More than Cookies: A Study of Trends and Promising Practices in Programming for Older Girl Scouts

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MORE THAN COOKIES: A STUDY OF TRENDS AND PROMISING PRACTICES IN PROGRAMMING FOR OLDER GIRL SCOUTS

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science with
Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

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2016

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ABSTRACT

This study examine rates of 'older girl' (ages 15-17) retention in Girl Scouts of the USA. Enrollment numbers and troop activity/participation are examined from the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Council to assess the reflection of this regional council to the nationwide organization. Benefits such as character building, developing leadership skills, international and domestic travel opportunities, democratic opportunities, and public work or service projects for older girls are described as promising practices for older girl retention. This qualitative study lead to the development of “The Five Keys of Effective Older Girl Programming” as follows: designing specialized experiences, building relationships with adults and peers, providing sustainable and straightforward volunteer/leader instructions, promoting support for autonomy development, and the expanding foundations for program design.

Keywords: Girl Scouts, youth development, program planning, non-profit administration
Dedicated to my sisters in scouting:

*May all of your dreams bloom like daisies in the sun.*
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been successful without the support and guidance of my CE/T Committee and the professional staff and volunteers of Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana. I would first like to thank my second and third readers, Mrs. Virginia Pfohl and Dr. Melinda Grimsley-Smith, for their thoughtful feedback and input. I appreciate the valuable time you have put into ensuring the success of this project. I would also like to acknowledge the WKU Honors College and the Office of Scholar Development for the grant awarded to me for my research pursuits. Thank you for your dedication to the success (academic and otherwise) of the students on this campus.

There are numerous people in “the Girl Scout world” I would like to thank for the plethora of resources and unwavering support. Special thanks to the CITs who inspired this project, and to Carrie “Tinkerbell” Mook: The impact you have made on me is enormous. The professional support and opportunities you gave me not only made a great deal of this project possible, but helped me surpass my own expectations of it.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Elizabeth Gish. Your diligent guidance and remarkably kind words have helped me not only through this project, but my academic career as a whole. Thank you for your support and patience this past year and a half (and beyond). I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with such an inspiring mentor—this project would not have been possible without you.
VITA

June 7, 1994. Born – Louisville, Kentucky

April 2012. Earned Girl Scout Gold Award

May 2012. South Oldham High School; Crestwood, Kentucky

May 2012. Received Jean Cole Scholarship

Fall 2013. Sol Education Abroad; Universidad Latina de Heredia, Costa Rica

March 28, 2015. WKU Student Research Conference Presentation

2015-2016. Charles Crume, Jr. Scholarship for Recreation Leadership

October 2015. WKU Sustainability Scholarship

November 2014. International Faculty-Undergraduate Student Engagement Grant

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Recreation Administration (Outdoor Recreation)

Major Field: Spanish
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Methods and Meaning

I was a member of Girl Scouts throughout elementary, middle, and high school, totaling 12 years of involvement as a girl member. My active participation of Girl Scouting has extended into what is now my fourth year as an adult member, volunteer, and employee of Girl Scouts. I currently hold a Lifetime Membership in Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana and have been employed twice as a seasonal part-time worker in the Caveland Program and Learning Center (PLC) in Bowling Green, Kentucky. I have held a summer position for three years as a camp counselor for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps where I have directed the leadership programming for high school girls entering the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade. My particular area of interest is older girl participation in Girl Scouts, as my own experience in the organization peaked in high school. This is a trend uncommon to most members as they tend to end their involvement before entering the high school age groups. At this age I found the organization to be increasingly more beneficial to my understanding of leadership, citizenship, adventuring, and more. This ultimately led to what I believe has been the most vital aspect of my growth as an active member of my community, as well as a major contribution to my academic, extracurricular, and social success. For this reason I am extremely interested in pursuing a career with Girl Scousts of the USA (GSUSA), which caters greatly to female
empowerment of high school girls, or similar non-profits. I have conducted this study as a means to explore the current state of older girl retention and involvement in the organization, as preparation for a career in this field.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine older girl involvement in Girl Scouting and the apparent decline in retention rates in recent years for this age group. To clarify, in my report I use the phrase “older girl” in reference to Girl Scouts in grades 9-12. This is not to be confused with GSUSA’s definition of “older girls,” which describes the 6th-12th grade age group. This study contains a trend analysis of statistics of older girl membership in Girl Scouting in the past few years and as well as an applied analysis of information gathered from personal interviews and my ground experience in working with high school girls. Through literature analysis and interviews, I have examined attempts at changes in programming/structure as well as opportunities unique to older girl participation, and how they are used in regards to retaining older girls. The research examines how the overall membership decline in the US affects older girl retention rates, as well as local and national movements to increase both membership and older girl retention rates in Girl Scouting. Also included in this thesis is the curriculum of a restructured Counselor-in-Training program for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana resident camp, which I wrote as a culmination of my own analysis of this research. I identify and explain five of my own suggested keys to effective programming for older girls and describe their implementation into my personal project of re-structuring the resident camp Counselor-in-Training program. It is designed to be an older girl program that will attract and maintain interest for girls entering 10th and 11th grade while appropriately
engaging them in a way that will potentially pique their interest to be involved in Girl Scouts in other aspects.

This study concentrates specifically on the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana council, due to geographical convenience and personal connections, to be used as a model to represent the nationwide decline of high school girl membership rates and levels of involvement in both urban and rural areas of the council.

History

A little over a century ago, in 1912, Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low founded Girl Scouting in the USA, first based in her birthplace—Savannah, Georgia. The organization began under the name Girl Guides, as it was called at the time in England (where Daisy’s inspiration was sparked). Just a year after its founding, Daisy published the first handbook for America’s Girl Guides, How Girls Can Help Their Country. At this time Daisy made the decision to deliberately separate America’s Girl Guides from those in England, so she began calling them Girl Scouts instead.\(^1\) It is a fitting name, for the word “scouting” means “adventuring,” and an adventure is what Daisy intended this group to be—an organization to empower girls to embrace their “womanliness” in a changing world by exposing girls to useful skills such as first aid, exploring the outdoors, and staying physically fit. Perhaps most importantly, it would encourage growing girls to “do what they wish” and even compete with boys—by participating in local and national elections, going to college, and seeking careers outside the home.\(^2\) Ultimately, the organization’s original purpose—it continues as such today—was to teach young women

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\(^2\) Ibid., 127.
how to be active contributors to their community and the country as a whole.

As years passed, the role of women in society began changing. Overall independence of women was increasing, and females began choosing different leisure pursuits and interests. In 1960s and 1970s the US began more deeply reflecting the values which Girl Scouting had been promoting for decades by granting more rights and freedoms to women in America. As the US was rapidly changing to assimilate the role of women into society, the Girl Scouting organization needed to re-vamp to cater to the new needs and wants of girls. Nationally at this time, the strongest involvement was from girls ages 9-14. This was the first occurrence of apparent decline in “older girl” (ages 15-17) involvement. Recognizing a need for more older girl participation—to prepare girls for careers, post-secondary education, and democratic participation, and to develop stronger leadership skills for life in a country that was becoming less and less of a man’s world—there was a national effort to increase older girl retention.

France and Great Britain were also struggling with older girl involvement with Girl Guides at the time, so Girl Scouts of the USA decided to look into how these countries were encouraging girls ages 15-17 to stay and/or become involved, because there was a “significant drop in membership at or around age 14.” Efforts by Great Britain were small and somewhat ineffective with increasing older girl membership numbers—for example, they changed the uniforms to be more appealing to older girls. In France they did a complete restructuring of the program, making separate age groups with specific programming for each group. Consequently, Girl Scouts of the USA

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4 Ibid., 155.
changed uniforms and also restructured the organization into new age groups in 1963. The new organization consisted of Brownies (ages 7-8), Juniors (9-11), Cadettes (12-14), and Seniors (15-17).  

The updated programming focus for the oldest girl age group—the Seniors—focused on “widening their circle of opportunities beyond the troop.” At this time, girls were invited to participate in democratic opportunities with GSUSA by attending local and national Girl Scout conventions and conferences. Officials also hoped that these older girls would help develop and plan the new programming for the other three age groups. This restructuring focused on developing adolescent models by emphasizing psychological and sociological growth of adolescents while providing programming that helped educate the girls on their “sexual, psychological, and educational development.”

Due to the ever-changing role of females in society, GSUSA needs to constantly change and evolve to cater to the needs and wants of girls in the US. With these changes, GSUSA needs to analyze the role of girls within the organization itself to retain overall membership numbers and intensity of participation of girl members. At this time, a major focus needs to be put on older girl retention rates as well as a re-focusing of older girl programming—this age group is essential to shaping and securing the future of the organization at this time of overall membership and involvement decline. As a means to best understand how to keep girls as active members in Girl Scouting, the organization needs to examine and model promising practices of small-scale efforts to increase older girl participation.

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6 Ibid., 156.
7 Ibid., 156.
CHAPTER 2

CURRENT STATE

Membership Rates Trend Analysis

Today Girl Scouts of the USA has 2.8 million members—800,000 of these are adult members who primarily serve as volunteers, and 2 million of these are girl members (ages 5-17). The current age groups structure (in contrast to the aforementioned age structure of the 1960s) is as follows: Daises (K-1st grade), Brownies (2nd-3rd grade), Juniors (4th-5th grade), Cadettes (6th-8th grade), Seniors (9th-10th grade), and Ambassadors (11th-12th grade). The division of the Senior and Ambassador age groups is a fairly new change, implemented nationwide in October 2008. The Girl Scout Research Institute determined that “girls learn best and have the most fun when they are with the right developmental/social grouping.” Because the maturity levels of younger high school girls versus older high school girls is very different, this was determined as the best way to separate programming in order to appropriately cater to the needs and wants of girls at different ages within the new programming structure—Journeys—which were implemented nationwide the same year.

In recent years Girl Scouts of the USA has had significant membership decline as

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a whole. After reaching a membership peak of 3.8 million in 2003, enrollment numbers have since fallen 27 percent nationally. From the 2013-2014 school year to the 2014-2015 enrollment dropped 6 percent, totaling an 11.6 percent drop in membership in the past two years alone.\(^{10}\) Of course, this decline will automatically assume decreasing numbers of older girls involved as a whole, but this research investigates the quickly shrinking sector of older girl involvement in Girl Scouting as it compares to the rest of the Girl Scout membership population.

Within the national organization, there are 112 geographical councils which serve girls across the nation on a local level.\(^ {11}\) This past membership year (October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015) the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana (GSKYANA) council served 14,000 girls and 6,500 adult volunteers in 700 zip codes within 64 counties in the western Kentucky and southern Indiana region.\(^ {12}\) These counties are divided into six service areas, which each have a “Program and Learning Center” where the professional staff works to manage membership, programming, marketing, and finances for that particular region. The headquarter PLC in the Kentuckiana council is in the Metro Louisville service area. Much of the research for this study was conducted in this region as well as the Caveland service area which serves 13 counties in the Bowling Green area.\(^ {13}\)

Overall retention and membership rates for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana are actually very high in comparison to the other 112 councils nationwide. The Kentuckiana council ranks in the top five councils for retention rates, which includes all age group


\(^{11}\) Ibid.


levels. This success has continued through the 2015-2016 scouting year, beginning October 1st, 2015. At this time the GSKYANA council experiences a 1% increase in membership rates, one of only 15 councils nationwide that had a successful membership growth. Most councils experienced a double-digit percentage decline in membership for both girl and volunteer membership rates.\textsuperscript{14} There is not much data available at this time regarding the specifics of grade level membership numbers, but of what information is available we do know that as of October 1\textsuperscript{st}, GSKYANA membership included 12,293 girls and 5,586 adults—37.23\% were new members and 66.77\% were re-registered members.\textsuperscript{15} These results indicate a 1\% increase in the girl membership numbers of the 2014-2015 membership year.

That being said, retention rates in Kentuckiana for older girl age groups are still drastically lower than those of the lower, elementary school levels of Girl Scouts. Because the overall retention rates in Kentuckiana are so high, the extremely low levels of older girls in this council suggest an even more drastically low retention rate for high school Girl Scouts in other councils.

**Recruitment vs. Retention**

On a national level, there has been a major refocus on increasing membership at the younger age group—grades K-5. The main reasoning for this is that these age groups are easier to target and market to, because generally parents make decisions about

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\textsuperscript{14} Jackie Ford (Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Chief Executive Officer), e-mail message to author, October 1, 2015.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
extracurricular activities for their children at this time.\textsuperscript{16} GSUSA currently requires the focus of professional staff at the regional council level to be on recruitment for K-5 grades rather than retention or recruitment of grades 6-12,\textsuperscript{17} which can certainly be a major contribution to the lower membership numbers in this older age group.

In September 2013, GSUSA launched a national campaign called “I Can’t Wait,” which broadcasts the opportunities that Girl Scouts offers, but emphasizes recruitment of new members (particularly of grades K-5 and adult volunteers) rather than retention of current members.\textsuperscript{18} GSUSA reported near the end of the 2013-2014 membership year that the “I Can’t Wait” campaign caused recruitment numbers for both the K-5 grades and adult volunteers to rise (relative to membership numbers of the prior year) nationally. The Year-Over-Year change in 2013 was (-36,345) new girls grades K-5 and (-5,700) new adults; the Year-Over-Year change in 2014, with the help of the “I Can’t Wait” campaign, was (-12,135) new girls grades K-5 and (-2,706) new adults. Although there is still a membership decrease, the “I Can’t Wait” campaign helped make the decrease much smaller than that of the more recent years. There is no mention of membership numbers of girls grades 6-12.

