




Service Team Member Orientation Position: Coach

Who is a Volunteer Coach?

Coaches are experienced volunteers who are available to mentor new volunteers on an as-needed basis, answering questions, providing support and ideas. Coaches may work with leaders of a specific grade level, or across all levels.

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Coaching Responsibilities:

- Act as a resource for new leaders.
- Acquaint volunteers with helpful resources and programming ideas.
- Assist leaders with challenges they may be facing.
- Provide motivation and emotional support.
- Share knowledge of GSUSA and Council policies and procedures.
- Acquaint leaders with current program level materials.
- Communicate suggestions regarding training needs to Adult Development Department.

Desired Skills for Volunteer Coaches:

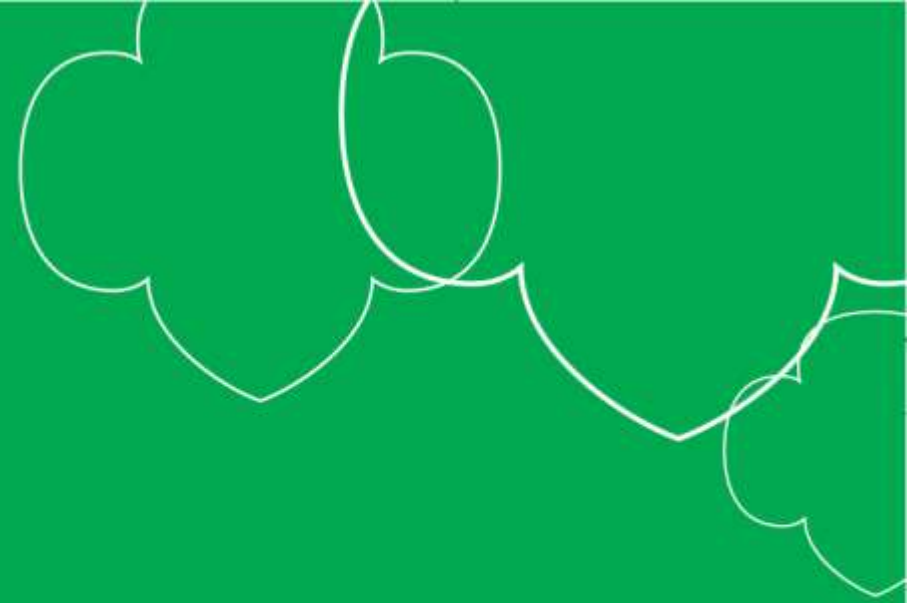
- Strong communication and relationship building skills
- Empathy
- Creativity and ideas
- Knowledge of conflict resolution strategies



Girl Scout Core Competencies for All Volunteers:

- **Girl Focus:** Demonstrates dedication and commitment to guiding girls toward reaching meaningful outcomes through the three keys to leadership: Discover, Connect and Take Action.
 - **Adaptability:** Adjusts and modifies own behavior, and remains flexible and tolerant in response to changing situations and environments.
 - **Fostering Diversity:** Understands and embraces human diversity, and promotes inclusion of all people.
 - **Oral Communication:** Expresses ideas clearly and concisely.
 - **Personal Integrity:** Demonstrates honesty, credibility and dependability.
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Training Requirements for Coaches:



This online module is the primary position-specific training for Volunteer coaches. However, because coaches work with new volunteers who will have many questions about all aspects of Girl Scout Programming, it is important to be fully trained and up-to-date on most council resources, events and policies.

Recommended Trainings:

- GSUSA New Volunteer Orientation
- Council 101
- Leadership Essentials
- Journey Training
- Grade Level Training

Recommended Resources:

- *The Source*
- *Safety-Wise*
- *Monthly Connect* Newsletter

How Are Coaches and New Volunteers Matched?

Ideally, each Service Area will have a coach who specifically works with new leaders at each grade level. However, in many areas, one coach may work with multiple grade levels. When new Troop Leaders or Co-Leaders are appointed, they are assigned a coach for their specific grade level and Service Area. The new volunteer is provided with the coach's email and phone number, and encouraged to contact the coach as needed for support, idea sharing, and mentoring. The coach is also provided with the volunteer's name, position, and contact information. It is recommended that the coach personally contact each new volunteer as they are assigned.

How Should Coaches Support New Volunteers?

Each coach may view their role differently, and take a slightly different approach! The following list includes recommended practices for Volunteer Coaches, and some great ideas for reaching out to new volunteers!






Give a warm welcome! Within one week of being matched, send out an email, handwritten note, or make a phone call, introducing yourself and offering to help as needed. Although the volunteer is given your contact information, they may be intimidated to call. Reaching out can get the mentoring relationship off to a great start!

