

Hosting a Girl Scout Parent Meeting

(This should be your first meeting of the GS year.)

One-Two weeks prior to the parent meeting

- Set a date and time (one hour to 90 minutes) – after work or on a weekend might be the best – then send invites via email, text, or social media.
- Try to meet in the same location you will hold Troop meetings, or somewhere familiar to everyone if possible – the local school or community center are often good bets.
- Remember to include the GSGST website link, www.gsgst.org, in your communication to ensure all girls are registered online.

Before the meeting

- Make enough packets of the following printed documents for each parent/caregiver:
 - Girl Health History Form
 - Photo Release Form
 - Girl Scout Family Promise
 - Girl Scout Promise & Law
 - Make her Experience Memorable Flyer

Parent/Caregiver Meeting Agenda Steps:

While you're welcome to put your own unique spin on this meeting, following this format will ensure the most relevant information is communicated clearly and that everyone's on the same page.

Welcome & Introductions (10 mins)

- Ask parents to fill out the sign in sheet as they arrive.
- Leader introductions (share why you volunteer your time with Girl Scouts)
- Have parents/caregivers introduce themselves & their Girl Scout and share expectations for this year of Girl Scouting.
- Share meeting information for this new troop.
(Location/Dates/Times/Frequency: weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly).

(As the leader you pick meeting days, times, and frequency that works for you. If this schedule doesn't work for some parents have them contact us at info@gsgst.org to see if another troop is available.)

Family as part of the formula (10 mins)

- Explain how you'll be engaging parents (via text, email, or social media, etc.) in their girls' Girl Scout lives by keeping them in the loop on what the girls are doing and learning during each meeting.
- Encourage them to let their daughters "be the expert" at home, explaining or teaching a new skill she's learned to the rest of the family.
- Let them know there will be special events throughout the year for families to share with their girl and celebrate all they're achieving with the troop.

Get them Hooked on Helping (10 mins)

- Using the *Make Her Experience Memorable guide*, point out that spending just a little time to help can make a big impact.
- Secure adults to help with organizing and managing the troop.
- Encourage caregivers to consider other leadership opportunities – emphasize they're not just welcome to lend a hand, they're wanted.

(Parent Volunteers are always vital to for Troop Success. Parents that want to stay at meetings will need to register and complete a criminal background check.)

Volunteer Opportunities for all parents (Parents can)

- Bring snacks
- Help welcome girls to the meeting
- Guide girls in one of the activities
- Or just be ready to take care of small problems (spilled juice!), hand out art supplies (share the crayons, please!), or act as cheerleaders (I like how you are designing your name tag, great job!).

Money Matters (10 mins)

- Outline cost to parents and caregivers (sash or vest and other supplies needed for the year). – Let parents know they will be financially responsible for uniform costs.
- Explain due expectations, and how they'll be used to support the troop. Example Troop Dues = \$5/month per girl. This will help the leader purchase any additional supplies needed. Parents may still have to help bringing items until the troop has enough in the troop account to cover everything.
- If participating in the Girl Scout Cookie or Fall Product Program, explain how money raised benefits the troop. (help purchase supplies, helps pay for events for girls...)

(Parents will be responsible for purchasing uniforms. Parents will also be responsible for helping with supplies until Troop Dues are enough to pay for them. Participating in Fall & Cookie Product sales will also help with the cost of supplies.)

Wrap it up (10-15 mins)

- Make sure everyone has your phone number and email, knows the troop number, and has all the information about the next troop meeting (date, time, location, and any supplies the girls will need to bring.)
- Collect forms then leave time for questions, concerns, and simply to get to know people better.

Forms to be collected: *Girl Health History Form and Photo Release Form.*

(Leaders- you will keep these forms in a binder and bring them to every meeting.)

If there are questions you cannot answer, email info@gsgst.org those questions so we can get you an answer. Or encourage parents to reach out as well.

Closing:

Invite Girl Scouts to form a circle, cross arms, and then join hands. Then, close the meeting with a Friendship Squeeze.

Say:

- Think of a silent wish that you would like to pass along.
- Once you get the wish and the squeeze passed to you, then you'll use your right hand to squeeze the hand of the friend next to you and it will travel all around the circle.
- The last person to have her and squeezed will say, "Goodbye, Girl Scouts."
- Ready?

Remember to keep your Girl Scout promise and Girl Scout Law where you can see them and practice at home.

The next meeting is _____.

See you next time!

Follow up with a thank you, then keep the conversation going all year via email, in-person chats, and/or social media. Updating caregivers on troop activities helps them feel more invested and gives them a chance to build on their girl's experience at home.