In the years before the campaign, many high school girls felt they were overlooked or “written off” because of the perceived lack of programming, opportunities, and resources offered for them through Girl Scouts.\textsuperscript{19} With this campaign, this age group is even more so overlooked. As an example of how this campaign specifically overlooked

\textsuperscript{16} Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12) in discussion with the author, March 31, 2015.
\textsuperscript{17} Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).
\textsuperscript{19} Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate) in discussion with the author, July 7, 2015.
older girl involvement, Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana launched a new website design in January of 2015, and the new structure of the website caters to the GSUSA requirements of the “I Can’t Wait” campaign. The simplistic design of the website fosters ease of access to basic information but lacks in-depth material which was previously available, such as resources and information that may be useful for high school girls who are interested in becoming more involved.

**Gold Award**

The Program Specialist at the Louisville Metro PLC, Danica Van Volkenburg, is worried that this new website may make it more difficult for girls to find resources for various aspects of Girl Scouting, such as help with completion of the requirements for the Gold Award.\(^\text{20}\) This can be especially problematic because already so few girls pursue and complete the Gold Award, which is the “highest and most prestigious”\(^\text{21}\) honor a Girl Scout can receive.

Of all the older girls in the Kentuckiana council, only about 15-20 girls complete the Gold Award requirements and receive the award annually. This past membership year (2013-2014), only 9 girls in the Kentuckiana council received this honor—a significant decline. This current year (2014-2015), 45 Girl Scouts are in the process of completing the Gold Award requirements.\(^\text{22}\) According to Van Volkenburg, there are a few reasons why so many girls begin the process but do not complete it. Some girls aren’t interested

\(^{20}\) Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).


\(^{22}\) Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).
in pursuing the award but are encouraged and “pushed” to do it by parents, peers, or Girl Scout leaders. This may cause a lack of intrinsic motivation to complete the rigorous requirements, which demand a minimum of 80 contact hours for the final project alone, not including the hours of prerequisites to be completed before beginning the project.

Intrinsic motivation is extremely important for one to complete the Gold Award. For an effective Gold Award project, the guidelines require the girls to choose an issue that they are passionate about and to create a sustainable project to help improve their community in an attempt to tackle whatever issue they have chosen. The GSUSA official Gold Award requires that the project creates a “lasting effect” on the community and the girls must complete seven steps—Choose an Issue, Investigate, Get Help, Create a Plan, Present Your Plan and Get Feedback, Take Action, and Educate and Inspire. Each step provides guidelines for girls, which GSUSA calls “Standards of Excellence,” in order to be sure that the girls learn how to properly “demonstrate civic engagement” in compliance with the completion of their project. Step 5, “Present Your Plan and Get Feedback,” commonly referred to as the “Project Proposal Stage,” is where many girls lose interest or get discouraged, which causes them to “drop out” of the Gold Award process. For this step, girls have to write up an extensive proposal outlining the idea for their project and the steps they will take to complete it, including a budget. According to Van Volkenburg, who oversees all aspects of the Gold Award process in Kentuckiana, proposals are rarely approved the first time they are submitted. It often takes multiple

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23 Ibid.
24 “Go Gold,” GSUSA.
25 “Go Gold,” GSUSA.
26 Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).
submissions before a project is approved, which is discouraging to girls.\textsuperscript{27}

It is a given that many high school girls are interested in building strong résumés for college and scholarship applications. In truth, the Gold Award is an excellent addition to a résumé due to its intensity and rigor. The purpose of the Gold Award is to prepare girls for real-world application, but why would these girls want to pursue such a rigorous project when they can be a part of other organizations such as BETA club or National Honors Society which require volunteer hours that are typically turnkey opportunities? To them, that’s a much simpler option for community service activities to put on a résumé.\textsuperscript{28} This, in turn, is a reflection of older girl involvement in Girl Scouts as a whole.

**Organization, Club, and Work Competition**

Perhaps the most apparent assumption about the decline in membership rates, particularly for the older girl sector, is the abundance of other extracurricular activities in which girls have the opportunity to—and do—participate in. This is regarded as a major reason for membership decline by the Girl Scout Research Institute. In the executive summary of their 2002 research study called “The Ten Emerging Truths: New Directions for Girls 11-17,” the GSRI refers to teenage girls as “joiners,” meaning that girls of this time participate widely in various groups and clubs through their school or community. These groups include sports teams, religious groups, community center participation, and after-school clubs. According to their survey, 98 percent of non-Girl Scouts participate in at least one of these activities and 100 percent of current Girl Scouts belong to at least one

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate).
additional club.\textsuperscript{29}

It has become a common assumption that “the increased demand and competition from other organizations, school, and extracurricular activities for the attention of girls have also cut into the time girls commit to Girl Scouts.”\textsuperscript{30} Many recent Girl Scout graduates would say that Girl Scouts is, in fact, a more time-demanding organization than other clubs and activities a high school girl can be involved in. Bailey Mack of Louisville, Kentucky agrees and said “it’s easier to drop scouting and pick up two other extracurricular activities in place of it.”\textsuperscript{31} In short, résumé-building for girls of today has become more focused on quantity of involvement rather than quality.

\textbf{Lack of Volunteers}

Not only are girl members conflicted with busy lives, but the organization’s alumni are fulfilling the Girl Scout’s objective to create capable women with expanded roles in society. Some are referring to this trend as how the Girl Scouts are becoming “victims of their own success,”\textsuperscript{32} because these alumni—many of whom now are mothers—have joined the workforce and taken on other responsibilities which limit their time available to volunteer with program delivery or as troop leaders. Due to this decrease in number of adult volunteers, fewer troops have become available. There is a current national wait-list for girls who want to join the organization—over 30,000 girls ages 5-17 do not have an

\textsuperscript{29} Judy Schoenberg et al., The Ten Emerging Truths: New Directions for Girls 11-17, (New York: Girl Scout Research Institute, 2002), 11.
\textsuperscript{31} Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate).
available local troop.\textsuperscript{33}

This lack of a volunteer base is especially a major problem locally for councils, whose professional staff is required by GSUSA to recruit new girls in grades K-5. Jennifer Johnson, Membership Specialist for the Caveland PLC, said that one of the hardest parts of her job is that when she recruits new girls, she constantly worries or knows that they might not have enough volunteers for these new girls to actually join a troop.\textsuperscript{34}

This is why a large part of the “I Can’t Wait” GSUSA campaign focuses on recruitment of volunteers. The professional staff in the Kentuckiana Girl Scout council attempts to recruit more volunteers by offering the opportunity to be on a volunteer team. This involves multiple volunteers per troop (one that plans programs and events, one that handles troop finances, one that coordinates travel and meeting places/dates, etc). This structure reduces the amount of work for a woman who might instead be a solo troop leader—and also allows the troop to possibly include a higher number of girls.\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{Professional Staff}

GSUSA is currently in a major fiscal crisis. Due to a “deficit-stripped pension plan” and “revenue shortfalls,” national headquarters had to lay off and let go about a fourth of its staff in 2012.\textsuperscript{36} This directly affected local council staffs across the country as well. In January 2013, and again in January 2016, the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana staff was

\textsuperscript{33} “Girl Scouts Investing,” \textit{Girl Scout Blog}.
\textsuperscript{34} Jennifer Johnson (Membership Specialist) in discussion with the author, July 1, 2015.
\textsuperscript{35} Jennifer Johnson (Membership Specialist).
\textsuperscript{36} David Crary, “Girl Scouts ‘Can’t Wait.’”
restructured, with a number of people let go or laid off and another large number of jobs that were swapped, combined, and re-titled. With this sudden and considerable change, at this time much of the staff members had to take on additional responsibilities.\(^\text{37}\)

Essentially, each staff member had so many duties that they no longer had time or funds for program planning. Program planning became a duty for volunteers, which there was already a shortage of. As a result, less programming is offered for girls—especially the older girls, who already don’t have much programming available as is.

**Misconceptions and Social/Political Controversy**

Sometimes older girls are turned off from Scouting because of stereotypes that only “nerdy girls” are involved, or that it just isn’t “cool” anymore. Sometimes, they drop out of Scouting because their friends aren’t continuing with it and they’re trying to fit in\(^\text{38}\)—it is well-known that girls in this age group are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure and conformity.

Alongside the concept of misconceptions of the girls within the organization, there are some major misconceptions of the organization itself, particularly regarding social and political controversies. Progression of GSUSA programming emphasizes and encourages democratic participation as well as education and opportunity for “sexual, psychological, and educational development.”\(^\text{39}\) Currently, GSUSA takes no official stance on social or political issues, in order to appease all of its members. In addition, GSUSA has an all-inclusive policy which prohibits discrimination against membership or

\(^{37}\) Jennifer Johnson (Membership Specialist).

\(^{38}\) Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).

troop involvement based on race, religion, disability, and sexuality. Their reasoning behind this principle is that GSUSA believes that its “role is to help girls develop confidence and good decision-making skills that will help them make wise decisions in all areas of their lives.”

Although this policy of inclusiveness and refraining from official political stances is an attempt to please all members, misrepresentation of Girl Scouts in the media as a hyper-liberal organization has turned members away. Every year, a few pastors encourage the boycott of Girl Scout cookies, bringing a wave of news articles with titles such as “Girl Scout Cookies: Proceeds Promote Lesbianism, Planned Parenthood and Communism.”

GSUSA in no way encourages any certain kind of sexual behavior or orientation, however at times it seems many LGBT-identifying individuals are attracted to the organization due to its inclusive nature. “My Girl Scout troop and my friends from Girl Scout summer camp were the only people I had in my life in my middle and high school years that accepted me and didn’t harass me for being gay,” resident camp staff of three years, Madeline Liles, said. But, not everyone is pleased with such an all-inclusive environment, which has been associated with a drop in membership.

In addition, although Girl Scouts as an organization has never supported or endorsed Planned Parenthood in any way, a number of “factually inaccurate” articles were published in 2010 after GSUSA participated in the 54th Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations. These articles suggested that a partnership between

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Girl Scouts and Planned Parenthood existed, in which it did not and never has. But this misrepresentation in the media also caused a drop in membership by those who disagree with the vision of Planned Parenthood. These misrepresentations caused the formation of a new scouting organization for girls in 1995 called the American Heritage Girls—a “Christ-centered alternative to Girl Scouts.”\textsuperscript{43} It began in West Chester, Ohio by “a group of parents wanting a wholesome program for their daughters” in protest to the “increasing secular focus of existing organizations for girls.”\textsuperscript{44}

Girls in high school are getting prepared to become adults in a world in which they will have to make their own decisions about social and political issues. For an adolescent just beginning to learn about these controversial issues and political stances, it is no wonder that they may be intimidated or apprehensive about participating in an organization that is perceived to be polarized toward particular views.

Girl Scouts as a national organization has seen significant change in this past century. Even more change is needed to keep the organization afloat—and thriving—for another century. The Girl Scout community has to take its own actions to make things better. Girl Scouts explicitly aims to teach girls to “make the world a better place,” so who is doing what to make the “Girl Scout world” a better place?


\textsuperscript{44} “The History of American Heritage Girls,” \textit{American Heritage Girls}. 
CHAPTER 3

PROMISING PRACTICES

As the membership numbers and degree of involvement of older girls in the Girl Scouts organization decline, both national and local attempts have been made by adult volunteers, professional staff, and high school members themselves to increase older girl participation. These attempts come in the forms of official changes in programming and structure of the organization, creation of events and opportunities unique to older girl age groups, honoring girls for their continued participation in Scouting, and campaigns to disprove misconceptions and stigmas of the non-profit and girls who participate in it.

Re-establishing the Public’s Vision

To help combat falling membership numbers as a whole, the GSUSA Girl Scout Research Institute wrote a research article called “More Than S’mores” to “claim [Girl Scouts’] responsibility for much more than popularizing the delightful campfire treat.” That is to say, that Girl Scouts offers much more than what may meet the public’s eye—especially regarding outdoor activities. Although this presentation of the organization may attempt help to alleviate misconceptions about what Girl Scouts actually do, GSRI research reports are rarely seen or read by the general public, or even by leaders and volunteers.

This de-stigmatizing is much more effectively done on a local level and by the
girl members themselves. Other high school Girl Scouts are taking their own initiatives to
change the public’s stereotypes and misconceptions about Girl Scouting. A senior at
Assumption High School in Louisville, Kentucky wrote an article for her school paper
regarding misconceptions about Girl Scouts by describing her own experience and
addressing that people often make comments to her such “[you’re] too old to be Girl
Scouts” and “[I] thought Girl Scouts just sold cookies.”46 She contradicts these
assumptions by telling of her troops’ extensive travel opportunities, public service
activities, and awards. She concludes by stating what many older scouts are trying to
explain to increase awareness of what it means to be a Girl Scout: “[A Girl Scout is]
doing more than having fun with her friends; she is trying to promote equality,
leadership, and trying to make the world a better place.”47

In reality, other non-Girl Scout high school girls actually don’t think of Girl
Scouts as an “un-cool” experience. Recent graduates of Girl Scouting have stated that in
their own Scouting experience, their non-Girl Scout friends often complimented their
involvement and expressed desire to participate in the organization.48 It seems as though
this claimed negative stigma of Girl Scouts presents itself more so in the middle school
population of girls, which is certainly suggested by the significant drop in membership
and retention rates between the Junior and Cadette levels of Girl Scouting. This is also
the age when girls stop realizing what opportunities they have to participate in through
Girl Scouts.

47 Ibid.
48 Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate).
In an attempt to help increase awareness of older girl participation in Girl Scouts, current volunteer Rebecca Woodburn and I encouraged girls to share their experiences with Girl Scouts on social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, using the hashtag: #morethancookies. This way, the current tremendous usage of social media sites by girls of this age group are used to help spread the message about the “cool stuff” Girl Scouts do—so their friends can see that Girl Scouting is indeed more than just selling cookies.49

Improving Communication

One technique that is being utilized in Area 10 (which is the Oldham County area), is a restructuring of the troops and local organization of Girl Scouts. Started by Girl Scout volunteer Terri Massey a few years ago, a “pod” structure was formed—each elementary school has one pod leader that represents all the troops associated with that school. There is one pod leader to represent all the Oldham County middle schools, and one to represent all the Oldham County high schools. These pod leaders attend regular meetings where information about events, programming, and news for Girl Scouts in Kentuckiana is exchanged and communicated so that all troops can easily and effectively be reached. This program was created in order to increase communication among all the troops in the area to be sure all girl members had the opportunity to participate in any aspect of Girl Scouting that they desired.50 This area is the only area in Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana which has this structure.