Meet 1:1. Have coffee or a snack, answer questions, share ideas, and provide your favorite tips and strategies for a successful troop. You may always reserve meeting space at your Service Center, but local coffee shops, cafes or parks can also provide a relaxing and informal atmosphere.

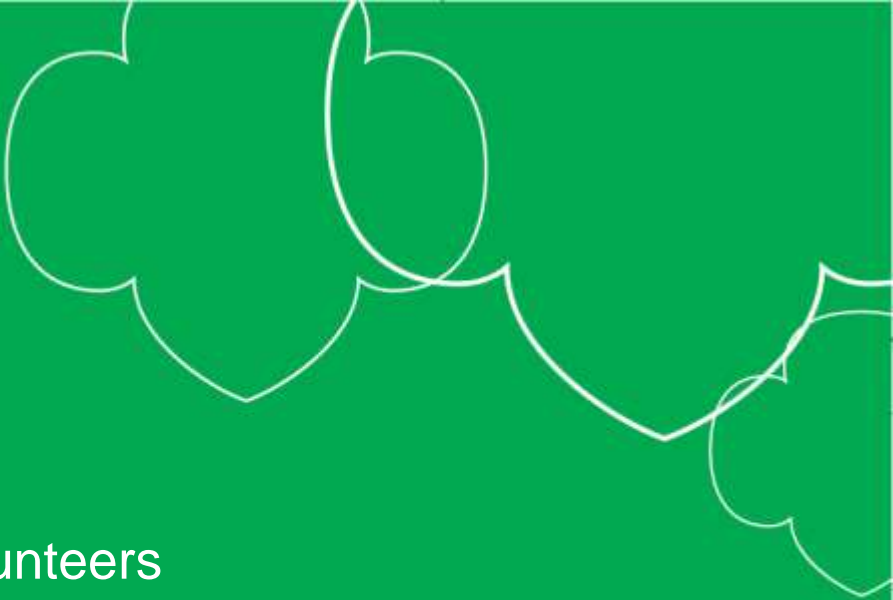
Assist with a troop meeting. Sometimes, having an experienced Girl Scout on hand to assist with those first meetings can be so helpful!



Share the secrets of your success. Provide an outline or discuss what your typical troop meeting looks like and the strategies you use to keep things running smoothly.

Do you have a list of your favorite resources? What are your favorite websites, books, games, songs, and teambuilding exercises? Compile a list, and share them with the new leaders you are serving!

Hold a “support group” for leaders at your coaching level. Organize an informal idea sharing and Q and A session for new Daisy Leaders (or any other level) in your area. Consider opening it up to all returning leaders as well! *This could be a great activity to plan directly before or after a Service Area Leader Meeting, as people will already have it on their calendar.



Keep in touch. Touch base with your new volunteers regularly, providing tips and offering assistance and ideas. Some coaches like to send a monthly email, based on the Girl Scout Calendar! See the next slide for calendar topics and ideas. Sending out group emails can be a quick and easy way to reach out to all your mentees.

Review your status. At the end of the year, touch base with your volunteers. Do they still need a coach? Many new volunteers feel comfortable after their first year, and no longer need ongoing assistance. Other volunteers may need your support a little longer. Either way, let them know that you are available to them, and they can contact you as needed.

A Year of Support

The Girl Scout calendar can provide a great structure for mentoring topics. Consider checking in throughout the year regarding these timely issues:

September: Ideas for first meetings, How to register your troop, Organizing your troop finances

October: Great ideas for fall field trips, Using the Journeys, Juliette Gordon Low Birthday Celebration, Best practices for a successful Fall Product Program.

November: Community service project ideas, *Safety-Wise* tips

December: Best practices for a successful Cookie Program

January: Adult Recognitions, Leadership Conference, Winter activities

February: Thinking Day activities, Girl Scout week

March: Spring Registration

April: Camp involvement, Outdoor activities

May: Bridging, Ideas for keeping your troop going strong over the summer

June: Increasing parent involvement and communication

July: Planning and setting goals for the new troop year

August: Getting your troop re-energized, Recruiting additional girls

What Do New Volunteers Want to Talk About?

Every new leader will have different questions and learning needs, but here are some topics which frequently arise:

Hot Topics:

- Managing troop finances
- Getting parents involved
- Dealing with behavior challenges
- Running a successful product sale
- How to be “girl-led” at every level
- Meeting planning and ideas
- Trip planning





Thank you, Coaches!

Thank you for passing on your knowledge, leadership skills and enthusiasm to our new volunteers! Your support is so important in developing and retaining new volunteers, and keeping the Girl Scout Movement going strong. If you have additional questions or needs regarding the coaching position, do not hesitate to contact the Adult Development Department.

training@gsnwgl.org or 888.747.6945, ext.3341