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#), [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#).
- ❑ Review the Activity/Trip Approval Chart (pages 3-4) to see what approval, training, and additional resources you may need for the activity/trip.
- ❑ Designate the approved adult volunteer who will be the First Aid/CPR certified person for the activity/trip.
- ❑ Secure approved volunteer drivers and helpers to appropriately supervise the activity/trip. All adults must be registered members and approved volunteers to assist, attend, or drive.
- ❑ If GSMISTS approval is needed, complete the [Activity/Trip Application Form](#). Make sure to follow the Activity/Trip Application Approval Timeline on page 5. GSMISTS reserves the right not to approve activities/trips that do not follow the approval timeline.
- ❑ GSMISTS will review your [Activity/Trip Application Form](#). You will receive an e-mail with one of three outcomes:
 1. Activity/Trip is approved – No further action is required.
 2. Activity/Trip is tentatively approved – The e-mail will describe additional information needed for the activity/trip to be approved.
 3. Activity/Trip is not approved – The e-mail will describe the reason(s) why the activity/trip is not approved.

After approval is received, planning the activity/trip can proceed.

- ❑ Plan and participate in money-earning activities, if needed. GSMISTS Money-Earning and Fundraising Guidelines can be found in GSMISTS [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#).
- ❑ For each girl collect a signed [Annual Permission and Health History Form](#) or [Girl Permission Form](#) and [Girl/Adult Health History Form](#) and bring with you on the activity/trip. Adults need to complete a Girl/Adult Health History Form also. Obtain a completed and signed [Troop Trip Treatment Permission Form](#) for each girl which documents necessary medication, treatment, food, and care that needs to be provided. Obtain completed [Sleeping Arrangements for Travel/Trips](#) (if applicable). Collect a Health Examination Record from [girls](#) and [adults](#) if required.
- ❑ Have FUN on your activity/trip!
- ❑ As a troop, evaluate the experience. Think about creating a survey for your activity/trip so the troop can learn from its experiences!

What did you enjoy?
What did you learn?

What would you change?
What could we do differently?

What was your favorite part?
What was your least favorite part?

Stay Connected with GSMISTS

Good communication is essential to a well-run troop and service unit. It's a great idea to discuss how communications will be handled. Does everyone need to be in special troop Facebook group, an e-mail group, etc. Will you make phone call reminders or text? Be sure to include response expectations in this conversation.

A good idea is to always provide a deadline for communication responses. Do you have a parent who will be the designated communications person?

Digital Newsletters

In the Know: A monthly newsletter sent to your e-mail or available on gsmists.org. In the Know is for troop leaders and service unit team members to stay informed on GSMISTS happenings and activities.

Shore Shout Out: A quarterly newsletter sent to your e-mail or available on gsmists.org. Shore Shout Out is for Girl Scout families to share GSMISTS happenings and activities.

What's Inside?

- Membership Info
- Product Program
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Upcoming Events
- Ways to Support GSMISTS
- Shop Updates
- and more!

Want to be added to the e-mail list?
Contact communications@gmists.org

Be Featured

A troop in your service unit could be featured on our social media channels, or e-mail newsletters! Simply submit a photo to communications@gmists.org or tag us on social media @gsmists sharing your adventure, project, or accomplishment!



Follow Us!
For uplifting stories and council updates, check out our socials.

[f](#) [o](#) [in](#)

@gsmists | #gsmists



Contact Us

We're here for you! If you have any questions, need assistance, or just want to connect, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our dedicated team is committed to providing you with the support and information you need.

844-476-4787 | customer care@gsmists.org

girl scouts 
of michigan
shore to shore