49 Rebecca Woodburn (Girl Scout 2013 graduate and current volunteer) in discussion with the author, March 8, 2015.
50 Sarah McKenna (Girl Scout graduate 2008 and current adult volunteer) in discussion with the author, March 8, 2015.
Arrangement of this structure may be beneficial in other areas, especially larger ones such as Louisville Metro Area 13, since girls often become uninterested in Scouting because they believe the organization has little to offer them as they get older. In reality, though, they just aren’t aware of the opportunities they have to participate because the information has not been communicated from troop leader to troop leader.\textsuperscript{51} Perhaps this system would help improve this communication council-wide so that older girls might stay more involved.

**Examining Available Opportunities**

Danica Van Volkenburg, Program Specialist for Grades 6-12 for the Kentuckiana council, listed numerous options for older girl programming. This research examines these opportunities and the extent to which they are utilized by older girls.

*Outdoor and High-Adventure Experience*

Outdoor experience has always been a trademark of the Girl Scout experience. Older girls in particular could take advantage of outdoor adventuring because they are capable of learning advanced and specialized outdoor skills more so than younger age groups. However, there has been a recent national Girl Scout controversy which raised concerns about diminishing outdoor experiences. Alumnae were especially concerned; 49 percent ranked “camping trips” as the most influential part of their Scouting experience.\textsuperscript{52}

The controversy surrounding this idea has recently been discussed because of the lack of a Girl Scout “Journey” for outdoor skills. (Journeys are a new, national programming structure implemented in 2011. The idea of this structure is that it organizes

\textsuperscript{51} Danica Van Volkenburg (Programs Specialist Grades 6-12).

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 4.
a series of badges and awards to be completed over a period of time—typically about one year. This structure contrasts with the previous “Interest Project” programming, which allowed girls to pick and choose what skills they wanted to learn and pursue to earn a badge. There are three Journey tracks, each with a different topic—becoming a change agent, environmental education, and leadership development. There is a Journey handbook for each of the three tracks at each age level with awards and activities geared to the appropriate age group.) Journeys are already a controversial structure because in some ways they are not widely accepted positively by girl members. “Journeys come with a giant workbook, and girls don’t want to spend their time in Girl Scouts doing something that feels like school,” said current volunteer Rebecca Woodburn.53 Further adding to the discontent of Journey structure is the fact that there is no Journey track specific to outdoor experience.

Girl Scout alumnae, leaders, and professional staff are particularly concerned with this lack of outdoor adventure curricula. Marty Woelfel, a current volunteer in Area 10 of Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, strongly believes that the trademark leadership skills of Girl Scouts are learned most successfully through outdoor activities (and 60 percent of girls agree).54 According to “More Than S’mores” research project survey results, about 50 percent of girls are able to participate in outdoor experiences that they would not be able to pursue outside of scouting and about 70 percent of girls have participated in a particular outdoor activity for the first time through Girl Scouting.55 However, in a country with increasing parental protection, technology use, and a plethora of other

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53 Rebecca Woodburn (Girl Scout 2013 graduate and current volunteer).
54 “More Than S’mores,” GSRI, 10.
55 “More Than S’mores,” GSRI, 10.
extracurricular activities for girls to participate in, outdoor activity is an experience that is quickly diminishing. Woelfel is quoted in a *New York Times* article as having said that outdoors, as leadership, has fallen “off the map” in terms of the Girl Scout experience. She and thousands of other Girl Scout members support promoting the debate using social media. A Facebook page titled “GSUSA, Are You Listening?” spread the message about the push for an outdoor Journey nationwide.

*Democratic Process and Civic Engagement*

Adult and girl delegates debated the creation of an outdoor Journey at the 2014 National Girl Scout Convention, due to the widespread concern about diminishing outdoor experience in Scouting. At the tri-annual National Girl Scout Convention, selected girls ages 15-17 and adult members participate as delegates to debate and vote on national issues regarding the organization. At the 2014 convention, it was decided that by October 2015, there would be four new outdoor badges and at this time professional staff members will be “working to develop programming and resources for troops, leaders, and volunteers.”

“The 2014 GSUSA convention was a watershed moment for outdoor programming,” said Woelfel. “Girl delegates, over and over again, spoke to the importance of outdoor programming. One result of the girls speaking out is that GSUSA found, to its surprise, that Girl Scout Ambassadors wanted badges to work on.”

Initially, the new outdoor “Girl’s Choice” badges to be released in 2015 would only include those for Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, and Seniors. Once the girl delegates spoke

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57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 Marty Woelfel (Girl Scout volunteer) in discussion with the author, February 19, 2016.
out at the convention, though, it was decided that an Ambassador badge would be designed and released in 2015 as well.\(^6\)

Debates such as these, where girls ages 15-17 can participate and officially vote on national changes in the organization, give older girls the opportunity to contribute to and have a say in the development of programming for Girl Scouts. This is a good method to encourage girls to stay involved. The girls can take away concrete democratic experiences for themselves as well as give vital feedback to professional staff as to what girls their age want to gain from participating in Girl Scouting. This opportunity is also presented annually at the council-wide annual meetings in which issues about Girl Scouting are discussed on a local level. This is a beneficial opportunity especially for girls interested in politics, particularly because they are encouraged to think about current events and social issues and how they affect the community to make their own opinions—and they are given a real-life experience with participating in democracy.

The participation of older girls in council governance has had a decline in recent years. To increase participation of older girls in the democratic process (a central tenet in Girl Scouting) and implementation of governance practices in general among Board members and service unit managers in Kentuckiana, a task force was formed in July of 2015. The specific aim for older girl involvement in the democratic process is attempted by this task force to “achieve it for girls by making our activities girl-planned and girl-led to the fullest extent possible.”\(^6\) Older girls are being encouraged to participate in this group in order to be a part of the Delegate Assembly which attends the Annual Meeting

\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^6\) Diana Clark (Executive Assistant/Board Relations), e-mail message to author, July 6, 2015.
and Fall Forums to discuss and approve bylaw changes and elect area leaders. An extra benefit for older girls in this group is the possibility to serve as a Girl Board member to have the opportunity to introduce girl member-specific issues that girls would like addressed.

Occasionally there are lobbying opportunities to defend the organization in various community issues. For example, in February of 2012 the Western Kentucky coal mining organization requested access to strip mine near the Girl Scout property in Utica, Kentucky. This was upsetting to many Girl Scout members due to the potential for pollution and other disturbances for this property. Older girls from various areas and counties in Kentuckiana attended the forum to discuss and debate this issue in an attempt to encourage council members to vote against granting the rights to the coal miners in this area.

**International Travel**

Girl Scouts offers international travel opportunities which are of particular interest to older girls, although it seems that many girls in this age group aren’t necessarily informed of these opportunities. One of the experiences that is offered is a program called *Destinations*—“the ultimate adventure for individual girls ages 11 and older,” in which GSUSA offers unique travel opportunities all over the world with specific themes and activities of interest to older girls. In 2016 there are 35 domestic and international trips offered, including sea kayaking in the Ionian Islands of Greece, geology education and whale-watching in Iceland, cross-country biking in Sweden and Denmark, cross-

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62 Ibid.
country travel for culinary exploration across the US, and scuba-diving in Costa Rica and Peru. Canada native and Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana graduate of 2013, April Fowler, participated in two 10-day Destinations: a backpacking trip in Costa Rica in the summer of 2010 and another in Peru the summer of 2012. She studies history, environmental studies, and secondary education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. She has participated in a teaching placement in the Green School in Bali, Indonesia, volunteered in conservation projects in Madagascar and Fiji, and studied abroad in 2015 at University at Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. She attributes her motivation to participate in these projects to her Destination experiences. She says they were a vital experience that led to her decision to work in leading international outdoor adventure opportunities. “I already had an interest in outdoor adventure and environmental education, and traveling abroad with Girl Scouts really sparked my desire to pursue leading these kinds of programs and trips in the future, which is why I chose to study it in college,” she said. “I’m really glad I stuck around with Girl Scouts long enough to have the opportunity to go on this trip…It really influenced my future, which is what Girl Scouting should really be about.”

Another popular opportunity for older Girl Scouts to participate in international travel is through the World Association of Girl Scouts and Girl Guides. The World Association has four international centers where Girl Scouts and Girl Guides from around the world can visit to experience programs to explore other cultures, try new adventures,

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64 April Fowler (Girl Scout 2013 graduate) in discussion with the author, October 3, 2015.
65 Ibid.
and meet girls from other countries. The four World Centers are located in Cuernavaca, Mexico (Our Cabaña), Adelboden, Switzerland (Our Chalet), London, England (Pax Lodge), and Pune, India (Sangam). All of these world centers offer programs for girls throughout the year focusing on themes such as leadership, cultural exploration, and adventure. Girls can attend either as a troop or individually.

**Specializing Troops and Groups**

Another major reason for keeping outdoor and high-adventure experience in Girl Scouts is to keep older girls interested in staying involved. According to Rebecca Woodburn, an adult volunteer and seasonal employee for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, Girl Scouts has to compete with Boy Scouts of America in terms of high-adventure outdoor experience. She states that “as girls get older, they want to do more adventure stuff. So they leave Girl Scouts and join Boy Scouts because haven’t been able to find as many camping opportunities.”66 Boy Scouts has a co-educational branch of scouting called Venturing Crew which admits girls ages 14-21. This group’s essential focus is to provide high-adventure outdoor experiences for young people to “mature and prepare them to become responsible and caring adults.”67 According to Woodburn, many troop leaders and volunteers for Girl Scouts are not interested in or do not have the proper training and time for outdoor activities. Because of this, older girls are feeling like the outdoor adventure component in Girl Scouting is disappearing, and since they have such trouble finding opportunities for outdoor adventure activities, they leave the organization and join groups

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66 Rebecca Woodburn (Girl Scout 2013 graduate and current volunteer).
like Venture Crew instead. In her own attempt to offer more outdoor and “high-adventure” activities for older Girl Scouts, she created a specialized supplementary troop for girls in the high school age group, modeled after similar troops in the Metro Louisville area.

The challenge of college student volunteers is that they often have extremely full schedules that don’t allot much time to dedicate to the time-demanding job of being a troop leader. For this reason, the adventure troop disbanded due to lack of time for planning trips and events for the girls in the group. In 2015, two other experienced and dedicated volunteers in the Caveland service area attempted to form an “Arts and Adventure” troop with programming geared toward older girls. This kind of volunteer work is highly beneficial considering professional staff don’t have the funds or time to plan programming, particularly for older girls, and any implemented programs are required by GSUSA to be solely recruitment-focused. A few concerns for this particular troop was that it was geared toward both middle and high school levels of scouting. Because of this high school girls might be less likely inclined to participate due to the involvement of girls in drastically different maturity levels. In addition, the programming opportunities may be too vague to encourage girl-planning, which is a current goal for Girl Scout older girl programming. Volunteer leaders of this group (Betsy Sheppard and Amanda Day) had high hopes for the troop, but professional staff were only able to offer limited support in programming and funding as it was an older girl troop. Dedicated volunteers such as these have a highly beneficial impact on the ability to provide programs to older girls, but sometime this lack of funding and support puts a strain on the

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68 Rebecca Woodburn (Girl Scout 2013 graduate and current volunteer).
success of these kinds of initiatives.

Another specialized opportunity for older girls is leadership teams. In recent years, high school groups used to be organized within Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana which provided opportunities to allow these older girls to plan and provide programming for younger Girl Scouts. These programs were usually based in the Louisville Metro area: the Senior/Ambassador Leadership Team and the Senior/Cadette Planning Boards. As is a common trend, these groups disbanded due to busy schedules of high school girls.

Other “specialized” troops may have highly specific interests to serve a particular population of girls. For example, the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program in Texas provides troops for girls whose mothers are imprisoned. The goal of the troops are to help girls reconnect with their mothers, offer a support group for girls in similar situations, and to help “break the cycle of crime and imprisonment.”

The benefit of having Girl Scout troops such as these, particularly for older girls, is that it may attract girls who may not otherwise have an interest in scouting at all. By being involved in such specialized Girl Scout experiences, they would have more exposure to Girl Scouts’ other offerings, therefore potentially increasing their interest in the organization.

Honoring Achievements and Involvement

Opportunities to give recognition and honor to older Girl Scouts with outstanding involvement and dedication to the organization has been one way that councils have made scouting for older girls more appealing. In 1965, the last Girl Scout “Senior Round-up” national event took place in Idaho. These Senior Round-ups were held tri-annually.

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from 1956-1965. A personal recounting of the final Round-up in Farragut Reservation, Idaho, by a local scout named Linda Young Wells can be found in the Caveland Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana PLC. The event was described as “a combination of nature study, outdoor science fair, and a fresh air foreign policy seminar” in a newspaper clipping found in Linda Wells’ self-published scrapbook of the event. At this time, GSUSA had about 3,500,000 members, and only about 4 percent of these members were Senior Girl Scouts (ages 15-17). Attendees to the Round-up were Senior Girl Scouts selected from their local council due to their excellence in “leadership, camping, resourcefulness, skill, and ability to get along well with others.” The selection of these girls was an intensive process, as the event was created to honor older girl scouts with extensive dedication to the organization. Four representatives were selected from the Caveland council to attend this event, out of twelve girls total from Kentuckiana. According to Linda Wells, this event greatly increased her appreciation for Girl Scouts and gave her a “deeper understanding of life” through an “unforgettable voyage…that would make [them] better people.” If special opportunities like this were still offered in Girl Scouts today, older girls may be more likely to consider increasing their level of involvement in scouting.

