



Junior Independence Badge Activity Plan 2

Badge Purpose: When girls have earned this badge, they'll have confidence doing things on their own and will know how to help others have confidence in them.

Planning Guides Link: Healthy Living and Creativity

Activity Plan Length: 1.5 hours

Involve Family and Friends: Participation from family and friends can enrich your troop's Girl Scout experience, both for the girls and for you. Use the suggestions below to make it easier for you to connect with additional support.

- Before the meeting:
 - Send a note to families to find those with interest in or expertise with the topic. Ask them to lead or support an activity or two, or even lead the whole meeting.
 - Offer this activity plan as a starting place and point out that they may choose alternative activities using the *Customize It!* section as a guide. For example: If an activity plan directs girls to sit outside and observe animal habitats, you may choose to go to the zoo and learn about animal habitats there instead.
- At home:
 - Encourage families to ask questions about their girls' badge activities. Some examples that work for any badge include: What did you learn? What surprised you? What does it make you think of trying next?
- Throughout the year:
 - Suggest to families ways that girls can share or display their Girl Scout accomplishments. Possibilities include a bulletin board, a scrapbook, a special memories box or family sharing time.

Girls Take the Lead: Include girl leadership through long-term planning, short-term meeting prep and specific activities at meetings.

- Long Term Planning
 - If you use "Plan Your Junior Year", share this with the girls at the start of the year. Have them ask friends and family to help out with specific meetings or activities. Let the girls brainstorm ways to make the plans their own, such as thinking of related field trip activities. If a girl has experience with a field trip, ask her to be assistant tour guide.
 - If you are adapting the "Plan Your Junior Year", get the girls' input on which badges to choose. Offer just a few choices in each category or timeframe to make decisions easier. Every girl should have at least one badge or journey she's excited about.
- Short Term Planning
 - Ask a family to help lead a badge. Make sure they have access to activity plans and any resources you might have. Keep additional requested materials to a minimum.
 - Choose two helpers to stay after a meeting for 15 minutes. Give them each an activity to introduce and either instruct or help guide at the next meeting.
 - Before a meeting, ask everyone to vote on some aspect of the activity: draw posters or perform skits, open with a song or game, etc.

- Use a rotating list of helper tasks, called a 'kaper chart', to share responsibilities. Examples include acting as emcee of the meeting, leading an opening game, bringing a snack next meeting or taking attendance.
- At the Meeting
 - During the opening, have 1-2 girls share their answers to a get-to-know-you question.
 - Have girls fulfill their kaper chart responsibilities.
 - Try to find something in each activity that you can let girls decide or manage.

Customize It: If your group wants to expand work on this badge or simply try different activities, go for it! There are many ways to earn this award, including: completing the activities as listed in the Junior Skill-Building Badge set for *It's Your Planet—Love it!*, completing two of these activity plans, attending a council-sponsored event or customizing activities. Pick the one(s) that work best for your group. Girls will know they have earned the award if:

- They know what being independent means
- They can take responsibility for themselves and their actions
- They can show their independence by helping others

Tips and Tools

- Check out ways to stay safe using Safety-Wise at <http://gsrv.gs/safetywise>.
- Ensure that your activities are accessible to everyone. Ask in advance if any special accommodations need to be made. If you have questions regarding specific adaptations, please contact River Valleys at 800-845-0787.

Resources

- This activity plan has been adapted from the Junior Skill-Building Badge set for the *It's Your Planet—Love It!* Independence Badge, which can be used for additional information and activities.

