

New Troop Agenda

Family and Friends Meeting

Notes to the Troop Leader are on the left side. Talking points to use during the meeting are on the right side.

Materials Needed the Friends and Family meeting:

- » Name Tags for each person
- » 4HER materials for each family

note: Use names tags and call people by name to begin making friendly connections.

Personally welcome each person as they enter. Chat with each person and encourage them to talk to each other about:

- » Do they have other children? If so what ages?
- » How long they have lived in the area?
- » Do they have scouting experience as a child or other children in Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts?
- » What kind of work they do or if they're in school?

note: We hold up the Girl Scout sign while reciting the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Hold the right hand up and use the thumb to hold down the little finger, keeping the first three fingers upright and together.



Welcome

say: Hello and welcome! My name is _____ and I'm the Troop Leader of your daughter's Girl Scout Troop. It's so nice to meet you/see you again.

Introduce Troop Leaders

do: Introduce yourself and your co-leader (if you have one) by sharing:

- » your name
- » volunteer role
- » your children's names and ages
- » your day job and/or other responsibilities

Parent Introductions

ask: I look forward to getting to know you all as we go through this year of Girl Scouts. If you don't mind – we are all going introduce ourselves. Please tell us these things about yourself:

- » your name
- » your children's names and ages
- » your day job and/or other responsibilities

Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law

say: Thank you! Before we go any further, I want to start this meeting the way all Girl Scout meetings begin by saying the Girl Scout Promise and Law together. You can read it from the back of the Family Guide. Hold up the scout's sign and say it together.

Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout
Law.

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

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note: Find out who your Member Support Executive is or contact Customer Care at reghelp@girlscoutsaz.org if you or your troop have any problems registering online.

note: The Financial Assistance Application is available in the forms library at girlscoutsaz.org.

□ **Ages and grades of our troop**

say: Our Troop consists of grades _____ so we are Daisies/Brownies/Juniors (*choose as appropriate*).

□ **Registration GSUSA Membership**

say: It should be easy for the parents and girls to register online at girlscoutsaz.org/join. You will create a family login and use your credit or debit card online. You will search by troop number. If it is not found, try adding a zero in front of the troop number.

□ **Uniforms**

say: Uniforms are optional but every girl will want a place to display her badges and patches. The Girl Scout shop has starter kits available for girls. The closest Girl Scout shop is located at 1611 E Dobbins Road in Phoenix or you can order online at girlscoutsaz.org/shop.

Optional: Some troop leaders help parents by allowing them to order uniforms and handbooks through the troop and placing a group order.

□ **Explain what girls do and learn in Girl Scouts**

say: Briefly explain the Girl Scout Leadership Experience – the process Girl Scouts uses to help build girls of courage, confidence, and character and become girls who make the world a better place! While the girls learn positive values, healthy relationships, challenge seeking, and more they will have a lot of fun earning badges and patches, selling cookies to learn financial literacy, having great outdoor experiences at camp, and much more! To find out more about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) please visit our website: <https://www.girlscoutsaz.org/en/about-girl-scouts/our-program.html>

ask: Parents, what are you most looking forward to about your daughter being in Girl Scouts?

□ **Financial Assistance**

say: While it is only \$25 to join Girl Scouts, there is also the uniform to buy, and the fun weekend events and camps will be an additional cost. Typically, you just pay as you go, everything is optional; you only pay if you go. You don't have to go on all the fun weekend events to be in the troop. And there is financial assistance available to join, purchase uniforms and books, and for camps and some events. If you want to share with me later privately, I can help your family navigate the process as we learn together, or you can apply for financial assistance online.