While there are fewer events such as these that celebrate high-achieving Girl Scouts, there are still awards for outstanding Girl Scout work; namely, the National Young Women of Distinction award for “exceptionally inspiring” Gold Award recipients. Even more prestigious than acceptance into a program like the Senior Round-

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70 Wells, Linda Young, _My Roundup Trip_ (2010), 24.
71 Ibid., 28.
72 Wells, _My Roundup Trip_, 28.
73 Ibid., 69.
74 Ibid., 67.
Up, this award is only given to ten Girl Scouts in the USA annually. The Girl Scouts who receive this award must have completed the Gold Award with a project that “presents extraordinary leadership, had a measurable and sustainable impact, and addressed a local challenge related to a national or global issue.” Each year, local councils select their most outstanding Gold Award projects to GSUSA to be reviewed for this prestigious award.

Scholarship opportunities are another major way older girls are honored for their involvement. Involvement in a single organization from early grade school years through high school shows dedication, and with the multi-faceted aspect of Girl Scouts, there are a number of ways to be involved which are appealing to scholarship committees. Particularly, completion of the Gold Award makes an application stand out high above the rest. “To see something on your application that you’ve gotten a Gold Award shows them that you’re worth investing in because you’ve had the kind of long-term dedication that you’re worth giving money to,” said Bailey Mack, a Girl Scout graduate of 2010 and a Gold Award recipient. Mack has received many scholarships to study abroad, including the Fulbright for 2016-2017. According to Mack, some scholarship committees have specifically named her Gold Award as a major factor in their decision to award her. “At that point it had been three years in the past, but of all the things on my résumé that’s the thing they picked to be the most important.” There are also scholarships exclusive to Girl Scout Gold Award recipients, both on a local level (such as the Jean Cole Scholarship for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, a one-time scholarship of $500) as well as a national level. Although the point in completing a Gold Award project isn’t to earn

76 “National Young Women of Distinction,” Girl Scouts of the USA.
77 Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate).
scholarship money, it is beneficial and often a huge appeal to high school Girl Scouts (even motivation to stay involved in the organization through high school).

All in all, there are a plethora of opportunities for older Girl Scouts to participate in. But with membership numbers plummeting and with such a small sector for the high school age group, these opportunities are not taken advantage of as widely as they could be.
CHAPTER 4

MOVING FORWARD

Why is retention important?

Adolescence is a critical period of development for girls in a number of ways. Mary Pipher, in her book *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*, refers to adolescence as the “border between childhood and adulthood.” This period in a young woman’s life very much shapes her future as her culture and community greatly influence her development into an adult—physically, emotionally, mentally, intellectually, sexually, socially, and more.

The community that Girl Scouts provides for an older girl is a largely varied experience from her school and home life and ultimately provides a more well-rounded understanding of her world and community. This offers the opportunity to analyze and develop her own worldviews, opinions, goals, and future plans. At this age, teenagers are beginning to have the capacity to think like adults—analyzing complex topics and issues and engaging in abstract thinking and logical reasoning.

In a comparative study by the Girl Scout Research Institute, researchers analyzed the moral compasses of adolescent girls in a study completed in 1989 against a study completed in 2009. In 1989, the highest polling of girls’ self-identified moral compass

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was a civic humanist perspective, at a total of 25%—which dropped dramatically to 8% in 2009. Civic humanism can loosely be defined as a type of moral judgment with a strong tendency to make decisions to act in order to benefit the community as a whole. Girl Scouts is the kind of organization which promotes this kind of moral judgment and offers the opportunity for girls to learn more about issues and concerns in their community through community and public service projects.

“[Girl Scouting] shows commitment and it shows dedication to volunteer work from a young age, which is something that doesn’t matter if you are applying for a scholarship, an internship opportunity, or a job. It’s something that right now, in the US, people like to see,” said Gold Award recipient Bailey Mack. “It isn’t ‘one time I went to this place and did something for two hours and now it’s on my résumé.’” Essentially, Girl Scouts promotes dedication to volunteer work in the community—particularly long-term dedication to making change for the betterment of the community.

On a different end of the spectrum, the percentage of girls who identify with a conventionalist way of thinking—making moral decisions based on what is expected/believed by parents, teachers, and peers—largely stayed the same (20% in 1989 to 19% in 2009). Typically, girls who are not exposed to varying types of environments will have this way of thinking. In addition, in 2009 the leading type of moral judgment (at 24%) in teenage girls is “conscience following,” or the drive to do

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82 Bailey Mack (Girl Scout 2010 graduate).
84 “Good Intentions,” *GSRI*, 30.
85 Ibid.
what they personally believe is right. It can be argued that a teenager’s own conscience can be heavily affected by their peers and parents, as is a significant trait of adolescent thinking.\textsuperscript{86} Pipher goes as far to say that teenage girls are “pressured to deny their true selves” to please their parents and peers.\textsuperscript{87} Thus, Girl Scouts provides the potential benefit of offering differentiating experiences through a multi-faceted organization which is highly involved in the community.

Along with the new perspectives that girls obtain from belonging to groups of differing peers, as they would in a Girl Scouts troop, belonging to an accepting group of peers is highly beneficial. Of course, some girls may have this in school, but others may find comfort in support from peers that they don’t see as often as they might see their classmates. Older girls are involved in Girl Scouts for a variety of reasons—some may be seeking more of a support group environment of peers close in age, and some may be in search of opportunities to lead younger girls, or a combination of the two. For the latter option, there are troops called “mega troops” which range in members’ ages—as young as 5 and as old as 17. These troops are designed to give the older girls opportunities to plan activities and events for the younger girls. Other older girls might prefer to stick to activities with their own age group. Both offer an opportunity for growth, development, and peer support.

Non-profits for youth with leadership training in its programming emphasize the importance of challenge. Girl Scouts is certainly not excluded from this, and has always encouraged outdoor adventuring as a challenge that can help build leadership skills. However, in recent years, research has shown that fewer girls have been participating in

\textsuperscript{86} James Wright, “Growing Up Can Be Awkward.”
\textsuperscript{87} Mary Bray Pipher, \textit{Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls}, 22.
outdoor activities through Girl Scouting. Coincidentally, as levels of “outdoor challenges” decrease in frequency and intensity, girls are reporting less positively in regard to their desires to take risks and challenge themselves.\textsuperscript{88} Perhaps this is because, due to safety regulations and age-appropriateness of particular outdoor activities (such as white water rafting, spelunking, and high ropes), there are relatively more outdoor programs are feasible for older girls than younger ones. However, as girls get older, membership numbers get smaller as more options for outdoor opportunities become available. If girls were retained until middle and high school, perhaps Girl Scouts would be able to more effectively implement challenge-seeking as a factor in its programming.

Keeping girls involved in Girl Scouting through their teenage years creates substantial benefits for not only the girls in this critical stage of development, but for the organization and its longevity and effectiveness as well. By providing high-quality and engaging experiences and programming for older Girl Scouts, the organization may be more able to retain the high school girls even beyond girl membership—resulting in creating qualified and motivated volunteers right as they graduate high school. Some young volunteers agree and say that “even just a few years of really honing in and focusing on those older Girl Scouts will help alleviate the problem of our lack of volunteers at least a little,” said Girl Scout volunteer Sarah McKenna, age 24. She speaks of a “lifelong experience” with Girl Scouts: “Even after I graduated and started volunteering, I found that I was still learning about myself and how to help the community even through my volunteer experience with Girl Scouts. Volunteering is a whole other level of scouting in itself.”

The Five Keys to Effective Older Girl Programming

Ann Muno, an advocacy director for Girl Scouts of Western Washington, stated about programming for youth that “a little bit of intentionality goes a long way.”89 This may ring particularly true in programming for older girls, who require more challenge and rigor and may need extra enticement to participate or fully engage in activities. However, with the quantity of older girl programs as limited as it is in Girl Scouts, there is not a significant amount of direction available for creating effective (highly engaging and appealing) girl programs which in turn yields higher retention of older Girl Scouts.

Based upon my own research on the subject and ground experiences with programming for older girls, I have compiled a list of the five key elements to creating and implementing an effective and enticing older girl program. These five keys include fostering a specialized experience for the girls, the intentional opportunity to build relationships with adults and peers, providing sustainable and straightforward volunteer/leader instructions to carry out the program, promoting support for autonomy development, and the expansion of foundations for program design. Appendix B, the CIT I Director’s Manual for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps, provides my own examples of how to incorporate these keys into a program.

Specialized Experience

One of the most important qualities of an older girl Girl Scout program is that it offers opportunities for the girls to learn specific skills which pertain to their interests and that

they can use in other aspects of their lives. This means that programs should vary in their offerings but should ultimately benefit the girls in other organizations in which they might be involved. For example, programs for girls interested in STEM would provide them with skill sets to succeed as leaders in other science, math, or robotics clubs and classes. This way, Girl Scouts can be viewed as an extension of their other extracurricular activities instead of an entirely separate commitment.

The Counselor-in-Training program at resident camps has two levels. The first level provides the environment to learn basic outdoor and leadership skills; they can become certified in these skills at the second level of the program (first aid, lifeguarding, sailing, paddling, etc). The design of this program provides a direct path to being a qualified camp counselor and/or adventure trip leader once the girls graduate from high school. This not only provides a high-quality, beneficial experience for girls interested in outdoor activities, but also plays into an attempt to qualify young Girl Scout volunteers who are readily equipped and inspired to lead activities once they are too old to be a girl member. The program focuses on leadership training in addition to outdoor activities, and therefore provides a challenging and new experience for girls interested in learning about leadership who may not have much previous experience in outdoor activities.

Building Relationships with Adults and Peers

The Girl Scout Research Institute’s *Ten Emerging Truths* indicates that older girls are looking for connections with adult leaders in their programming. In addition, programs that yield higher retention for older girls most often include a sense of community among the peers within the group. So, an effective program for older girls would incorporate

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90 Judy Schoenberg et al., *The Ten Emerging Truths: New Directions for Girls 11-17*.
opportunities to build relationships among the adult leaders and the girls enrolled in the program.

The “Sundae Party” activity found on page 31 of Appendix B demonstrates such an opportunity. It creates an intimate and relaxed environment in which there are specific opportunities to talk about tough issues that affect girls’ in their everyday lives. Fostering a safe environment to talk about such issues yields the opportunity to create deep connections among the leaders and participants in the group.

*Sustainable and Straightforward Volunteer/Leader Instructions*

A major problem for volunteers, particularly those who work with older girls, is the lack of programming readily available. In order to make this possible, having well laid-out and straightforward programming with some wiggle room for creativity and variability is essential. At times, it can be difficult for a leader/volunteer (especially a working mother or a college student) to come up with programs completely on her own. It becomes less of a challenge and less of a time constraint for volunteers if the programming is already planned out, with a goal in mind.

The CIT Director’s Manual in Appendix B was designed with a tentative schedule and a number of detailed “program sheets” in order to be an easy-to-follow guide for future CIT Directors. The manual was created by myself with assistance from fellow task-force members, including Outdoor Program Manager Carrie Mook and volunteers Stephanie Mobley, Rebecca Woodburn, and Jessica Botkin. The task force was led by a professional staff member at Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana in order to assist the volunteers in making a program that falls within the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Professionally-led task forces for programming would help bridge the gap between
programing falling solely on volunteers (who perhaps have minimal experience or knowledge of the matter) or solely on the professionals, who have other responsibilities with their jobs.

**Support Autonomy Development**

According to Mary Pipher, spending an extended period of time away from home (in programs such as summer camps or foreign exchange) is an excellent opportunity for growth.91 This is because it allows adolescents to have a break from the family and friends they see in their day-to-day life and spend time with new people—potentially creating the opportunity for developing new worldviews and expanding their perspective to make their own decisions. The CIT I program was extended from ten days to thirteen in order to provide a more extensive and intensive experience for the program participants.

Programs with high autonomy support foster self-direction and self-expression. Recreation professionals working with adolescents can foster self-direction and self-expression by providing the opportunity for the youth to set their own goals and decide how they, individually or as a group, plan to achieve those goals. By having a say in activity planning and how to make changes to programs when failures occur, the adolescents maintain responsibility and build decision-making skills.

The challenge for program planners in autonomy-supportive environments is to find and maintain a balance between youth planning and leader planning. Many leaders have found that having girl-led Girl Scout troops often leads to inactivity because high

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school girls have “too much on their plate” and also lack the resources to effectively plan trips and activities.\textsuperscript{92} The overnight experience in the CIT program requires planning by the girl participants, but the planning is limited to meal planning and deciding on means of transportation (paddling, sailing, hiking, biking, etc) and a destination. This planning and the implementation is guided by the CIT director. This supervised planning is an attempt to provoke a sense of competence among the program participants—according to the Self-Determination Theory, competence is a key factor in autonomy support.\textsuperscript{93}

Professionals in girl programming, such as Girl Scout research team members Kallen Tsikalas and Karyn L. Martin, suggest that outdoor exposure is a key component in promoting challenge—which in turn provides the opportunity for girls to practice problem-solving skills in a team setting.\textsuperscript{94} For this reason, overnight backcountry camping experiences in summer resident camps for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana is an important part of the program structure, especially for older girls. For CITs, making the overnight trip last multiple days and multiple nights increases the rigor. Not only does this give the girls a break from leading activities for younger girls, it also provides a necessary opportunity for autonomy support and development.

*Expand Foundations of Program Design*

For a well-rounded program that promotes different ways of thinking, it is important to include variations in the foundations of the program’s design. This is particularly true in program such as the CIT program, which teaches leadership. Leadership is a vague term that incorporates multiple theories and definitions. Girl Scouts

\textsuperscript{92} Jennifer Johnson (Membership Specialist).