Getting Started

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Girl Scout Promise and Law printed out on poster board

Steps:

1. Welcome everyone to the meeting.
2. Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Use repeat-after-me or say it as a group if girls know it by heart.

| Girl Scout Promise | Girl Scout Law |
|---|--|
| <i>On my honor, I will try:</i> To serve God and my country, To help people at all times, And to live by the Girl Scout Law. | <i>I will do my best to be</i> honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, <i>and to</i> respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout. |

Activity #1: Good Habits Handbook

Badge Connection: Step 3 – Break a bad habit

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- Small notebook or journal for each girl
- Writing utensils (markers, pens, pencils)
- Stickers, magazines, ribbon

Steps:

1. Explain to the girls that part of being more independent is practicing good habits. Give them a few minutes to decorate the cover of their journal, including their name.
2. Tell girls to open it up to the first page and think about some of the bad habits they have. They can list as many as they want. If they can't think of any, here are some examples:
 - Putting off schoolwork
 - Being disorganized, losing homework
 - Forgetting to brush your teeth
 - Biting your fingernails
 - Not putting away your clothes
 - Eating too much junk food
 - Being bossy with friends
 - Interrupting when your friend is talking
2. Ask girls to pick one of the bad habits they have listed. Write it on top of the next page. Ask girls to think to themselves about *why* they do it. To help girls figure out *why*, tell them to write down when they do it, how they feel before, during, and after doing it.
3. Next, have girls write about how this habit might affect others. How would she and the people affected feel if she changed the habit?
4. On the next page, tell girls to find something positive to replace the habit. The key is to break the old routine around that habit.

5. Challenge girls to use this journal to track their progress of breaking a bad habit and starting positive ones. Encourage girls to reward themselves each day, week, or month they have success.
6. Optional: have girls bring their journals to the next troop meeting and discuss how they are doing!

Activity #2: Testing Smoke Detectors

Badge Connection: Step 4 – Help around the house

Time Allotment: 20 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.
- If you meet in a public facility, such as a church or school, check with the maintenance manager to see if this is okay to do with the girls. Invite them to attend your meeting if they'd like to teach the girls!
- For additional information: <http://gsrv.gs/1NafvyD>

Materials Needed:

- Smoke detector
- Batteries

Steps:

1. Tell girls they can practice being independent by helping keep their homes safe. Ask girls what smoke alarms are and why they should have them in their homes.
 - a. Smoke alarms help protect families by making a very loud beeping noise to warn that smoke is in the air or a fire has started.
 - b. Sometimes, especially at night when people are sleeping, they may not see fire, smell smoke or wake up in time to get out safely.
 - c. Smoke alarms provide an early warning signal for escape from fire.
2. Take a walkthrough of your meeting place and point out important safety devices in kitchens, bathrooms and classrooms like smoke detectors, radon detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers. Demonstrate what a smoke alarm looks like and the sound it makes when it detects smoke.
3. Ask girls what they should do if they hear a smoke alarm sound.
 - a. They need to follow their home or school fire escape plan and get out fast.
4. Ask girls if they know where smoke alarms should be installed.
 - a. Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home, including the basement.
 - b. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside the sleeping area.
 - c. Smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling or on the side walls 6 to 8 inches below the ceiling.
5. Ask girls how often they think the batteries in smoke alarms should be changed.
 - a. Batteries should be changed at least once a year and tested monthly to make sure they are working.
6. Show girls where the batteries go in a smoke alarm. Ask for a volunteer to replace the batteries correctly.
7. Have one of the girls press the test button to demonstrate it is working properly. Also, remind girls that alarms need to be kept clean from dust. This can be done by running a vacuum cleaner attachment over and around them.
8. Protect your home from fire by helping grown-ups remember to:
 - put smoke alarms in the home, especially near bedrooms
 - test smoke alarms monthly to make sure they are working
 - replace with brand new batteries at least once a year
 - keep smoke alarms clean from dust

Activity #3: Miss Independent

Badge Connection: Step 5 – Show off your independence!

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Prep Needed:

- Gather materials and supplies.

