

Detailed Example - Parent Meeting Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome

- Greet everyone and ask them to sign in
- Encourage girls to introduce themselves to one another and get acquainted
 - **Girl Activity:** Guide the girls to the activity you've planned for them so they can get settled in before the meeting starts. The activity can be a craft, make a SWAPS, coloring page or a simple game.

Introductions

- Introduce yourself and any other troop volunteers
- Have the adult attendees introduce themselves and share their experience with Girl Scouting or consider asking them to share a special skill or hobby that might interest the girls.
 - **Note:** Parents/guardians with special skills or interests may someday wish to share their knowledge with the girls!

Provide Girl Scout Program Information

- Share the Girl Scout program materials (Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting and Journey books specific to your troop's program level) and let families know that the Guide will have information about Girl Scouts, as well as the badges and Journeys that will be the basis for their girl's leadership experiences. If you don't have the books on hand, show the parents a picture of the materials available for their age level.
 - **Note:** Purchasing the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting and/or Journey books is not mandatory. Also, with the **Volunteer Tool Kit**, the troop leader can print out a meeting outline to include step-by-step badge requirements and share it with the families.

Recruiting Volunteers

- In order to start a new Girl Scout troop, a minimum of two registered, approved (background checked) and unrelated volunteers must accompany the troop at all times. Share what you have learned about Girl Scouts so far. Look for ways to get other adults excited and involved with the troop.
- Explain that as a Troop Leader, you cannot "do it all." The most successful troops have a support network of adults who participate in various aspects of the troop. The parent meeting is the perfect opportunity to ask parents and

guardians for their support throughout the year. Encourage parents and guardians to take an active role in the troop's success by volunteering to serve in one of the following ways:

- Troop Helper
- Troop Treasurer
- Troop Cookie Manager
- Nut, Candy and Magazine Manager
- Record Keeper
- Snack Coordinator
- Drivers

Registration

- Each girl must be registered to participate. Parents or guardians must also register if they will be helping the troop on a regular basis.
- Ask parents/guardians to complete a Girl Health History and an Annual Parent Permission Form for each girl. It is imperative that leaders collect the completed forms for each girl before they can participate in Girl Scout meetings and activities.

Parent/Guardian Expectations

- Even with troop leadership in place, parents and guardians can still play a role and are important for the success of the troop. Ask for help transporting or chaperoning girls on trips, bringing snacks, sharing talents, or attending troop meetings. For safety purposes, Girl Scouts USA requires that there be two registered, approved (background checked) and unrelated adults, one of which must be a female, attend each meeting and all activities. In addition there is an Adult-to-girl supervision ratio required to ensure the safety and health of all girls taking part in an activity. This is a good reason to have as many parents/guardians register as an adult volunteer.
- Learn to work closely with families, so together girls can benefit from leader/parent involvement in the troop. Here are some benefits of parent/guardian involvement that you can share with families:
 - Parents and guardians know their children better than anyone else. They can provide insight and help when it comes to planning and problem solving.
 - Involving caregivers can help keep girls interested in the troop and troop activities.

- Involved caregivers become closer to their girls, develop an extended social network, and are actively contributing to the community.

Building a Troop Treasury

In the first year, families can expect that there may be some out-of-pocket expenses such as field trips, uniforms, and books.

- To help cover these expenses, troops may decide to collect **troop dues** from each family.
 - Explain to parents that membership dues pay for their national membership to GSUSA to provide liability insurance during Girl Scout activities and does not stay locally.
- Troop dues are paid directly to the troop and is used to cover the cost of project supplies, meeting expenses, badges, etc. New troops may want to collect dues in order to have funds to open a troop checking account.
 - There are two council-sponsored product sales programs offered by the Southern Illinois council during the year, the **Nut, Candy and Magazine Program** and the **Girl Scout Cookie Program**.
 - Troops retain a portion of the proceeds of each product to fund their activities and council uses the remaining portion to support the delivery of programs to girls, provide training to volunteers and to maintain local Girl Scout camps.
 - Participation in the Girl Scout Cookie Program is required, but participation in the Nut, Candy and Magazine Program is voluntary.
- If the troop decides that funds earned by participating in product programs will not be enough to meet troop expenses, with approval, they can organize additional money-earning activities that the troop carries out themselves.
- Girl Scout troops may accept cumulative monetary donations of up to \$250 annually from October 1 through September 30 from an individual, small local business or community organization.
 - Monetary donations belong equally to all members of the troop.
 - The direct solicitation of cash by Girl Scouts is not allowed.

Communication and Meeting Dates

- When compiling parent/guardian information, determine what will be the best means of communication for the troop (consistent communication between troop volunteers and parents is vital). Do they prefer to receive important information from you via emails, texts, or phone calls? Would they like information on a shared calendar from Google or Shutterfly?

Closing

Thank parents and guardians for coming and take any remaining questions.

Forms to have on hand:

- Girl Health History and Permission forms
- Girl and Adult registration forms, financial assistance forms, and volunteer background check forms for those who do not have internet access