\textsuperscript{94} Kallen Tsikalas and Karyn L. Martin, “Girls’ Challenge Seeking,” 2.
has its own definition of leadership, as defined and outlined by the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (outlined on page 52 in Appendix B). However, I believe that approaching the leadership experience from various points of view not only makes the program more well-rounded, but allows the girl participants to take ownership in developing their own ideas of leadership.

For this reason, multiple professional ideologies were taken account in creating this program (such as utilizing Self-Determination Theory for autonomy support in overnight planning). As an example, in the “Leadership and Group Dynamics” training activity (Program Sheet 2, found on page 23 of Appendix B) the concept of group dynamics is taught and explained utilizing Tuckman’s model of team formation. In another example, the program participants were also required to do self evaluations and be evaluated by the program director twice throughout the session. It is difficult for girls to identify their own progress as leaders by utilizing the Girl Scout Leadership Experience model. The CIT program development task force found Michael Brandwein’s leadership skill maps to be an effective means of measurement for evaluation. By referencing these skill maps, the program participants and program directors could more easily identify areas of improvement and areas of strength in leadership qualities.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The small and rapidly shrinking older girl age group in Girl Scouting needs immediate attention, not only for the sake of keeping the older girl sector alive, but for the organization’s success as a whole. Older girls in Girl Scouting can be utilized for programming assistance and building a successful volunteer base. This could be a potential asset to combatting overall membership decline in GSUSA—but, in order to utilize this asset, older girl programming needs effort and attention to attract and retain older girl participation.

Programming for older girls in Girl Scouts provides the opportunity to build relationships with peers and adults outside of home and school—which in turn provides them with the opportunity to explore and expand their worldviews. It offers opportunities for challenge and self-discovery, and acts as a guide to create successful female leaders and role models in the community. It is arguable that older girls may benefit more from participation in the organization than the younger members—or, at least, their experience is different. From democratic experience, to expanded outdoor activity options, to leadership training programs, to international travel excursions, to earning honors and awards, there are opportunities for older girls to succeed and participate in the organization. However, in order to keep these programs available, there must be a focus on retaining membership through adolescent years.
While there are programs specific to older girls in place, they are not widely known about and not particularly abundant, either. At this time, programming with intention is critical to both the current and future success of older girl activities in Girl Scouts. The purpose of this study was to examine trends and promising practices of older girl retention and participation in Girl Scouting so that I could develop a model of the “five keys” which would be most effective when programming for older Girl Scouts. The five keys I identified through my research include: fostering a specialized experience for the girls, the intentional opportunity to build relationships with adults and peers, providing sustainable and straightforward volunteer/leader instructions to carry out the program, promoting support for autonomy development, and the expansion of foundations for program design. When developing programs for older girls, consciously including these keys will create a more effective program design that will help increase retention and active participation among high school Girl Scouts.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Clark, Diana. Executive Assistant/Board Relations. E-mail Message. July 6, 2015.


Ford, Jackie. Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Chief Executive Officer. E-mail Message. October 1, 2015.


Welcome to a crazy, messy, fun-filled, amazing summer! Not only do you get to inspire the minds of some creative, quirky, hard-working, passionate, and remarkable high school girls, but you are also building the future leaders of our camps and of the “Girl Scout world” as a whole. It is our job to not only to encourage but to inspire these girls to love camp as much as we do and prepare them to keep our camps a great place for years to come. As Counselor-in-Training Director you are here not only to show our campers how to become a camp counselor, but how to become a leader in their everyday lives. It is our job to help them build their courage, confidence, and character and pass on their knowledge and skills to younger girls. The purpose of the CIT program is to provide training in leadership skills for girls to utilize outside of the camp experience, as well as to foster development of the essential qualities for effective camp counselors.

**CIT OBJECTIVES:**

- To provide a meaningful transition between camper/counselor
- To allow assessment of one’s own potential and capabilities
- To help one gain from group experiences
- To help one develop a personal code of ethics to enjoy and appreciate the out-of-doors
- To master and share with other a variety of camping skills and techniques
- To recognize the needs of others and the means to help others achieve their goals
- To assume varied leadership roles under the guidance of experienced leaders

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**2015 Leadership Experience Task Force Committee**
Chair: Carrie Mook
Author: Jennifer Ottersbach
Committee Members: Stephanie Mobley, Rebecca Woodburn, Jessica Botkin

**THE WORK OF TODAY IS THE HISTORY OF TOMORROW, AND WE ARE ITS MAKERS.**

-Juliette Gordon Low

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Appendix: Leadership Skills Maps
Michael Brandwein’s “Learning Leadership: How to Develop Outstanding Teen Leadership Training Programs at Camp”

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE 2016

Thursday, June 25th
1:30PM ARRIVE AT BEAR CREEK
- _____ health checks
- _____ swim tests
- _____ unit time: plan trip, plan cookout, name/”get to know you” games
6:00PM DINNER
7:15PM unpack at unit
8:00PM CAMPFIRE
9:15PM “CIT 101” : Program Sheet 1, page 20

Friday, June 26th
7:00 wake up
8:00 BREAKFAST
9:30AM Tour of Camp: BCAC
   Compass Course
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM “WATER, WATER”
4:00PM Team’s Course *req: team’s course facilitator*
6:00PM DINNER
7:30PM “Leadership and Group Dynamics Training” : Program Sheet 2, page 23

kaper ___________________________ shower time ____

Saturday, June 27th
7:00 wake up
8:00 BREAKFAST
9:30AM “Canoe Learn and Teach” : Program Sheet 3, page 25
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM “WATER, WATER”
4:00PM Wild Walk / “Poo Party”
   “Song, Game, and Activity Planning” : Program Sheet 4, page 26
6:00PM DINNER
7:30PM “Safety Procedures” : Program Sheet 5, page 28
   *req: camp director*
   “Intro to Outdoors” : Program Sheet 6, page 29
   (overnight trip planning)

kaper ___________________________ shower time ____

Sunday, June 28th
9:00AM wake up
10:00AM BRUNCH
11:30AM “Scout’s Own” : Program Sheet 7, page 30
2:00PM “WATER, WATER”
4:00PM cookout (in units)
8:00PM night hike/games
9:00PM “Sundae Party”

kaper ___________________________ shower time ____

Assign the Group Dynamics and The Leader in You journal prompts.

Assign the Camper Development journal prompt.

Assign the Girl Scout Leadership Experience journal prompt.
Monday, June 29th
7:00 wake up
8:00 BREAKFAST
9:30AM “Trail Clearing Service Project” : Program Sheet 8, page 32
12:00PM LUNCH – Pontoon Boat Ride “P. Party” *req food*
4:00PM REST HOUR
6:00PM DINNER
7:30PM “Amazing Race” : Program Sheet 9, page 33

kaper ___________________________ shower time _____

Tuesday, June 30th
7:00 wake up
8:00 BREAKFAST
9:30AM “Diversity Training” : Program Sheet 10, page 34
   emergency drill *req: camp director*
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM leave for overnight

Wednesday, July 1st
[overnight continued]

Thursday, July 2nd
10:00AM return from overnight
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM “WATER, WATER”
4:00PM “Time Capsule” : Program Sheet 11, page 37 /make banner
6:00PM DINNER “Naming Ceremony” : Program Sheet 12, page 38
7:30PM pack up
8:00PM CLOSING CAMPFIRE
9:15PM “Popcorn with a Purpose” : Program Sheet 13, page 39

kaper ___________________________ shower time _____

Friday, July 3rd
6:30AM wake up/clean unit
8:00AM BREAKFAST
9:30AM DEPART FROM BEAR CREEK

Sunday, July 5th
1:30PM ARRIVE AT PENNYROYAL
   - _____ health checks
   - _____ swim tests
6:00PM DINNER
7:15PM unpack at unit
8:00PM CAMPFIRE
9:15PM UNIT TIME
**Monday, July 6th**
7:00AM wake up
7:45AM FLAG
8:00AM BREAKFAST
10:00AM high ropes / mid-session evals
12:00PM LUNCH (sack - *req: food*)
   Tour of Camp: Pennyroyal
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM FREE SWIM
4:00PM UNIT TIME PREP, Program Sheet 14, page 40
5:45PM FLAG
6:00PM DINNER
7:30PM UNIT TIME

kaper ___________________________ shower time _____

**Tuesday, July 7th**
7:00AM wake up
7:45AM FLAG
8:00AM BREAKFAST
10:00AM UNIT TIME
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM FREE SWIM
4:00PM UNIT TIME
5:45PM FLAG
6:00PM DINNER
7:30PM UNIT TIME

kaper ___________________________ shower time _____

**Wednesday, July 8th**
7:00AM wake up
7:45AM FLAG
8:00AM BREAKFAST
10:00AM UNIT TIME
12:00PM LUNCH
1:00PM REST HOUR
2:00PM UNIT TIME
4:00PM cookout with council staff
9:00PM night games/craft/stargazing

kaper ___________________________ shower time _____

**Thursday, July 9th**
7:00AM wake up
CIT FRAMEWORK

The CIT program for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps has been re-structured to fit the GSUSA guidelines for completion of the official council-designed Counselor-in-Training course while maintaining our well-loved camp “spirit.” The GSUSA guidelines require a series of framework components to be completed, each which has a unique set of goals and objectives. Our new CIT program will allow opportunity for every girl enrolled in the program to complete the course in compliance with the GSUSA Teen Mentor Training
Program. This two-week curriculum encompasses both the official council-designed goals and objectives and their specific application to our camps.

Listed and described below are the eleven framework components as provided by the GSUSA Teen Mentor Program for completion of the CIT I course.

**THE LEADER IN YOU**
At the end of this session girls will be able to describe themselves as leaders in their lives and in the world. Specifically, comparing their leadership roles at camp and away from camp.

**THE GIRL SCOUT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**
At the end of this session girls will be able to name some of the specific benefits Girl Scouting promises and begin to think about how to choose and focus activities to meet those outcomes. Girls will be able to define "fun with purpose" and understand the three keys to the GSLE.

**THREE KEYS TO THE GIRL SCOUT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

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

**CONNECT**
- Girls develop healthy relationships.
- Girls promote cooperation and team building.
- Girls can resolve conflicts.
- Girls advance diversity in a multi-cultural world.
- Girls feel connected to their community, 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.

**CAMPER DEVELOPMENT**
At the end of this session girls will learn how younger girls develop physically and emotionally. CITs will come to understand how the needs, interests and capabilities of younger girls can change. CITs will be intentional in helping young campers be leaders in their lives.

**GROUP DYNAMICS**
At the end of this session girls will have an increased ability to manage groups effectively. CITs will begin to think about how they can be leaders at camp as they spend time with groups of younger girls.
JOURNEYS
At the end of this session, girls will know that leadership journeys are a key part of the GSLE, that a journey is a coordinated series of activities grouped around a theme, and that each journey is tied to Girl Scouts' 15 national outcomes as they are connected to the GSLE. Specifically, CITs will be able to facilitate journey activities with younger girls, using their creativity to customize for the camp setting.

HIGH-QUALITY EXPERIENCE
At the end of this session girls will understand that not only are the activities they facilitate with girls important, but how they engage girls is also important to creating a high-quality experience. Specifically, CITs will be able to plan activities that contain at least one of the processes.

THREE PROCESSES OF GIRL SCOUT EXPERIENCE

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<th>COOPERATIVE LEARNING</th>
<th>LEARNING BY DOING</th>
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<td>Girls shape their experiences by asking questions, offering ideas, and using their imaginations.</td>
<td>Girls work together to choose an idea and develop a team plan.</td>
<td>Girls think about what they've experienced so they can apply what they've learned to other areas of their lives.</td>
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SAFETY
At the end of this session, girls will be able to apply the 12 Safety Standards and Safety Activity Checkpoints to activities they facilitate with younger girls and know how to respond to emergency situations.

OUTDOOR LIVING
At the end of this session, girls will be able to perform and teach the outdoor skills necessary for living on a site or when traveling from camp.

CAMP LIFE
At the end of this session, girls will know the culture and history of their camp and the systems in place to make this the camp environment they have come to know. Specifically, CITs will begin to think about how the idea of fun with purpose impacts their camp environment and ultimately its history and culture.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE
Girls will complete a council-designed "hands-on" project/internship. Specifically, CITs will work with younger campers during a camp session employing all they have learned about themselves as leaders and younger campers to facilitate activities aimed at outcomes that provide fun with purpose.
CELEBRATION
After girls have completed the steps to earn their CIT awards, they can celebrate their achievements.

JOURNALS
Notebooks will be distributed to all CITs at the start of the camp session. These “journals” should be treated as something fun and rewarding for girls to do to express creativity and reflection—we don’t want them to feel like it’s schoolwork!

Journals are used for:
- assigned journal entries
- notes
- self-evaluations
- any other self expression! (appropriate and camp-related)
Journal entries are meant to be kept private unless a CIT decides she would like to share her writing. Times which may be appropriate for sharing journal entries may include debriefing sessions or “safe circles.”

Each day, CITs are encouraged to reflect on various topics in their journals, such as:

- how they felt about their choices
- what challenges have they overcome
- how they have or have not felt like a leader
- how have they applied what they are learning about leadership to the general camp setting and activities
- moments of pride or discouragement
- highs and lows of the day
- etc

In addition, some specific, mandatory, open-ended journal prompts will be assigned, which will be distributed throughout the session in correspondence with the CIT Framework guidelines. These prompts are designed to get girls to think actively about the topics and ideas that fulfill the course requirements: CITs are required to respond to all assigned journal prompts, even if the responses are brief.

**The Leader In You:** “The term ‘leadership’ is a loose one. How would you describe leadership in your own words? After examining your personality and leadership type, what do you identify as your stronger leadership skills, and what areas regarding leadership might you want to work on? How may your leadership skills differ from ‘camp life’ to ‘real world’ situations?”

