



# Belonging Activities for Your Troop

There are so many fun and easy ways to build connections in your troop and establish an environment where all girls feel like they belong in Girl Scouts. Below are some ideas to get you started!

## Mix it Up: Clique Busters

Some of the most valuable experiences in Girl Scouts are about friendship—learning to be a friend and learning to appreciate and care about all of the girls in the troop. However, what can you do about those cliques? You've got to Mix It Up! Here are some clique busters:



### Number Call Out

Assemble the group. Call out a number such, as “three” and the girls must scramble to get into groups of three. Try for numbers that divide the group evenly into your total group, or have those left out be the next callers.



### Just Like Me

The game leader calls out things that girls might have in common such as ponytail, an older sister, a piece of red clothing, the same height, and so on. On signal, everyone must quickly get into groups that have common characteristics. Be careful not to use racial, cultural or religious stereotypes in dividing the group.



### Fingers Up

Instruct all girls to hold any number of fingers up in the air. All those with a matching number of fingers become a team or all odd numbers and all even numbers become a team.



### Socks

Have enough pairs of matching socks for every girl in your group. Have the girls select a sock without seeing them and the girls then must pair up with the person that has their matching sock. If you have an uneven number of girls you can always put three matching socks in the pile. You can also do this with colored paper if you do not have socks.

# Getting Girls to Connect

Building positive group dynamics is one of the most important things you can do as a troop leader. Here are some ideas to get you started:

## Toilet Paper Talk

**Supplies:** 1 roll of unused toilet tissue and space for a small circle

**Procedure:** Sit in a comfortable circle and pass the roll of toilet paper around with these directions: “Take as many squares of toilet paper as you think you will need. Then pass the roll to the next person.” Usually you will get the question, “How many you need for what?” An easy answer to that is, “For whatever.” Try to brush off the question or just repeat it the instructions. Observe what happens. Some people need more information and have a hard time moving on without it.

If players choose not to take any tissue squares, that’s okay—for now. Once everyone has had the roll, explain that you would like each person to tell the group a quality about themselves for each square of toilet paper. Encourage responses beyond the superficial. If there were individuals that did not take squares the first time, offer the roll to them after others have gone. Adults can play this game with the girls so the girls can learn more about them as well.

### Debriefing questions for the group:

- Did anyone have a hard time saying something about themselves?
- Were the qualities outside or inside qualities?
- Shy do you think it is hard to talk about yourself?
- Can anyone name a quality for each person in the group?



*You can use candy instead of toilet paper.*

## “I Like Me” Color Wheel

**Supplies:** Paper, crayons or markers, several mirrors

**Procedure:** Have your girls look into a mirror. Ask them the following questions.

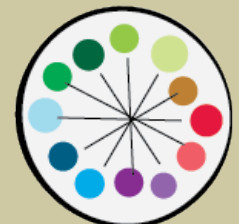
- What do you see there?
- How many colors did you see in the mirror?
- What color are your eyes, hair, skin, lips?
- What are the colors of the clothes you are wearing today?

If you don’t have mirrors, pair the girls and have them tell each other the colors they see.

Have each girl draw six circles on her paper. In each circle put a different color according to the following responses (use these or others of your own choosing): color of your eyes; one color you are wearing; color of your skin; color of your lips; color of your hair; another color you are wearing.

### Discussion Part:

Look at the color wheel you have made. All these colors are a part of you today. Look at the color wheels of other people. Notice that no two are exactly alike. Emphasize the large variety of colors. One color wheel is as special as another is. Emphasize how people are all very different and that prejudging according to color, shape of eyes, height, weight, etc., is prejudice.



# Human Knot

**Supplies:** None

**Procedure:** Divide participants into small odd number groups such as 5, 7 or 9. Have each group stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Have the groups then face to the right remaining in a circle. Then ask the groups to take their left hand and without looking reach into the circle and grab another participant's hand. Ask the participants to repeat the procedure with their right hand, also with out looking.

Once the group has created the knot, instruct them to untangle the knot with out releasing their hands.

As the facilitator you should allow the game to be difficult. Allow and encourage everyone to talk. Usually there is a dominant leader or two in the group. It is ok for these people to take the lead for a short period of time. The purpose of the game is not to allow one or two people to dominate but to allow the entire group to give opinions and make decisions as a team to untangle the knot. When you see people getting frustrated ask them to freeze then assign a leader(s) at different points in the game. Provide new obstacles such as no talking at all or only certain girls (e.g. girls wearing purple) can talk. You want to ultimately help them to realize that they need to listen and work as a team.

This is not intended to be a competitive game; it is not a race between groups. Maintain a teamwork atmosphere and encourage the groups to concentrate on their task and finishing their game. Take mental notes of those getting frustrated and ask them the questions during the debriefing.

## Debriefing questions for the group:

1. What was the biggest obstacle in the game? Why?
2. What worked the best to help you untangle the knot? Why?
3. What would you do differently if you played it again?
4. How did the interaction in the different groups differ?
5. How is this like a real life experience that you have had?  
(Feel free to share your experiences as well.)

