



New Leader Mentor Guide



We're so excited for you to join the team!

The New Leader Mentoring Guide serves to support service units in welcoming, engaging, and advising new leaders through one-on-one support and guidance. A leader's first year or two is crucial! Leaders play an integral role in Girl Scouting; it is through their leadership and service that girls have the opportunity to experience the world of Girl Scouting. With the proper support network and resources, leaders will be better equipped to provide a more meaningful experience for girls.

While the structure of any New Leader Mentor Program can be customized based on the needs of each service unit and community, the success of the program relies on the efforts of the mentor, as well as the commitment of the service unit team to support their work.

What is a Mentor?

Knowledgeable and experienced people are called mentors. They can be found everywhere. Think about your Girl Scout leader experience. Was there someone that helped you get started; offering advice and guidance, showing you how things work and how to get things done? What about throughout your leader experience? Who took that special interest in you and had an especially positive influence on you? We can all probably name someone who has had a profound positive effect on our Girl Scout experience.

New Leader Mentors are more than just an ambassador for leaders, they are a friend who can lend an ear in times of need. The mentor serves a vital role in welcoming new leaders and introducing them to the community of Girl Scouting, as well as familiarizing them with their support systems and available resources.

A mentor....



Takes a personal interest in and helps inexperienced leaders (mentee)



Offers knowledge, insight, perspective, and wisdom to the mentee



Serves as a role model, coach, and confidant



Helps someone become successful and learns new skills themselves

There are some important things to remember when working with new leaders that will make you an effective mentor.

Be Welcoming: Contact the new leader to remind them of the date, time, and location of the service unit meetings. Stay with them at the service unit meetings to make sure they feel included. Introduce them to people; draw them into conversations.

Be Patient: People learn at varying speeds, and some need more guidance than others. Be helpful, but don't do the job for them.

Be Sensitive: Tact and diplomacy are vital. As a mentor, always be careful to say and do things that will motivate and encourage the mentee.

Be Available: Plan to spend time with the new leader, as needed. Remember that new leaders may need you more the first month than the third. As they continue to develop skills take a small step back each month.

Be Respectful: Everyone is different. A mentor respects the differences between themselves, the mentee, and others.

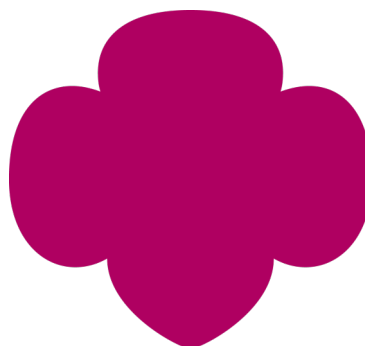
Be Supportive: Remember your job is not to take the place of the service team, but to direct your mentee to the correct team member, as needed. Remind them there are many people available to help.

Be Flexible: You are a friend and a mentor to the new leader. Not everything happens according to plan. You may need to adapt to various situations and accept that all the tasks might not be completed in the suggested time frames. Help make plans to accomplish them.

Be Knowledgeable: Help your leader understand Girl Scout terms, service unit positions, information discussed at meetings, resources available, and upcoming Girl Scout events.

Be a Good Listener: A mentor listens carefully. Simply listening can be helpful to the mentee and enable them to articulate the problem and sort things out. If a real problem arises, don't hesitate to contact a service team member for assistance, if necessary.

Be Considerate: Give them all the considerations you give your friends. Express an interest in how things are going by checking in with them. Don't wait for them to call and ask for help or clarification. They may not realize they need help until you ask.



ENGAGE
CONNECT
EMPOWER

ENGAGE new leaders to participate in and embrace their Girl Scout community

CONNECT new leaders to programs, trainings, resources, and opportunities

EMPOWER new leaders to provide exceptional leadership to girls

ENGAGE

- Connect new leaders to the area/service unit team by making introductions at a meeting and ensuring they understand the role of the service unit and administrative team positions
- Invite new leaders to attend yours or a fellow volunteer's troop meeting to get firsthand experience
- Add new leaders to service unit communications, such as, email list, Facebook group, Service Unit Rally, Remind etc.

CONNECT

- Invite new leaders to a Service Unit New Leader Orientation. This would be great to offer before upcoming service unit meetings.
- Share upcoming service unit events with the leaders and their troop personally
- Check to see if leaders have access to the New Troop Start-Up training on gsLearn, as well as any other pertinent volunteer trainings
- Help new leaders set up their year plan in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK)

EMPOWER

- Host an investiture ceremony for new leaders.
- Share past experiences and best practices
- Offer to attend their first parent meeting to set expectations for the troop year
- Share tips on how to best incorporate the Girl Scout Leadership Experience into troop meetings
- Offer your guidance during council-sponsored product sales programs
- Schedule regular time to meet informally

This is a list of primary forms that new troop leaders will use to get their troop started and have a successful year. The list will link you to the exact location to the document.

