

Slide 1



Troop Success Training

Introduce self, thank everyone for attending.

Agenda



- What makes a successful troop?
- Troop leader relationships
- Family Involvement
- Practice planning with troop success in mind
- Questions

State the agenda: Today we will discuss what makes a successful troop, spend some time talking about troop leader relationships and family involvement, then practice planning with troop success in mind! You're already making great strides toward having a successful troop by being here today.

Icebreaker



Why did you become a troop leader? & What are you hoping girls get out of Girl Scouts?

3

Find out who the audience is. There's a lot that goes into being a Girl Scout leader. You might have a few years under your belt or maybe you're still finding out all there is to know. Continue by asking for a show of hands of who is a new troop leader and who has been a troop leader for two years, three years, four years, more than five years, etc. – This will help gauge your audience is and you can adjust your content accordingly.

Reflect. Say, “If you're a new leader, or even a veteran leader, you might feel overwhelmed by all of the information you've been receiving – and we know, it can be overwhelming. But before we jump into all of those details, let's reflect on why we're here. Take a moment to think about why you became a troop leader in the first place. If you're a parent to a girl in your troop, what were you hoping for your daughter to get out of it. If not, what inspired you to choose Girl Scouts as a place to give your time?”

- **After a few minutes**, invite volunteers to share with one another. After they share in small groups, ask for a few key reasons and write them in the list on the white board.

Say, “These are the reasons that we’re all here, and though they may look a little different for each one of us, we all want to help build girls of courage, confidence, and character. I’m going to leave these reasons up here on the board for the remainder of the training. If at any time you feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of being a Troop Leader, I encourage you to return to these reasons and remember that this is why we do what we do! It’s easy to get caught up in the details, but at the end of the day, if you’re moving toward these goals – you’re leading a successful troop.”

What makes a successful troop?

– Data from GSUSA Voices Count Survey



Say, “Every year, Girl Scouts USA does a National survey to determine what the most successful troops (and struggling troops) have in common.”

Pass out Anatomy of a Successful Troop *handout*

Highlight each of the following points in slides 5-11

100% of successful troops held parent meetings throughout the year



100 % of successful troops held a parent meeting to begin the year

- Encourages parent buy-in, helps you to get more volunteers
- Connects parents to “the why” of Girl Scouts
- If you haven’t done this yet, it’s not too late!

Troop leaders get to know each other

**BUILD A
RELATIONSHIP**

**COMMUNICATE
REGULARLY**

An icon showing two stylized human figures, one female and one male, in green. Between them are two horizontal arrows pointing in opposite directions, one above and one below, indicating communication or relationship building.

6

Troop leaders know each other (or have a good relationship)

- Build a relationship with fellow troop leaders/ volunteers
- Communicate regularly and clearly

Maintain a
good troop
size



Troop size is 8 – 12

- Smaller = potential for really small troop meetings, Bigger = could be chaotic
- Good size for all girls to know each other
- Larger troops can work, but will require more support

Participate in a variety of activities

The infographic is divided into two columns. The left column contains two items: 'EARN BADGES & AWARDS' with a green clover icon, and 'EXPLORE THE OUTDOORS' with a green tree icon. The right column contains two items: 'ATTEND COUNCIL EVENTS' with a green calendar icon, and 'GO ON FIELD TRIPS' with a green van icon. A blue footer bar at the bottom contains a green clover icon on the left and the number '8' on the right.