Materials Needed:

- In Case of Emergency worksheet
- When I'm Home Alone worksheet
- Phonebook

Steps:

1. Girls should feel ready to be responsible for themselves. Tell them they are going to prepare for staying home alone, with cooperation from their parent/guardian. (If parents are not okay with this activity, or if girls have already stayed home alone, see additional options added into the Family Follow Up Email)
2. Discuss what to do in possible situations while home alone, such as answering the phone, answering the door, a severe storm, and smelling gas or smoke. Have girls fill out the **In Case Of Emergency** sheet. They can look up numbers in the phonebook if necessary.
3. Have girls brainstorm what they would like to do when they are home alone. Perhaps they want to use the quiet time to de-stress by taking a bath, doing yoga, or journaling. Maybe they want to watch a movie, play their favorite music and dance, or read a book. Give girls the **When I'm Home Alone** worksheet to write down their ideas.

Activity #4: Snack Chat

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 10 minutes

Steps:

1. While enjoying snack, here are some things for girls to talk about:
 - Is there a new habit you would like to start? For example, reading a chapter each night in a book for fun.
 - What is something you would like to eventually do by yourself?
 - How does it feel when you do something independently? Do you feel proud? Nervous?
 - Do you know how to maintain a bike? Take care of a car? What do you need to do? Why is this important to know?

Wrapping Up

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Make New Friends printed on poster board

Steps:

1. Instruct girls to get into a Friendship Circle. Have girls stand in a circle and cross their right arms over their left, holding hands with the person on each side of them.
2. Sing "Make New Friends."

| Make New Friends | | |
|--|--|--|
| Verse One | Verse Two | Verse Three |
| Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, the other is gold. | A circle is round, it has no end. That's how long, I will be your friend. | You have one hand, I have the other. Put them together, We have each other. |

3. After the song, ask everyone to be quiet.
4. Assign one girl to start the friendship squeeze by gently squeezing her neighbor's hand with her right hand. Then, that girl squeezes with her right hand. One by one, each girl passes the squeeze until it

travels around the circle. When the squeeze returns to the girl who started, she says “Goodbye Sister Girl Scouts” and the girls unwrap and face outward instead of inward.

5. Optional: Have girls make a wish after their hand has been squeezed and before they pass the squeeze along. Girls can also put their right foot out into the circle when they receive the friendship squeeze, so that everyone can see it travel along the circle.

More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
 - Go to Home Depot, Menard’s, or Lowe’s and ask for a demonstration on fixing a leaky pipe, hanging a picture, painting furniture, or installing a light fixture.
 - Visit a bike shop to teach the girls how to do basic maintenance such as adjusting the bike seat and handlebars, replacing a flat tire, and greasing the chain.
- Speaker Ideas:
 - Invite an older girl with babysitting experience to share what it is like to be responsible for both herself and younger children.

Suggestions

Do you have any suggestions to improve this activity plan? Do you have ideas for other possible badge-earning activities? Please email troopsupport@girlscoutsrv.org.

Family Follow Up Email

Use the email below as a template to let families know what girls did at the meeting today. Feel free to add additional information, including:

- When and where you will be meeting next
- What activities you will do at the next meeting
- Family help or assistance that is needed
- Supplies or materials that girls will need to bring to the next meeting
- Reminders about important dates and upcoming activities

Hello Girl Scout Families:

We had a wonderful time today learning about how to become more independent and have earned the Independence Badge.

We had fun:

- Exploring ways to replace bad habits with good ones
- Learning how to help make our homes safer
- Planning for a night home alone

Continue the fun at home:

- Help prepare your girl for a few hours home alone. If you are not comfortable with this activity, try one of these options instead:
 - Have your girl take the lead in running a family errand.
 - Take your girl and her friend out to eat or a movie. Let them sit by themselves, figure out the bill with tip and how much change they will get.
- Ask your Girl Scout to help you with home improvement projects around the house. Teach her a new skill to help make her more independent!
- Look through the *Girl’s Guide to Girl Scouting* with your Junior to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Junior to Girl Scouts!

In Case of Emergency



Parent(s) Name(s):

Home Address:

Cell Phone:

Work Phone:

Neighbor's name:

Home Phone:

Cell Phone:

Police/Ambulance: 911

Fire Department:

Gas Company:

Electric Company:

Water Company:

Poison Control:

When I'm home alone, I want to...



When I'm home alone, I want to...

