girl scouts
of eastern missouri

Leader's Guide for the

Initial Parent Meeting

PURPOSE

A successful troop is the result of strong Leader/parent cooperation and communication. This outline will help you organize and execute a meeting with parents that will result in committed support.

CALLING THE MEETING

» Contact everyone in a timely manner.
» Estimate that the meeting will take one hour; stress the meeting's importance.
» Parents who are unable to attend will need to make arrangements to complete the forms and return them to you, preferably before the meeting but no later than three days after.
» Do not make attendance at this meeting a condition of joining the troop; it is too easy for your best helper to have a last-minute emergency that legitimately keeps her/him from attending.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS & SET-UP

» Arrange the room in a circle or U shape, so each person can contribute equally.
» If possible, have the girls in another room, so the parents will not be distracted.

» SUPPLIES
- Troop Calendar
- Troop registration packet
- Large sign-up sheet to post on wall

» HANDOUTS
- Person-to-Person Treasure Hunt (optional)
- Parent Profile
- Our Willing Helpers
- Our Willing Helpers sign-up

Girl Scout Mission

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.

Thank you for caring enough to bring Girl Scouting into the lives of these girls!

Girl Scout Leadership Experience

» Girls join Girl Scouts seeking fun, friendship and belonging

» Girl Scouts engage in Discover, Connect and Take Action activities supported by adult volunteers

» The processes for these activities are Girl-Driven, Learning by Doing, and Cooperative Learning

SHORT-TERM/INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

DISCOVER
- Girls develop a strong sense of self
- Girls develop positive values
- Girls gain practical life skills
- Girls seek challenges in the world
- Girls develop critical thinking skills

CONNECT
- Girls develop healthy relationships
- Girls promote cooperation & team building
- Girls can resolve conflicts
- Girls advance diversity in a multicultural world
- Girls feel connected to their communities, locally and globally

TAKE ACTION
- Girls can identify community needs
- Girls are resourceful problem solvers
- Girls advocate for themselves and others, locally and globally
- Girls educate and inspire others to act
- Girls feel empowered to make a difference in the world

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
- Girls lead with courage
- Girls lead with confidence
- Girls lead with character

OVERALL IMPACT
- Girls make the world a better place.

Initial Parent Meeting AGENDA

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

» Thank everyone for attending.
» *Optional:* Have your Mentor introduce you and talk briefly about the amount of time and effort you are investing in leading this troop.
» Have each person introduce her/himself to the group, giving her/his name and daughter's name.

PERSON-TO-PERSON TREASURE HUNT (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY)

» Ask parents to get acquainted by using the Treasure Hunt sheet.
» Give the parents a few minutes to mingle around the room, finding people who fit the criteria on the list.
» When most have completed the task, call the parents back together.
» Ask how many were able to fill their whole list (you may want to have candy or a small token for the "winners")
» Call out each item on the Treasure Hunt list and have everyone for whom the statement is true stand up or raise hands.

NOTE: The Treasure Hunt list can be modified as needed to suit your troop needs.

ALTERNATIVE: Omit the "hunt" activity and just read through the list, having parents stand or raise their hands as applicable.

GIRL SCOUT PROGRAM BASICS

Many adults, even those who have been Girl Scouts, do not really understand Girl Scouting.

» Give the parents a few minutes to identify their answer to this question:
"If you could wrap up a gift package which would provide your daughter with three key values, what would they be?"
» Distribute the Parent Profile sheets.
» If the group is large enough, have the parents work in small groups of 3-5 to share the identified values.
» Have each group select a spokesperson to share the group's list.
» After the groups have shared their thoughts, say something like:
"Since values cannot be wrapped up and given, how can we transmit these values to our children? Obviously a child's family is the primary way children develop their values. Girl Scouts can serve as a reinforcement of the importance of developing values."
» Review the Girl Scout Mission Statement.
» Review the Girl Scout Leadership Experience Overview
» Point out the similarities to what the parents identified as important values and what the Girl Scout program is all about.
» Emphasize the concept of "It takes a village to raise a child."
» Tell the parents that it will take all of them to make Girl Scouting a significant part of this "village."

Initial Parent Meeting AGENDA

TROOP ACTIVITY PLANS

» Share the troop meeting place and time.
» Explain that this information also is on the Parent Consent Form that must be completed tonight.
» Share your hopes and expectations for the girls and the troop.
» Explain that above all else, it is the girls' troop; troop activities need to be planned around the needs and interests of the girls, not those of the leaders and parents.
» Explain how the Girl Planning Process works. If time allows, give the parents a chance to experience the Girl Planning Process through the following activity:
- Divide the parents into Patrols and provide each group with *The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting*.
- Have each Patrol decide which three Petals and Leaves/Journeys/Badges they think their daughters would most enjoy.
- Tell them that you'll share with them at a later date how close they were to identifying their daughters' interests (and remember to follow up on this promise).

» Share your Troop Calendar; review Neighborhood, District, Council events, Girl Scout holidays.
» Let the parents know you will periodically provide additional dates to update the calendar.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

» Talk to parents about the support the troop will need.
» Begin with the support needed from every parent:
- Enabling their daughter to participate
- Staying informed
- Communicating

» Distribute the Parent Profile for the parents to complete.
» Distribute the Our Willing Helpers task list and Our Willing Helpers sign-up sheet.
» Have each parent indicate which task they are willing to assume.
» Thank everyone for her/his willingness to help make the troop a success.