Participate in a variety of activities

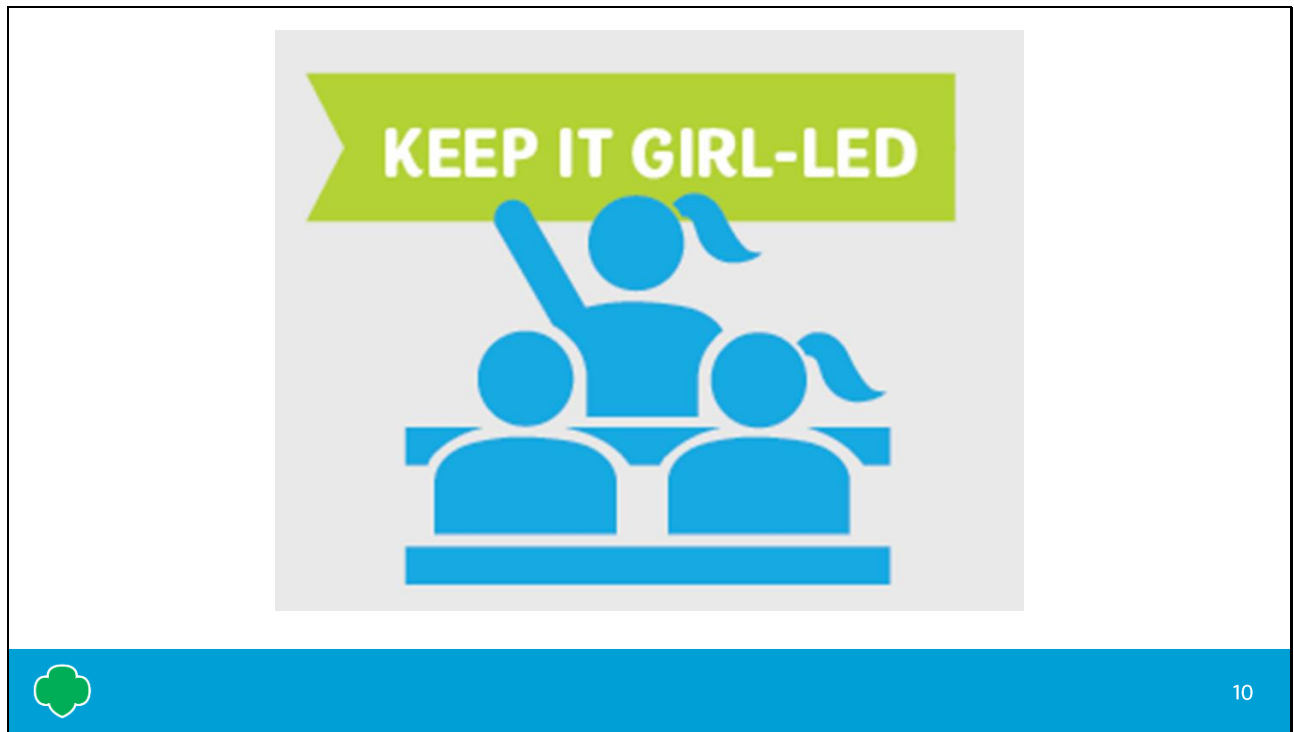
- Troop meetings, field trips, council events, outdoors
- Girls earn badges, complete journeys, and do things outside of troop meetings
- You *do not* have to do everything!

Slide 9



Go camping

- Or other similar outdoor activities that bring girls together for an extended period of time, require teamwork, and build new skills



Girls choose activities, badges, journeys – and are involved in planning of meetings, trips, and Take Action Projects.

Say, “What it means to be girl-led will change as girls get older. For example, a Girl Scout Daisy troop could be presented with a few field trip options and they can vote on their favorite while Girl Scout Juniors could have a troop discussion on areas of interest and choose a field trip based on their troop budget”.

Do Take Action Projects



Do Take Action Projects

- Helps strengthen and solidify learning
- Connects girls with a shared goal
- Takes learning into real life

Leading a troop is a team effort

Working with co-leaders, volunteers, and families



Say, “Earlier, I mentioned the importance of good troop leader relationships for troop success. Building a good relationship with a troop leader partner is a little bit different than making a new friend or meeting a new colleague. There are specific pieces of information that will be helpful to making sure your troop runs smoothly and you and your co-leader(s) have a good relationship. This can also apply to troop volunteers – especially those that you work with frequently!”

Slide 13

1. Why did you become a troop leader?
2. What do you hope to get out of leading this troop?
3. What do you hope girls will get out of being in this troop?
4. What is your communication style?
5. What is the best way to contact you? What is a reasonable time frame to expect a response?
6. How do you learn best?
7. How much do you hope to lead vs. support?
8. Do you have areas of expertise or interest that you'd like to lead in? (i.e. Outdoors, Science, Art, etc.)



Say, “If you’re here with a co-leader today, partner up with them. If not, find a partner near you for this activity.”

Instruct the pairs to choose three of these questions listed on the PowerPoint slide to ask their partner. Ask them to keep their responses to each question at one minute or less.

Ask the group, “Was anyone surprised by your partner’s answers?” If you have time, ask, “Why do you think this information might be helpful in leading a troop?” and “What other questions might be helpful to ask?”

