Tell Me About TAKE ACTION!

What is the difference between a community service project and a Take Action project?

Community service projects come from the heart
- Community service is an active role, where girls join something already in place
- Girls are following someone else’s directions
- Examples: collecting and donating items is a one-time fix, or beautification and renovation (without an educational or awareness raising component) is a one-time fix

Take Action projects come from the heart, and use the head to develop long-lasting impact
- Take Action is a creative role, where girls create an opportunity to help others
- Girls use leadership skills, make decisions, and give directions
- Example: girls explore their community, make observations, engage in brainstorming, planning, and organizing, and then put their own plan into motion

What is the difference between a Journey Take Action project and a Highest Award Take Action project?

A Journey Take Action project is topic specific; the project must relate to the Journey and what the girls have learned along the way. It’s a practice run for the Highest Awards Take Action project. The entire troop works together to complete the Journey Take Action project.

A Highest Award Take Action project can focus on any topic the girls choose. They continue to build their leadership skills when they follow their personal passion. A Gold Award is completed by just one Senior or Ambassador girl, a Silver Award is done by small teams of Cadette girls, and a Bronze Award project is worked on by the entire Junior troop.
A TAKE ACTION project has four elements

Root Cause

- When girls work through the steps of the Highest Award guidelines, they are actually conducting a root cause analysis.
- Girl Scouts are encouraged to ask questions and dig down to find out why the problem exists in the first place – this is the root cause of the problem and not just the symptom.
- As an example, think about this problem: kids keep tripping over sticks on the sidewalk and skinning their knees. A Girl Scout could provide community service and pass out band-aids for skinned knees, or she could ask, “Why are kids tripping here? Why are there sticks on the sidewalk?” The Girl Scout identifies the dying limb of the tree beside the sidewalk as the root cause. She asks the city to trim the tree, and the problem of tripping and getting skinned knees is solved.

Global

- Did the project get people in the community to come out and support their project? And do girls see similarities between themselves and others?
- Girls look wider than their circle of influence. Consider this progression of awareness:
  - Bronze: girls discuss how other places might have the same problem
  - Silver: in their planning stage, girls research how other communities have solved similar problems
  - Gold: a girl shares out her problem-solving plan and her project results for others to replicate

Measurable

- Girls use both numbers and comments to help communicate their project goals to the community, their target audience, and themselves. When the project is complete, Girl Scouts can answer this question: “We know we made a difference because…”
- Girls learn to work with data and information. Consider this progression of leadership:
  - Bronze: girls discuss how to measure success
  - Silver: girls develop a plan to measure impact
  - Gold: a girl’s project includes milestones to measure the impact

Sustainable

- Sustainability refers to the advocacy element of a project, not the objects included.
- Girls grow in their advocacy skills. Consider this progression of partnership:
  - Bronze: girls develop an understanding of sustainability, advocacy, and try to create a change that lasts beyond a one-time effort
  - Silver: girls demonstrate an understanding of sustainability, advocacy, and try to collaborate with community organizations and build alliances with mentors to create something that lasts beyond a one-time effort
  - Gold: a girl’s project must include provisions to ensure that advocacy and sustainability are in place through committed partnerships