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Our Troop

note: *If the leader and co-leader have already established a meeting day, time, and location you simply share this with the parents.*

note: *Or if you do not yet have a co-leader or a meeting location, talk to parents to find a meeting place and location that works for everyone.*

note: *Take time to get an answer from each family. If someone says it sounds good but there is a challenge, can the other parents work together to solve that parent's challenge. Sometimes one parent offers to bring several girls from school to the meeting place, but each parent picks them up at the end. Sometimes a dad or grandparent bring the child to the meeting and the mom picks them up when she gets home from work.*

note: *If there is a family that absolutely cannot make this meeting time work, the troop leader should contact the registration help desk to try to place this girl into another nearby troop.*

note: *Troop dues can be \$2 per meeting or \$20 to \$60 per year depending on what you are trying to cover with this money. Set an amount and frequency that works for the families in your troop.*

Discuss and establish meeting dates, time, and locations

say: Most of what we do will take place in our troop meetings. Our Troop's meetings will be on _____ (day) from _____ (time) at _____ (location).

ask: Does this time work for everyone?

do: Help the parents answer these questions for themselves and each other.

- » How will the girls get from school or day care to the meetings?
- » How long is their commute from work to home?
- » Do the girls need to eat dinner before the meetings?
- » Are the meetings so late that it cuts into bedtime?

do: If you still need to find a meeting place, brainstorm with the parents for a mutually agreeable meeting location. Here are some things to consider.

- » **Leader's house:** Many troop leaders like to meet at their house because all the stuff is already there! Do not feel that the girls need to have run of your whole house and pantry just because the troop meetings are at your house. Feel free to set boundaries.
- » **School:** Many troops want to meet at school. Some schools are open to this, others are not. It is all about relationships. Maybe a parent is a teacher and can offer her classroom after school. Maybe the girls in the troop attend several schools, so transportation from one elementary school to another right after school is a challenge.
- » **Get ideas from parents in meeting location**
- » There should be no pets or younger siblings at troop meetings.
- » Decisions need to include all the parents in a group discussion to come to a consensus.

Troop Dues & how they are used

do: Based on your troop meeting time and the ages of your girls, the Troop Leader and Co-leader need to decide in advance for what will troop dues be used? Here are several ways to keep the price of dues down.

- » Do you need to have snack during your meeting? You need to decide to include this in the cost of dues or have the parents rotate this responsibility to keep dues down.
- » Do you want to have each girl bring a few supplies to the first meeting? (If you plan ahead, the parents could bring these to the parents meeting, so you have them for the first meeting with the girls. Supplies often needed include: 10 pack of washable markers, kid scissors, glue stick, pen, and pencils. It is recommended that you create a troop set, don't keep them separate for each girl.
- » Host a troop birthday party where each girl brings a wrapped present for the troop supplies.

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note: Find out if your Service Unit offers local events for troops to attend and how that information is shared.

note: You will find there are so many fun events offered by the Service Unit and Council that you will definitely not be able to do it all. Don't even try! Some girls in your troop will be busy every weekend with sports or family activities. Some won't have transportation or money to attend extra events. Weekend events should always be optional. Some girls will attend everything; others will attend rarely or never. Each girl's Girl Scout experience is unique. It is okay!

note: Decide in advance of your parent meeting how you want to share troop communication with your troop parents. Try VTK, test it with your co-leader. Does your SU have a Facebook page? If so is it easy to share from the SU Facebook page to a secret group for your troop?

note: If you are still looking for a co-leader, this is the time to mention the troop leader training requirements.

note: Multi-level troops find it helpful to have one adult co-leader for each grade level and at least two for each program grade level.

say: Troop dues are necessary for new troops and will be used to cover meeting and craft supplies, badges, and patches. Depending on how cookie sales go in spring, we may need to collect more dues for next semester or less dues for next year. This month we need to start with \$_____ in troop dues per girl. Please bring this at our next meeting. You can bring cash or checks made out to "GSACPC Troop _____."

□ **Events: Troop events, Service Unit events, and Council events Require payment and permission form**

do: Tell the parents about upcoming Service Unit events of which you are aware. Explain to the parents your availability for weekend events.

say: There will be many fun events on weekends. Sometimes these will be troop events with just our troop, but often we will be invited to larger Girl Scout events. We always need a minimum of two unrelated registered adults to attend events as a troop, so I will need your help.