Family Involvement

Hold family meetings



Say, “Family involvement is also key to troop success – and the more invested families are, the easier being a troop leader is!”

Discuss the following ways to get families involved

- Holding a family meeting to start your year
- A family meeting will start everyone out on the same page and you’ll be a familiar face later in the year
- It’s not too late! Pre-cookie season meeting or end of year meetings are still helpful.
- Check out the Family Meetings article—complete with activity plans and email templates on the volunteer website.

Family Involvement

Communicate clear expectations around communication, finances, time commitment, etc.



Being clear with expectations surrounding communication, finances, time commitment, etc.

- When families can plan for expenses and time commitments in advance, they are more likely to follow through.
- Be clear about communication by **sharing** “Email is the best way to reach me” or “You can expect an update email from me on the second Tuesday of the month. It will have all the important information in it, so it’s important to read it thoroughly.”

Family Involvement

Ask for help!



Ask for help!

- Some families may be able to help coordinate snacks and others may be willing to take the lead on meetings for a specific badge – but you won't know until you ask!
- Talk about the benefits of volunteering for parents– help shape your girl's experience, gain useful skills, etc.
- Stress that the Girl Scouts experience is dependent on girls, leaders, and families to shape it

Family Involvement

Communicate the “why”



Communicate the “why.”

- Communicate what you’re working on as a troop, what girls learn, etc. Sending out a short meeting recap is a good way to connect families to the troop.
- When families understand the importance of Girl Scouts in their girl’s life, they will be more likely to help support it

There's more than one right way!



Say, “We are going to talk through what a plan for six months of Girl Scouts might look like, using all of the tools we’ve discussed today.”

Create a mock 6-month plan with a partner

Month 1

Meeting 1: Parent Meeting

Meeting 2: Art-related badge

Month 2

Meeting 1: Outdoor Activity

Meeting 2: _____



Instruct participants to pair up with a new partner (it may be helpful to pair a more experienced leader with a newer leader) **Say**, “Using the tools you’ve learned today about successful troops, take the next five minutes to plan out a mock 6-month plan with your partner. Suppose that your troop meets twice per month. You don’t need to know the specific names of badges or journeys, you can use placeholders like ‘art-related badge.’”

Reference the example on PowerPoint

When everyone has completed their plan, ask them to share with another group near them.


Slide 20

<p style="text-align: center;">Month 1</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Family Meeting + Girls decide on first badge they want to earn2. Badge of Girls' Choice Meeting 1 (Painting) <p style="text-align: center;">Month 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Badge of Girls' Choice Meeting 2 (Painting)2. Attend Council Event – Brownie Programming Robots (earn Programming Robots badge) <p style="text-align: center;">Month 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Journey of Girls' Choice Meeting 1 (It's Your Planet – Love it!)2. Journey Girls' Choice Meeting 2 (It's Your Planet – Love it! + tie into camping planning) <p style="text-align: center;">Month 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Journey Girls' Choice Meeting 3 – (It's Your Planet – Love it! + tie into camping planning)2. Go camping with troop – Complete It's Your Planet – Love it! Journey while camping <p style="text-align: center;">Month 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Girls lead planning the Take Action Project2. Do the Take Action Project <p style="text-align: center;">Month 6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Outdoor activity field trip to work toward earning Adventure Club patch2. Set cookie goals and plan for selling	20
---	----

Pull up the Sample Mock Troop Plan slide. **Ask**, “Did anyone have an identical plan to the group they shared with?” and “Does anyone have an identical plan to this one?” (Likely, no)

Does your plan...

- Include a variety of activities (Art, STEM, Outdoor, Friendship, etc.)?
- Include Council Event(s)?
- Include a Take Action Project?
- Include camping or another extended experience?
- Is it Girl-led? (Or could it be?)

21

Say, let's review and see if your plan met the goals for troop success. Does the plan...

- Include a variety of activities (Art, STEM, Outdoor, Friendship, etc.)?
- Include Council Event(s)?
- Include a Take Action Project?
- Include camping or another extended experience?
- Is it girl-led? (Or could it be?)

Emphasize that there are many ways to achieve troop success and no “cookie cutter” troop meeting schedule or combination of badges that will make a successful troop



Questions?

Contact Girl Scouts River Valleys at 1-800-845-0787
girlscouts@girlscoutsrv.org



22

Thank everyone for attending. If time, allow for questions, if not, direct participants to where they can ask any remaining questions.