**The Girl Scout Leadership Experience:** “Describe and reflect on your recent involvement in Girl Scouting and what your experience means to you. How has it been a positive influence on you and how can you be sure younger Girl Scouts receive these benefits too? What more would you want from Girl Scouts for yourself and how might you be able to fulfill these wants?”

**Camper Development:** “Consider the four age groups of younger girl scouts—Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, and Seniors. Think about your favorite and least favorite age groups to work with. What are the differences in these age groups? Why do you like or not like working with these age groups? What do you think that says about your leadership style/skills?”

**Group Dynamics:** “Name some examples of problems or struggles (ex: homesickness, bullying, etc) of working with groups of girls and describe how they affect the group as a whole. How might dealing with these problems differ from a troop setting to a camp setting? How would you handle these problems in both settings (consider especially the differences in how you would handle the situations)?”

**High-Quality Experiences:** “You have now had the opportunity to plan an event or activity for a group of girls. Reflect on your participation in the planning. What did you do well and what can you improve on for next time? Evaluate the level of engagement of the girls in the activity. How might you have increased the level of engagement?”
**Safety:** “What do you see as potential challenges for yourself in handling an emergency situation and how can you work on overcoming them?”

**Outdoor Living:** “Do you participate in outdoor activities outside of camp? If so, what other skills do you have to offer to resident camp? If you don’t have much outdoor experience outside of camp, think about outdoor opportunities you might be able to try getting involved in. How do you think these opportunities would help your abilities to contribute outdoor skills to resident camp activities?”

**Camp Life:** “What are your favorite camp traditions? How might you help ensure these traditions are kept alive for your future campers? Do you have ideas for new traditions you’d like to start? If you know of old traditions you’d like to bring back that have ‘died out,’ what are some ways you could go about reviving them?”

**Practical Experience:** “Think about the opportunities you have had to work with younger girls at camp this session (unit time, all-camps, leading songs/games, etc). What were your favorite and least favorites and why? In what other ways can you interact with girls during a camp session? What are your strengths and areas of improvement in regards to working hands-on with girls?”

---

**CIT 1 MID-SESSION SELF EVALUATION**

Name:

Camp Name:

Consult the leadership “skills maps” provided to you on the first day of the session. Think about your words and actions so far in the session and how they show good or poor leadership skills. Think about how you can improve your skills for the rest of the session and beyond. Acknowledge and reflect on your strengths and weaknesses—we all have both! Please take these evaluations seriously, remember that your counselors are observing you in these skill sets as well and will be considering
them for future placement in CIT, JC, and employment positions with Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps!

**Please Indicate: NI = Needs Improvement   S = Satisfactory   E = Excellent**

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**Other comments/concerns/questions:**

**CIT 1 MID-SESSION DIRECTOR EVALUATION**

**Camper Name:**

**Camper Camp Name:**

Consult the leadership “skills maps” provided to the CITs. Think about the CITs’ words and actions so far in the session and how they show good or poor leadership skills. Help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Use the back of this form for additional questions/comments/concerns.

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### Other comments/concerns/questions:

**Director(s) Name(s):**

**CIT 1 END-OF-SESSION SELF EVALUATION**

**Name:**

**Camp Name:**

Consult the leadership “skills maps” provided to you on the first day of the session. Think about your words and actions during the second part of the session and evaluate the changes in your skills. Think about how you can improve and apply your skills outside of camp. Acknowledge and reflect on your strengths and weaknesses—we all have both! Please take these evaluations seriously, remember that your counselors are also evaluating your leadership skill sets and will be considering them for future placement in CIT, JC, and employment positions with Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana.
Resident Camps! Would you want to hire yourself based on your demonstrated actions and lingo? Use the back of this form for additional questions/comments/concerns.

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CIT 1 END-OF-SESSION SELF EVALUATION (cont.)

Please Indicate:  
NI = Needs Improvement  
S = Satisfactory  
E = Excellent

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<th>Skill Group A</th>
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**Other comments/concerns/questions:**

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**CIT 1 END-OF-SESSION DIRECTOR EVALUATION**

**Camper Name:**

**Camper Camp Name:**

Consult the leadership “skills maps” provided to the CITs. Think about the CITs’ words and actions this session and how they showed good or poor leadership skills. Help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Use the bottom and back of this form for additional questions/comments/concerns.

**Please Indicate:** $NI = Needs Improvement$ $S = Satisfactory$ $E = Excellent$
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**CIT 1 END-OF-SESSION DIRECTOR EVALUATION (cont.)**

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**NI = Needs Improvement**  
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**Other comments/concerns/questions:**
Program Sheet 1: “CIT 101”

Time to welcome the CITs of this year home for the next few weeks! As the CIT Director(s) it’s your job to show enthusiasm about the upcoming weeks as well as to lay down the rules and expectations while maintaining a positive attitude. Show the girls you are here to be their “big sister” and that you are ready to have fun with them, be silly, and be there for them for whatever they need.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

- Remind the girls that they are role models for the other campers. They should model good decision making, maturity, and good hygiene/self-care at all times.
- Let them know that the program has been re-vamped to match the official CIT programming/certification from GSUSA and that they will be receiving the certification along with the specific knowledge and skills they need to be fabulous camp staff for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps.
- Explain the evaluation process for the session (mid-way “take home” evals, end-of-session evals, both which will be accompanied by one-on-one meetings with the CIT directors). Let them know that these are official documents that will be used to determine proper future placement in CIT, JC, and employment positions at camp!
- Tell them about the journals and distribute the notebooks. The journals are for free-expression regarding camp-related things which are to be kept private unless they wish to share something they’ve written or drawn in the journal during “safe circle” or debriefing times. There will be multiple required assigned journal prompts to which responses don’t have to be in great detail, but enough to reflect on what they’ve learned.
- Distribute disposable cameras! Tell them to take pictures wisely and be prepared to put them in a memorabilia scrapbook for future campers to see!

CAMP NAMES

Why do we have camp names? It’s a fun tradition! When else do you have the opportunity to name yourself something whacky and weird to express your personality? And it’s a safety/confidentiality precaution—remember, we don’t want campers to know much detail about our personal lives. It’s a fun way to remain professional.
**How will camp names work this session?** At Bear Creek, they will use their real names. BCAC is geared toward older girls—it can be weird to have that divide from their peers. Plus, the CITs have to “graduate”—they’ll use their camp names at PR!

**ACTIVITY: “Crossing the Line”**

Put a long piece of masking tape, or make a line somehow across the floor/ground. Explain the activity to the CITs: A scenario will be read to them, and they will determine whether the response to the situation given is “crossing the line” as a CIT. Explain that CITs have a unique placement at camp—an “in-between” stage of a camper and a counselor. When the scenario is read, the CITs will decide to literally cross the line if they think the response to the scenario is going to far or is inappropriate as a CIT. The CIT director(s) will then demonstrate the proper response as both a CIT, and then as a counselor.

**Examples of scenarios:**

A camper asks for help applying sunscreen. You help them rub it in on their backs, where they can't reach. Is this crossing the line?
Correct response: **Sure.** As a **CIT** you do not have a responsibility to refrain from actions that may be seen as stimulating or arousing, potentially by other campers, employees, or adults. However, as a **counselor**, this is crossing the line. It is not appropriate to have this kind of physical contact with a minor.

You bring alcoholic beverages to camp. Is this crossing the line?
Correct response: **Of course it is!** Neither **CITs** nor **counselors** can have alcoholic beverages, drugs, or alcohol on camp property. Not even counselors or other staff members that are over the age of 21 may possess alcohol on any Girl Scout camp property. Especially as a minor, this is definitely crossing the line.

A few of the camp counselors are fixing a broken sailboat. They are standing in the water, which is shallow enough that it only comes up to their waistline, so they aren’t wearing PFDs. They need assistance and ask you to come in and help hold the boat steady. You aren’t wearing a PFD but the water is shallow enough that you don’t think you need one, so you also don’t put one on before entering. Is this crossing the line?
Correct response: **Yes.** Even if you are a great swimmer, it is Girl Scout policy that all campers must wear appropriately fitting flotation devices in the lake. As a **CIT** you are technically still a camper, so you must follow these safety guidelines. **Counselors** must also always wear a PFD, but in some situations this can be disregarded (such as fixing a boat in shallow water, or lifeguarding). However, as a role model, counselors should never enter the water without a PFD in front of campers.

One of the counselors in the unit you are working with is complaining to you about an annoying camper. You agree with her but don’t add any of your own complaints.
Correct response: As a **counselor**, this is crossing the line. Staff should never complain about campers in front of any camper or CIT. Inevitably complaining might
happen when campers aren’t around, but this should be refrained from as much as possible—campers can pick up on negativity, and negativity will only increase with complaining. As a CIT, you should talk to your counselors about concerns you are having about campers that you are having difficulty working with. But remember to stay positive and ask for tips or ask any questions you may have—try not to complain.

A young, homesick camper wants to sit on your lap. You let her.
Correct response: **Yep, crossing the line.** This is for both counselors and CITs. This is similar to the sunscreen situation—this behavior can be seen as inappropriate. (Plus, when one camper sits on your lap, they will all want to. Don’t let campers feel left out, it’s easy for them to think you are playing favorites.)

You go alone with a camper to be her bathroom “buddy.”
Correct response: As a CIT, that’s okay. However, as a counselor, that is absolutely **crossing the line.** Although the likelihood of a girl making up a story about a counselor participating in any inappropriate behavior with her, that’s the reasoning for this policy. As a CIT you are not liable to Girl Scouts the way that counselors are (because they are employees). This is also why a CIT being alone with a counselor would be **crossing the line.** In addition, there are coverage ratios for counselors and their units. Typically, this is that two counselors must be with the unit at all times. Remember, as a CIT you cannot count as coverage because you are not over the age of 18.

Any other scenarios may be added as the CIT Director(s) see fit.

**ALL-CAMP PLANNING**

Tell the girls they will be planning an activity/game for the entire camp during their final week of the session. They will be allotted one hour. There are many “All-Camp” activities and games that are already created, but their job as a CIT group is to create a completely original game that will appeal to all age groups. This year the session’s theme is Harry Potter, so their challenge is to create and lead a game that fits this theme, with minimal help from the CIT Director(s) or other counselors. They won’t be given any specific time to plan for this event and they will have to find time in their session to plan for it. Time to learn what juggling responsibilities looks like as a camp counselor!
Earlier in the day, the CITs will have tried out their teamwork skills on the Team’s Course at camp. Start out this training by debriefing about the experience. In a group discussion, talk about what went well and what didn’t. Remember to give the girls specific examples of what was positive group/leader behavior and what was negative (but refrain from using names and singling out CITs). Talk about what goals the Team’s Course aims to achieve and how it can be used for fun as well as a tool. From here, lead into the activities in the training.

**ACTIVITY: “Define Leadership”**

Get the girls thinking about leadership. Find out what they already know about it, how they define the term, and what they consider good leadership skills or qualities. Spread out a large piece of paper and write “LEADERSHIP” in large letters in the center of it. Give the girls 5-7 minutes to decorate the poster by brainstorming about leadership. Have them be creative by writing or depicting their definitions, qualities of good leadership, examples of good leaders, etc. Discuss what they wrote or drew. At the end of the training, give them a few extra minutes to add new things to the poster. When it’s finished, hang it somewhere where the whole camp can see it.

**ACTIVITY: “Bird Quiz”**

The girls need to understand that leadership comes in a variety of forms, and that anyone can be a leader—that leadership abilities look different in everyone, based on their personality type. Help them realize that a variety of leadership skills in a group setting maximizes group potential. To get an idea about their own leadership style and how they contribute to groups as a leader, have them complete the DOPE “Bird Quiz.” This quiz will help them identify and understand their personality type and how it translates into leadership style. The results of the quiz also give suggestions for how to work effectively with people of other leadership styles. Using another piece of poster board, have the CITs (and the CIT Director(s)) plot their personality/leadership style results from the DOPE quiz on a coordinate plane so that everyone can see the variety of leadership skills and abilities that their own group possesses.

**ACTIVITY: “Group Dynamics Role Play”**

This activity is designed to help the CITs understand Bruce Tuckman’s famous model of team formation and group development (1965). Divide the girls into four groups, and assign each small group a stage of the model. Give each group the definition/information
about their assigned stage and give them about 5 minutes to come up with a short role play to teach the rest of the CITs about it. The stages are defined and explained as followed:

**Stage 1: Forming**
In this stage, most team members are positive and polite. Some are anxious, as they haven’t fully understood what work the team will do. Others are simply excited about the task ahead. As leader, you play a dominant role at this stage, because team members’ roles and responsibilities aren’t clear.

**Stage 2: Storming**
This is the stage where many teams fail. Storming often starts where there is a conflict between team members’ natural working styles. People may work in different ways for all sorts of reasons, but if differing working styles cause unforeseen problems, they may become frustrated. If you haven’t defined clearly how the team will work, people may feel overwhelmed by their workload, or they could be uncomfortable with the approach you’re using. Some may question the worth of the team’s goal, and they may resist taking on tasks. Team members who stick with the task at hand may experience stress, particularly as they don’t have the support of established processes, or strong relationships with their colleagues.

**Stage 3: Norming**
This is when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues’ strengths, and respect your authority as a leader. Now that your team members know one another better, they may socialize together, and they are able to ask each other for help and provide constructive feedback. People develop a stronger commitment to the team goal, and you start to see good progress towards it.

**Stage 4: Performing**
The team reaches the performing stage when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the team’s goal. The structures and processes that you have set up support this well. As leader, you can delegate much of your work, and you can concentrate on developing team members. It feels easy to be part of the team at this stage, and people who join or leave won’t disrupt performance.
Program Sheet 3: “Canoe Learn and Teach”

The boating director will be needed for this program as it involved specific knowledge of boating skill instruction. Before the lesson, the boating director will need to be briefed about the goals and objectives of this lesson. This is a high-energy activity that require lots of active participation from the CITs, which is why it was placed in the beginning of the session, before girls are too burnt out.