□ **Troop Communication:** _____

do: Tell the parents how you will be communicating events and deadlines and meeting reminders. Many Troops use a secret Facebook group or a private Shutterfly site. Others use the REMIND or GROUPME apps. It is a good idea, to connect with the parents right now during your parent meeting to get this started using their smart phones.

□ **Emergency Communication: late pick-up or cancellations**

do: Tell the parents how to reach you during meetings in case they are stuck in traffic and running late, or if a different person is taking their child home that day. Can they text you or should they call your cell? It should be rare that you need to cancel a meeting due to illness or bad weather, but make a plan just in case.

say: Most troops go by the policy of "no school; no scouts" so is school is canceled for bad weather, so are troop meetings. We will need to communicate by _____ to communicate in case of emergencies.

ask: Parents what form of communication works best for you? (Maybe you will be able to text most of them, but one or two need a quick phone call.)

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note: *Volunteers must be registered and complete a background check to handle troop money, drive other people's children, and attend overnight events like lock-ins and camping. Certain events will require all participants to be registered for insurance purposes. GSUSA membership is \$25/year and includes the accident insurance for all Troop events and meetings for registered members.*

note: *If you are still looking for a Troop Treasurer or Troop Cookie Manager ensure someone is willing to be the second person on your bank account. You cannot open the account without a second person. You both need to be registered and complete the background check and Troop Money Management training before opening a troop bank account*

note: *Have you found your Service Unit volunteers yet? These volunteers usually offer monthly leader meetings. If neither leader can attend, a parent can attend and bring back the information for you. This is especially important October thru February as troops are preparing for cookie season.*

Troop Leader Responsibilities

☐ **Volunteer Training**

say: As your troop leader, I will be taking training so we have a great first year as a troop. Are any of you CPR/First Aid certified already or do you work in healthcare as EMT or Nurse? Is anyone willing to become certified in CPR/First Aid to support the troop? (Certified healthcare workers can be your troop first aider for outings.)

☐ **Leader Responsibilities**

say: I promise to do my best to follow the Girl Scout Law and to meet the expectations of a good troop leader.

☐ **Connect with the Service Unit Volunteers**

say: Our Service Unit offers leader support meetings on the _____ . These are open to parents too. Let me know if you would like to go together.

☐ **Troop Bank Account (Requires 2 unrelated registered adults)**

say: Each troop must have a troop bank account for dues, expenses, and cookies. There must be two unrelated adults with clear background checks on this bank account. Usually this is the Troop Leader and the Troop Cookie Manager or Troop Treasurer.

do: Either thank these volunteers or ask for volunteers.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

☐ **Financial support of the troop**

say: Parents will be involved in the success of the troop. The best way to support the troop financially is by paying for events and dues on time and by supporting your daughter in her goals during cookie season. Cookie time is family time.

do: Explain the method of payment you have arranged for your troop. Do not co-mingle personal funds or accounts with troop money.

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□ **4HER - How parents can help**

say: I promise that I cannot lead this troop alone. A troop is a family of Girl Scouts working together.

do: Pass out the 4HER materials and review them with the parents. Get volunteers to fill your slate of volunteers. Some people will volunteer for more than one thing. Attempt to get everyone to participate.

□ **Volunteer Roles: Troop Leaders, Troop Cookie Manager, Treasurer, Troop Volunteer, and Friends and Family Volunteer**

do: Use the 4HER materials to explain each role. All these roles listed above require they be registered adult Girl Scouts.

COLLECT the family pledge cards and use the Troop Worksheet to make a troop roster of all the parents in attendance.

say: Bringing snacks or teaching an occasional meeting topic does not require a background check or even that an adult be a registered adult Girl Scout.