NEXT STEPS

YOU'VE GOT SUPPORT FOR THE TROOP! *Now what?*

» Collect completed membership registration forms and registration fees.
» Each person should know her/his next step, such as:
- Take training course(s) as appropriate for their troop position
- Attend Troop Investiture on the specified date
- Send refreshments to the first meeting
- Attend next quarterly parents' meeting on specified date/location

» Let the parents know the date of the first troop meeting.
» Thank everyone for attending.

YOU DID NOT GET SUPPORT FOR THE TROOP! *Now what?*

» Review options for individual or short-term programs.
» Is there enough support for a short-term troop, maybe 6-10 meetings?
» You may need to negotiate with participants to either stay longer or schedule a follow-up meeting.

AFTER THE MEETING

» Let your Mentor know how the meeting went.
» If you have scheduled a second meeting, seek guidance/advice from your Mentor on how to conduct this next meeting or invite her/him to attend.

PARENT PROFILE

NAME:_____

Three key values I wish for my daughter:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

If we were to ask your daughter to make a list of four things you do really well, what would she name?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____

Please complete the following statements:

THREE THINGS I CAN DO FAIRLY WELL:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THREE GROUPS I BELONG TO:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THREE HOBBIES I HAVE:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THREE THINGS I DO IN MY JOB:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THREE THINGS I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THREE LOCAL PLACES I'D LIKE TO VISIT:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

OUR WILLING HELPERS!

These are important positions that support the operation of a Girl Scout troop. Without the support of volunteers to assist the Leader and Co-Leader or Assistant Leader, troop activities will be limited. Training is available.

LEADER

Primary responsibility for facilitating troop meetings. Usually responsible for coordinating volunteer support for troop.

CO-LEADER

Shares responsibility with another Co-Leader. Primary responsibility for facilitating troop meetings.

ASSISTANT LEADER

Assists Leader at all meetings. Helps plan and prepare for meetings.

TROOP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Coordinates the efforts of all volunteers who support the troop, so the Leader can focus on preparing for meetings.

TROOP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Volunteers with no fixed assignment who work under the coordination of the Troop Committee Chair to support the troop.

COOKIE PROGRAM MANAGER

Coordinates the troop's participation in the Cookie Program, which takes place in late January through March and generates troop funds for the Girl Scout membership year.

FALL PRODUCT ACTIVITY MANAGER

Coordinates the troop's participation in the Fall Product Activity (nuts, candy), which takes place in November and generates troop funds for the first part of the Girl Scout membership year.

FIRST AIDER, LEVEL I

Accompanies troop on trips and outings. Must have current American Red Cross First Aid certification.

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR

Licensed driver, willing to provide transportation for girls to activities and events. Proof of insurance, good driving record required.

RECORD KEEPER

Maintains individual girl records and activity forms.

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Communicates information/updates to girls and parents by e-mail and phone.

TREASURER

Oversees troop bank account. Serves as a second signer on troop checks. Encourages girl involvement in troop financial operation.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Serves as contact person in case of emergency during each troop activity away from the regular meetings. Manages communications in case of an emergency.

TROOP CAMPER

Specially trained to help girls prepare for overnight and outdoor activities. Attends overnight activities with troop.

SPECIAL SKILLS CONSULTANT

Serves as a consultant to the troop in any special skill area, such as technology, sports, science, math, crafts, ecology.

BABYSITTER

Cares for young children of other troop volunteers so they can conduct troop activities.

REFRESHMENTS COORDINATOR

Coordinates refreshments for troop meetings/activities.

BRIDGING COORDINATOR

Helps older girls in troop complete activities to prepare for the next level in the Girl Scout program.

SHOPPER

Shops or places orders for troop materials and supplies.

SPONSOR LIAISON

Recruits and communicates with troop sponsor.

OUR WILLING HELPERS!
sign-up sheet

LEADER	_____
CO-LEADER	_____
ASSISTANT LEADER	_____
TROOP COMMITTEE CHAIR	_____
TROOP COMMITTEE MEMBER	_____
COOKIE PROGRAM MANAGER	_____
FALL PRODUCT ACTIVITY MANAGER	_____
FIRST AIDER	_____
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR	_____
RECORD KEEPER	_____
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR	_____
TREASURER	_____
EMERGENCY CONTACT	_____
TROOP CAMPER	_____
SPECIAL SKILLS CONSULTANT	_____
BABYSITTER	_____
REFRESHMENTS COORDINATOR	_____
BRIDGING COORDINATOR	_____
SHOPPER	_____
SPONSOR LIAISON	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PERSON-TO-PERSON TREASURE HUNT

FIND SOMEONE WHO:	FIRST AND LAST NAME:
WAS A GIRL SCOUT AS A CHILD	_____
VOLUNTEERS FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS	_____
THINKS BEING A PARENT IS GREAT!	_____
ENJOYS COOKING	_____
HAS A FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME JOB	_____
LIKES TO SING	_____
LIKES TALKING ON THE PHONE	_____
WORKS WITH COMPUTERS	_____
LIKES ADVENTURE AND TRYING NEW THINGS	_____
WOULD RATHER DEAL WITH PAPER THAN PEOPLE	_____
ENJOYS CRAFTS	_____
IS WORKING TOWARD A DEGREE	_____
LOVES TO SHOP	_____
LIKES TO KEEP TRACK OF MONEY	_____
ENJOYS CAMPING	_____
IS A KID AT HEART	_____
IS TRAINED IN AMERICAN RED CROSS FIRST AID	_____
LIKES TO BE THE LIFE OF THE PARTY	_____
HAS OTHER DAUGHTER(S) IN GIRL SCOUTS	_____