LEARN TO CANOE

Some of the CITs may not have much experience with boating or paddling. This is why the first part of this lesson is important. The boating instructor will give a basic lesson in paddling and give pointers on how to teach these skills to a group of younger girls. This will involve a combination of skills both on land and in the water. This portion of the lesson will last about 45 minutes to an hour.

TEACH BASIC CANOEING

Immediately after learning and/or perfecting these skills, the CITs will have the challenge of teaching a canoeing lesson to a group of younger campers. The presence of the boating instructor is important for this portion, too, however it is your job to be sure she is supervising and offering help when needed while largely leaving the instruction up to the CITs. The CITs will need to develop the lesson keeping in mind the age group of girls and using the Three Processes as noted in the CIT Framework section on page 8 of this manual. Remember that for girls who may not have a lot of prior experience with paddling, this can be an intimidating and possibly frustrating experience. Be prepared to offer support. Remember to debrief about the experience later!

Purpose/Objectives:
- to teach CITs basic boating skills
- to teach CITs how to teach basic boating skills to a younger age group
- CITs implement a boating lesson for younger girls

Materials Needed:
- PFDs
- canoes
- paddles
- *req* boating director

Location:
- Paddle Beach

Time Estimate:
- 2 hours

“Canoe Learn and Teach” is designed to fulfill the requirements of the High-Quality Experience component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
**Program Sheet 4: “Song, Game, and Activity Planning”**

This training will be led into by a “Wild Walk” adventure and a “Poo Party” at the shower house. These are both activities geared toward younger girls, typically in early elementary school. Explain to the CITs why these activities are good for this age group:

**Wild Walk** – gets girls in the dirt, experiencing nature in a way they are not used to; gets them out of their comfort zone; encourages imagination and hands-on, active play

**‘Poo Party** – makes getting clean fun; helps counselors be sure girls are showering well

**GIRL SCOUT AGE GROUPS**

Discuss with the CITs differences in age groups, including emotional, psychological, and physical changes between levels in Girl Scouting. Talk about challenges with each age group and how to pick camp songs, games, crafts, and activities that are appropriate for each. Remember that girls at the CIT age level love to hear your funny or disastrous stories and past experiences as a camp counselor. Talk about how you can cater specific activities to achieve goals as a camp counselor, like the example of a ‘Poo Party. Typical characteristics of Girl Scout age groups are as follows:

**Daisies (K-1st grade)**

Girls this age are still very young and typically pretty dependent on adults. They need to be told exactly what to do and how to do it and may need assistance for some activities, particularly with hygiene or kapers. Attention spans are short for this age group while energy levels are extremely high, so plan for extremely hands-on activities. They will give up easily on difficult or complex tasks, but they will love to do simple games and activities over and over again. Games for this age level should have few rules that are easy to understand and follow. Repeat songs are best for this age group because they are not good at memorization yet.

**Brownies (2nd-3rd grade)**

Girls this age are just starting to develop a better understanding of the world and are beginning to form their own thoughts and opinions about things. They talk a mile a minute, love to show off, and ask questions constantly. They often have little respect for personal space. While games and activities do not have to be quite as simple as those for Daisies, the rules and directions should still be simple and to the point. Brownies get frustrated easily. Songs that repeat parts often appeal to Brownies because they are easy to memorize.

**Juniors (4th-5th grade)**

**Purpose/Objectives:**
- to understand differences in age groups
- to learn how to plan song, games, and activities that cater correctly to each age group

**Materials Needed:**
- a hose
- biodegradable soap

**Location:**
- Shower House

**Time Estimate:**
- 1 hour

“Song, Game, and Activity Planning” is designed to fulfill the requirements of the Camper Development component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
At this age, girls will want to learn new skills and start challenging themselves. Don’t underestimate their abilities! Their attention spans are getting longer, but they may be more hesitant to try new or unfamiliar activities. Bullying tends to be a problem with this age group because girls are becoming more aware of each other’s differences. It is important to watch for signs of bullying.

**Cadettes (6th-8th grade)**

At this age, girls are pubescent and probably becoming more self-conscious about themselves and their bodies. Providing an accepting atmosphere that promotes self-growth and discovery is important when working with this age group. Cliques are very prevalent at this age, and being sure to mix up groups will be good to help alleviate this problem because girls this age are looking for acceptance. A common mindset for this age group is the “I’m too cool/old for this” attitude. They often no longer want to participate in games or activities that seem too juvenile and often don’t want to subject themselves to situations in which they might be the center of attention. Remember that girls in this age group may be at very different levels of development.

**Seniors (9th-10th grade), Ambassadors (11th-12th grade)**

High school girls are forming more advanced and complex views of the world. They recognize that they are getting close to adulthood but have gotten past the “I’m too cool for this” phase. They like building upon skills they already have and generally have more fun if they are being challenged. Girls this age love “chill” time when they can relax and talk while doing more low-key activities. They might need more motivation to do high-activity objectives if they have had an excess of this time. It is important to balance these kinds of activities. These girls are able to recognize the value in various activities and building a community is highly important to them. Remember that role models are important to them, and they are watching your every move!

**ACTIVITY: “Design a Program”**

Close out this training by dividing the girls into four groups and assigning them age groups: Daisy/Brownie, Junior, Cadette, Senior/Ambassador. Let them apply what they’ve learned by coming up with an example of a song, game, craft, and activity (with a purpose) for their assigned age group. Give them five minutes to do so, then bring the group back together and have the girls share their examples and have a group discussion of the pros/cons of each of their examples.
Program Sheet 5: “Safety Procedures”

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

This training will be taught by the camp director. This is a great opportunity for the CITs to get to know the administrative staff members better and learn a little about what it is like to be an employee. For the most part, the job of the camp director will be to explain the EAPs of fire, severe weather, and missing camper emergencies in order to prepare the CITs for a “random” emergency drill sometime during the session. When the drill occurs, the CITs will need to identify the code or alarm sound to signify the type of drill, and then respond to the EAP accordingly.

RISK AUDITS

Introduce the CITs’ new responsibility for safety precautions for the rest of the session and beyond. A Risk Audit is simply an assessment of risk for participating in a particular activity in a particular area. Let the CITs know that they will be doing informal Risk Audits before starting any activity, and at any given time during the activity. The idea is to train the girls to constantly be on the lookout for safety concerns, as they would need to do as a camp counselor. For the first few Risk Audits, verbally remind the CITs to do them, and guide them to look for the right things by asking questions (“Does anything, such as debris or objects, need to be cleared away to prevent injury?,” etc). As the week goes on, the goal is that you will no longer have to remind them, and they will automatically be looking for safety concerns on their own.

SAFETY CHECKPOINTS

As you wrap up the training, pass around an example of the GSUSA Safety Checkpoints for an activity that would be done at camp (example: canoeing, sailing) so that they girls can be familiarized with the official safety guidelines provided by GSUSA.

Purpose/Objectives:
- to learn about safety precautions as a camp staff member
- to learn the Emergency Action Plans of the camp
- prepare for an emergency drill
- introduce Risk Audits
- introduce Safety Checkpoints

Materials Needed:
- *req* camp director
- example of Safety Checkpoints

Location:
- lodge porch or director’s cabin porch

Time Estimate:
- 30 mins

“Safety Procedures” is designed to fulfill the requirements of the Safety component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
**Program Sheet 6: “Intro to Outdoors”**

This purpose of this training session is primarily to help the CITs prepare for their overnight trip on Land Between the Lakes. They will learn how to properly plan, pack, and prepare for a two-night overnight trip to learn new outdoor skills as well as to build upon prior knowledge and skills.

During unit time on the day of arrival at BCAC, the CITs will help plan meals, the method of travel, and a route for their overnight trip. Based on these factors, the girls will have to learn how to pack their gear and food effectively. They will also help counselors fill out paperwork (trip itineraries and gear requisites) for their trip so they can see the counselors’ responsibilities regarding preparation for an overnight trip. They will also learn some basic backcountry etiquette for fires and cooking, shelter making, anchoring, and going to the bathroom.

**OVERNIGHT TRIP**

After learning the very basics of the required outdoor skills during the “Intro to Outdoors” training, the CITs will put them into practice with as little guidance from the CIT Director(s) as possible. They will learn three types of fire building (A-Frame, Log Cabin, and Teepee), and be given some tarps and parachord to build a shelter to sleep in. Every CIT should have the opportunity to try fire building, cooking, clean up, tent pitching/fire building, and all other backcountry skills. It is important to have a good understanding of all these skills before becoming an effective camp counselor at Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Resident Camps.

**Purpose/Objectives:**
- to prepare CITs for a backcountry camping trip
- to teach CITs counselor planning involved in backcountry camping trips
- to teach CITs outdoor etiquette
- to teach how to properly pack a trip bag

**Materials Needed:**
- dry bags / packs
- trip kit
- trip itineraries

**Location:**
- lodge porch/director’s cabin/program garage

**Time Estimate:**
- 1 hour

“Intro to the Outdoors” and “Overnight Trip” are designed to fulfill the requirements of the Outdoor Living component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
**Program Sheet 7: “Scout’s Own”**

Sunday mornings at camp are for sleeping in and having brunch. Sometimes, after brunch, the whole camp will gather together in a field or meadow to hold a “Scout’s Own” ceremony. GSUSA’s definition of a Scout's Own is: a girl-planned program that allows girls to explore their feelings around a topic, such as friendship or the Girl Scout Promise and Law, using spoken word, favorite songs, poetry, or other expressions. It is never a religious ceremony. As Girl Scouts is a secular organization that recognizes and celebrates all differences in faiths and traditions, it is important to note that an official Scout’s Own will not have any religious aspects. The exciting thing about a Scout’s Own is that there is no official script or format for this ceremony—the girls are free to design and structure the ceremony any way they like and it can be as formal or informal as they desire. The CITs will explore this Girl Scout tradition by planning one for the whole camp on Sunday morning. It can have a specific theme or central idea and the girls should be creative in its implementation in order to get girls actively involved and thinking about the topic in the ceremony. They are encouraged to find ways to incorporate meaningful songs, poems, or whatever they find relevant to the topic they choose.

**How to plan a Scout’s Own Ceremony**
(from Crossroads Service Unit in GS of Northern California)

1. Choose a theme, such as one of the Laws, the Promise, our country, people, citizenship, nature (forests, mountains, rivers), special occasions (Thanksgiving, First Day of Spring), local history
2. Make a list of the different ways you can show or tell the theme
3. Choose one idea to open the Scout’s Own
4. Organize order of the program
5. Decide who is to lead parts
6. Decide who is to lead girls to and from the Scout’s Own
7. Decide how to end the Scout’s Own

(See next page for an example)
**ACTIVITY: “Sundae Party”**

Sunday night, the girls will be participating in a Scout’s Own ceremony held by the CIT Directors. It is one designed to help girls think about their lives and how camp/Girl Scouts affects them in their “real life.” This activity will also be a model for the girls to see an example of an effective Scout’s Own, while having some fun with a break from responsibility and high-energy activities at camp. This ceremony will hopefully help girls get to know each other more and bring the group closer together.

Start by bringing the girls into the lodge/kitchen and sit them in a circle. You will pass around the bowls, ice cream, and toppings and as the girls make their Sundaes and add their toppings, there will be a correlating theme or discussion for each item they add onto their delicious treat.

**Bowls** – What is your foundation? What is the one thing that holds you together, the one thing you know will be there for you no matter what happens?

**Ice Cream Scoops** – What are three important themes in your life—three things that you consider and incorporate into all the decisions you make in your life?

**Chocolate Syrup, Hot Fudge, or Caramel** – What drowns you? What is the biggest challenge in your life?

**Spoon** – How do you overcome this/these challenges or try to make it/them better?

**Other Toppings** – Name five things that are a combination of things you like about yourself and things you have done that you are proud of.

**Sprinkles** – What are some of you favorite “little things” in life that never fail to make you smile? Think especially about the things you don’t appreciate as often as you should.
**Program Sheet 8: “Trail Clearing”**

Being a camp counselor isn’t only about working with the kids. An important part of camp staff is the manual maintenance labor to keep the equipment and land usable for the campers. Trail maintenance is a time-consuming job that camp counselors and other staff members rarely have time for, and eventually without maintenance the trails become unusable. This year, we have decided to have the CITs help clear old trails to make them usable again. This will ideally give them a sense of their value to the camp property and future.

**ACTIVITY: “Pontoon Boat Ride”**

After completion of their trail clearing service project, they will have a picnic lunch on the pontoon boat—and all of the food will start with the letter “P”! (Popcorn, pretzels, pink lemonade, pineapple, etc). It’s a “P Party!”

The purpose of this P-boat ride around Kentucky Lake is for the girls to learn the history of Kentucky Lake, Land Between the Lakes, and camp itself. The site manager will be able to give them a tour of the lake and explain its history to the girls. The goal is to help the CITs understand when and where camp began and how it got to be the way it is today.

**Purpose/Objectives:**
- to help girls feel like a part of camp life
- to do a service project for camp
- to learn about camp history

**Materials Needed:**
- gloves
- long pants and close-toed shoes
- trail clearing tools
- *req* food for “P Party”
- *req* site manager for p-boat ride

**Location:**
- Red Apple Trail or Fossil Point Trail
- Pontoon Boat

**Time Estimate:**
- 2.5 hours trail clearing
- 1 hour pontoon boat ride

“Trail Clearing” and “Pontoon Boat Ride” are designed to fulfill the requirements of the **Camp Life** component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
Everyone likes a little friendly competition. It’s time to mix up the girls into teams and put their knowledge of camp and camp skills to the test in a fun, exciting, challenging way!

Planning of this is largely up to the CIT Director(s), who know what supplies and resources are available for writing the perfect clues and creating the perfect obstacles for an epic, unforgettable Amazing Race.