| Document Title | Description |
|--|---|
| Member Forms | |
| Girl Health Information and Release Form | This form is completed annually for troop records. |
| Photo Release Minors | Allows GSWO to use, distribute, publish, exhibit, digitize, broadcast, display, modify, etc. the use of name, picture, voice or likeness |
| Policies and Procedures | |
| Volunteer Essentials | All the legal, procedure, and policy guidelines are outlined here for you in one handy document. |
| Safety Activity Check Points | Is a safety checklist to prepare girls and troop to participate in activities. |
| Incident/Accident Report | Online form used in the event of an incident/accident, or emergency. |
| Permission Slip | This form allows leaders to communicate to caregivers the key information about the activity and receive permission for participation. |
| Troop Support | |
| New Leader Patch Program Request Form | Use this to submit to request new leader patches from the new leader patch program |
| Troop and Parent/Caregiver Agreement | A document allows the troop to have a formal agreement with parent/caregivers about troop expectations. |
| Ways Adults Can Support the Troop | This form can be used to recruit adults (beyond leaders) to support troop activities. |
| Request for Certificate of Insurance | A form used to request a Certificate of Insurance be issued to a venue hosting Girl Scouts, noting the level of liability insurance GSWO holds. |
| Troop Opportunity Catalog Form | Record the troop's capacity, identify if the troop will be open to accepting new members now or in the future, and when and where your troop meets |
| Digital Kaper Chart | A fillable PDF to offer a kaper chart digitally for when your troop is meeting virtually |
| Troop Finances | |
| GSWO Bank Information Form | Complete the GSWO Bank Information Form online to inform the council of the troop bank account information. |
| Troop Finance Tracking Sheet | An excel file designed to help you keep track of your yearly finances and complete your finance tab and the end of the membership year. |
| VTK Finance Tab FAQ | Frequently asked questions to help leaders submit their finance report using the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) Finance Tab. |
| Tax Exempt Form Ohio | Must be presented at the time of purchase in Ohio. |
| Tax Exempt Form Indiana | Must be presented at the time of purchase in Indiana. |
| Tax Exempt Form Kentucky | Must be presented at the time of purchase in Kentucky. |
| Tax Exempt Form Michigan | Must be presented at the time of purchase in Michigan. |
| Money Earning Approval Form | Complete this form to get approved for any additional money earning or project funding activities. It must be submitted to your community development manager with a months notice to receive approval. |

Below is an overview of what troop mentors can expect throughout the year. This timeline will vary depending on the start date of the new troop mentor.

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|-----------------------|--|
| <p>30 days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Troop Start Up Getting Started and Next Steps on gsLearn • Secure a meeting location/date/time • Schedule the first meeting with the girls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they need additional tools or support to help them be prepared for the first meeting with the girls? • Make sure all girls and adults have registered and paid their membership dues • Attend or have plans to attend a local service unit/area meeting |
| <p>60 days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become a CPR/AED and First Aid Certified Adult • Open a troop bank account • Schedule a troop parent/caregiver meeting • Ask if they have collected health forms from all girls participating in their troop? (Are they kept in a secure and organized place?) • Kaper Chart–Do they know what it is and/or are they utilizing one? • Be introduced to the council-sponsored product programs • Create a year plan in the Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) |
| <p>90 days</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new leaders to attend onboarding training and events (ex. New Leader Fair and Forum) • Reached out to girls and caregivers to confirm which current members are returning for another year of Girl Scouting fun • Taken advantage of “Early Bird” membership renewal incentives and renewed their Girl Scout membership for the upcoming year? • Completed the end of year troop finance report • Considered being a troop mentor to a new co-leader? • Share council-sponsored and service unit events • Discuss how to use the Girl Scout Program Processes: Girl Led, Learning by Doing, and Cooperative Learning • Share how to fill out the GSWO Bank Information form |

At this point, you have established yourself as a reliable resource and hopefully your mentees feel comfortable reaching out to you with questions. As the new leader continues their Girl Scout journey, consistent reassurance, support, and engagement is the focus of your role as their mentor for the remainder of the Girl Scout year.

Midyear Check-In:

- How are things going overall and what are their big concerns or questions at this point?
- Acknowledge their progress and remind them how they are benefiting girls.
- Check in during the Girl Scout Product Programs—how are things going? What questions do they have?
- Share upcoming Girl Scout holidays and events—Juliette Gordon Low’s Birthday, World Thinking Day, Volunteer Appreciation Day, etc.

End of Troop Year Check-In:

- Reminder—end of year finance report completed and filed by June 30
- Bridging (if applicable) - Have they worked on requirements and/or planned a ceremony?
- End of year court of awards planned? Great opportunity to involve parents and show what the girls have accomplished throughout year.
- Summer Plans—are they planning anything with their girls over summer? If not encourage them to stay in touch at least a few times and get out a “save the date” notice for their first meeting prior to school starting.

While a mentor/mentee relationship does require some time and commitment, the relationship does not last forever—nor should it. The purpose of mentoring is to teach the mentee to think and act independently and successfully. Once mentees have developed to the point where they are functioning effectively on their own, mentors’ services are no longer needed. Most likely, the mentor/mentee relationship turns into a strong, warm friendship. Mentors can find new mentees to help, and former mentees have the skills and knowledge to become mentors themselves.



Thank you for your interest in being a Girl Scouts of Western Ohio New Leader Mentor. You’re helping a new Girl Scout Leader smoothly transition into leadership and making a positive impact on their Girl Scout experience! Please check the council website regularly for new resources and New Leader Mentor updates.