Ideas for obstacles and activities include:

- completion of a Team’s Course objective
- paddling across the bay and back
- hiding puzzle pieces around a building or campsite to be pieced together for a riddle
- setting a table to match a model table
- building a steady shelter that can hold two team members using only nature items
- building a fire tall enough to burn a suspended string

Be creative! And make this challenging but fun!

**Purpose/Objectives:**
- friendly competition
- put their skills/knowledge to the test
- team building

**Materials Needed:**
- team bandanas
- clues
- whatever supplies are needed

**Location:**
- all over camp

**Time Estimate:**
- 2 hours
**Program Sheet 10: “Diversity Training”**

*remember that the emergency drill will occur at some point during this training session*

At the start of this training session, tell the CITs that this morning they will be talking about a potentially sensitive subject and that their maturity for this training is vital. However, they will hopefully still have fun. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience requires that CITs can embrace a diverse and accepting environment at camp. And to do this, as part of their training they have to be taught to be conscious of thoughts they have about others.

**ACTIVITY: “First Impressions”**

This activity will not be effective if any of the girls in the group have done it before, so be sure to gauge if this activity or the alternate (see below) should be used. Before the training session, the CIT Director(s) will make a powerpoint of 20 slides. The first ten will be pictures of people you know (BUT, it is important that the girls don’t know this). Try to use pictures that don’t fit their real personality well. As each slide is shown, have the CITs describe the person in the picture, being as honest as possible. Using a large piece of paper at the front of the room, write down phrases and words they use to describe the person. Example:

They might say things like:
- spoiled, bratty
- slutty
- self-centered
- rich
- dumb blonde
- only cares about appearances
- backstabbing friend
- model
- parties a lot

**Purpose/Objectives:**
- to exemplify “fun with purpose”
- to remind girls to avoid stereotypes when working with girls
- to help girls discover how they can create a camp environment where everyone can be accepted

**Materials Needed:**
- powerpoint and projector
- large paper
- markers
- band aids

**Location:**
- great room or lodge basement

**Time Estimate:**
- 1.5 hours

“Diversity Training” is designed to fulfill the requirements of *The Girl Scout Leadership Experience* component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
The next ten slides will be pictures of the same ten people, but pictures that suit them better. You will reveal the person’s name and some information about them.

Example:

This is my friend, Emily. She is 20 years old and an Honors College student on scholarship at Western Kentucky University. Her dorm room is covered in Hello Kitty and Disney princess paraphernalia. She plays guitar and piano and is a music major and psychology minor who sings in an acapella group. She volunteers with special needs college students and wants to be a music therapist after she graduates. She either buys her clothes at Goodwill or makes them herself. She works at a Toyota manufacturing plant, loves babies, and studied abroad in Salzburg, Austria.

The idea is to help girls be aware of the judgments they make when they meet someone for the first time. At camp, we only see one aspect of that camper’s life. We have to remember that there is more than what meets the eye and embrace everyone’s talents and abilities.

**ALTERNATE (OR ADDITIONAL) ACTIVITY: “Bumper Stickers”**

If some of the girls have done the powerpoint activity before, the ending would be spoiled for them. So, there is an alternate activity to teach about stereotypes. Divide the girls into four groups and give them each a list of “bumper sticker” sayings. Give them a few minutes in their groups to come up with a description of the car’s owner, what they do, what they look like, what the car looks like, etc.

**CAR 1:**
“Save the whales”
“Fair trade coffee”
“Meat is murder”
“Shop local”
“Dumbledore’s Army”
“The mountains are calling”

**CAR 2:**
“Pro-life”
“No-bama”
“Baby on Board”
“John 3:16”
Stick figure family
“On Pointe Ballet Studio”

**CAR 3:**
“May the force be with you”
“E=MC^2”
“Comic Con”
“I <3 My Rescue”
“You’ve Cat To Be Kitten Me Right Meow”

**CAR 4:**
A monogram
Greek letters
“Girls Just Wanna Have Fun”
“Keep Calm and Be Fabulous”
Breast Cancer Ribbon
ACTIVITY: “Camp Heals”

After getting girls to think about stereotypes, it is time to help them figure out how, as a camp counselor, they can create an accepting environment for all girls. For this activity, lay out a large piece of paper on the ground and have the CITs trace the outline of someone. Give them markers and 2-3 minutes to write words or phrases of something that might make someone feel like an outcast or something negative a girl might feel about herself (ex: fat, ugly, stupid, insecure, depressed, eating disorder, disability, unsafe home life, non-traditional family, etc). Then give them a box of band-aids. For every phrase or word that is written on the outline, they must discuss a way that camp can be an accepting place for these girls to feel better about themselves and how, as a camp counselor, they can work to create this environment. Once they figure out a solution or idea, they can put a band-aid on that word or phrase.
Program Sheet 11:
“Time Capsule”

GSUSA requires working toward a Journey for CIT 1 certification. While it is difficult to find much time to complete Journey requirements in a camp session, many of the activities in a Journey can be modified to fit a camp setting. Counselors sometimes have to modify these Journey requirements for camp sessions, and so this is practice for the CITs.

A suggested Journey activity that can be easily modified in a way to express and celebrate camp spirit is for the CITS to lead the creation of a time capsule. The details of this activity are outlined in Chapter 5 of the “Mission: Sisterhood!” Senior Journey book from the It’s Your Story—Tell It! leadership series. Have the CITs look at this component and adapt it to camp life to get the campers involved in making a time capsule!

Purpose/Objectives:
- to complete a Journey requirement

Materials Needed:
- “Mission: Sisterhood!” Senior Journey in the It’s Your Story—Tell It! series

Location:
- arts and crafts building

Time Estimate:
- 30 mins – 1 hour

“Time Capsule” is designed to fulfill the requirements of the Journeys component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
Program Sheet 12:
“Naming Ceremony”

It is the CIT Director(s) responsibility to prepare a small naming ceremony for the CITs during their last dinner at Bear Creek, before they move on to being with their unit assignments at Pennyroyal. The purpose is to celebrate their hard work and present them with the honor of getting to begin using their camp name. They are on their way to becoming great camp counselors!

Traditionally, the CIT Director(s) will make name tags for each of the CITs to use for the rest of the session, or even in the future as a camp counselor. Be creative and let the camp spirit shine through! A suggestion/example would be to woodburn their new camp names into a tree cookie. You want something that looks nice and is sustainable—this is a big deal for these girls! Make them feel as special as they are!

Purpose/Objectives:
- to celebrate the hard work of the CITs for the first half of the session
- to announce their camp names

Materials Needed:
- name tags

Location:
- Dining Hall

Time Estimate:
- 5-10 minutes during dinner
Program Sheet 13: “Popcorn with a Purpose”

The girls just got back from a long backcountry camping trip. They will be tired! As a surprise treat, they can pack up their stuff and have it ready to go for the morning, and bring their sleep stuff up to the lodge. Set up a movie and make them popcorn while they get their beds made for the night. It’s a good way to have everyone together for a low-key activity on the last night before their weekend at home. The movie is fun but must have a “purpose”—so we carefully select movies with appropriate discussion topics!

Mean Girls (97 mins, PG-13)
Cady Heron is a hit with The Plastics, the A-list girl clique at her new school, until she makes the mistake of falling for Aaron Samuels, the ex-boyfriend of alpha Plastic Regina George. Bear Creek has this movie in a hard copy. Discussion topic for this movie: Bullying!

Heavyweights (100 mins, PG)
Plump kids are lured into joining a posh fat camp with the promise of quick weight loss and good times, only to find that the facility is a woodland hellhole run by a psycho ex-fitness instructor. Bear Creek has this movie in a hard copy. Discussion topic for this movie: Camp is empowering!

Camp (109 mins, PG-13)
To impress a potential client, financial advisor Ken Matthews signs up to be a counselor at a camp for kids in the foster system. He is paired with Eli, a 10 year-old determined to hate camp. However, when Ken discovers Eli’s dark past, his apathy turns to compassion. But is he too late to help the scared boy nobody wants? Available on Netflix. Discussion topic for this movie: Working with less fortunate kids is difficult but rewarding.

Program Sheet 14: “Unit Time Prep”

Purpose/Objectives:
- to relax!

Materials Needed:
- mattresses
- popcorn
- sleep stuff
- TV or projector
- movie

Location:
- great room, lodge porch, or lodge basement

Time Estimate:
- 1.5 hours
All of the preparation the CITs went through at BCAC is being put to the test in their hands-on experience this week in units at Pennyroyal. Immediately upon arrival, they will be given their unit assignments and will meet with their unit counselors that night to assist in unit planning and requisition paperwork.

Set aside time to talk to the girls as a group to remind them of their expectations when working with units. Debrief with them their first experience, working with the counselors in their assigned unit. Describe to them their responsibilities and encourage them to ask questions or express concerns. Let them know that you will be circulating from unit to unit throughout the day to observe their behavior and offer help. Encourage them to talk to their unit counselors and be comfortable asking them for help.

Don’t forget to meet with the unit counselors at the start of the session to describe what kind of experience you want the CITs to have. In addition, let them know that you will be asking for their observations when filling out the CITs final evaluations.

| Purpose/Objectives: | - to prepare girls for Unit Time  
|                     | - to check in with CITs  
|                     | - to answer any questions  
|                     | - prepare unit staff to work with CITs |
| Materials Needed:   | - unit assignments |
| Location:           | - unit shelter |
| Time Estimate:      | - 30-45 mins |

“Unit Time” is designed to fulfill the requirements of the Practical Experience component of the GSUSA CIT certification.
**Program Sheet 15: “Candle Ceremony”**

The girls have made it through an intensive and demanding program. It’s time to celebrate and say goodbye (until next summer of course). The Juliette Low “Eternal Flame Pass the Light Candle Ceremony” is a tradition passed down by generations of Girl Scout troop leaders to their girls as they graduate high school. You will need to ask the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana Council to supply you with the candles. Go somewhere sentimental to your unit and be ready for tears to flow as you prepare to say to your sisters in scouting, until next summer.

The script for the candle ceremony is as follows:
(taken from scoutingweb.org)

Long ago a special ceremony was formed. Juliette Low wanted her original girls to carry a special spark with them as their Scout group broke up. Some from the troop were moving away, working to help their families or wanted to help a group of girls a little younger than themselves. But whatever their reasons, Juliette knew no other group would ever quite be the same. As the girls stood in a circle holding candles (they had made), Juliette knew what spark it was that she wanted to pass on. She lit her candle and spoke.

*(begin the circle of lighting the candles, pass the flame around, lighting them one by one)* With this candle I give you each something very special to pass on. As I light the candle on my right I ask each of you to light the candle to your right and pass it on. I want you to carry this thought with you wherever you go. This is the ETERNAL FLAME for Girl Scouts. Each of you after having a lit candle before you will repeat the Girl Scout Promise with me, then pause and recall a few of the things we have done together as a group. I will hold my candle up and as I do so you will all raise yours and we will blow them out together. Before we separate from our circle, I want to ask you to keep this candle as a very special candle. It is not to be used for any purpose but passing on the ETERNAL FLAME. You may use it in other Girl Scout ceremonies such as camps, encampments, campfires, bridging, or court of awards ceremonies. I’m glad we were able to start a special tradition based on our ETERNAL FLAME.*

I light this candle for Juliette Low, our Girl Scout founder. Even though we lost the personal presence of our founder in 1927, her spirit has led us constantly to greater growth and fellowship. Today there are over three and a half million Girl Scouts in the United States. Juliette Low’s heart’s desire was to bring love and understanding to all girls in every land. Her dream is coming true, for today Girl Scouts and Girl Guides have members around the world. I light this candle to our founder, Juliette Low and to all Girl Scouts and Girl Guides the world over.

*(share a special story or song to give the girls a personalized message to carry with them beyond camp. When the ceremony is over, blow out your candles together and take a moment in silence.)*

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**Purpose/Objectives:**
- to celebrate completion of the program

**Materials Needed:**
- candles from council
- a lighter
- love and friendship
- tears to cry
- a sentimental story or song to share

**Location:**
- Chigger Meadow / Inspiration Point / Greenpeace

**Time Estimate:**
- as long as it lasts
### Cit I Session Evaluation Sheet

**Camp name:**

**Please Indicate:**

1 = Strongly Disagree  
2 = Disagree  
3 = Neutral  
4 = Agree  
5 = Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I grew as a leader this session.</td>
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<td>Girl Scouts has more meaning to me after this session.</td>
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<td>I know how to teach something meaningful and make it fun.</td>
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<td>I can describe differences in age levels and I feel confident that I can</td>
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<td>work with girls of all ages.</td>
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<td>I can manage groups of girls.</td>
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<td>I can manage groups of my peers.</td>
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<td>I understand how to earn a Journey.</td>
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<td>I can customize a Journey requirement to suit a camp setting.</td>
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<td>I was given opportunities to plan activities for girls.</td>
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<td>If an emergency were to occur at camp right now, I would most likely</td>
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<td>know the appropriate way to respond.</td>
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<td>I learned new camping/outdoor skills this session.</td>
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<td>I improved/built upon my previous knowledge of camping/outdoor skills.</td>
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<td>I feel confident in my ability to teach camping/outdoor skills.</td>
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<td>I learned something new about camp history this session.</td>
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<td>I left a positive impact on camp this session.</td>
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<td>I had fun this session.</td>
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<td>I feel like I had a connection with the Cit Director(s).</td>
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<td>I would recommend this program to other girls my age.</td>
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<td>I feel ready to be a camp counselor.</td>
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<td>After this session, I am interested in being more involved in Girl Scouts</td>
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<td>outside of camp.</td>
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</table>
Please explain/give details for any “Performance Factors” that you marked Disagree or Strongly Disagree:

What did you find most effective about this program? Least?

What did you like best about the program? Least?

If you could change something about the program, what would it be? Why?

Are you interested in other areas of Girl Scouting? If so, please describe.

What are your plans for camp involvement next year/the future?

Anything else you’d like to share?