

Girl Scout Center

FAQ's

What is a GS Center?

A Girl Scout Center is a safe space that welcomes all girls (K-12th grade) from the surrounding community to participate in Girl Scouting. This program is designed as a space for girls, and those who support them, to learn more about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE).

The goal of a GS Center is to allow families to learn about Girl Scouting, meet other families in the area who are also interested in Girl Scouting, and help girls be connected to existing and/or forming troops in the area, and/or help families within the center to form their own volunteer-led troop to continue their Girl Scout journey outside of the Center.

Is this a troop?

GS Centers are designed to model a troop experience as closely as possible, however this is not a troop. GS Centers are led by Council Staff who are part of our GS Impact Team. Please see our *Girl Scout Experience* comparison chart for more information about the difference between a GS Center and a Volunteer-led Troop.

Are GS Centers permanent?

GS Centers are typically scheduled from September – May each year with the potential to continue the following year, however this is not guaranteed. GS Centers are placed strategically throughout our Council jurisdiction to serve areas with fewer existing volunteer-led troops to temporarily fill the gap. It is our goal to provide girls with an opportunity to still engage in Girl Scout programs while we work to cultivate new troop opportunities in the area. With support from our staff, we encourage families within the Center to form their own troops to continue the Girl Scout experience.

Is my girl a Girl Scout?

Yes, by registering to participate at a GS Center, your girl has become a Girl Scout Member for our current membership year. This means she can participate at the GS Center and explore Girl Scouting independently by attending other Council programs. See our [Event Calendar](#) on the GSACPC website for upcoming programs.

What is a Girl Scout Level?

In Girl Scouts, girls are grouped by levels based on their current grade. GS Centers are considered a multi-level program because we are open to girls in grades K-12. Often, volunteer-led troops may choose to only serve 1 or 2 levels so that girls can focus on level-specific badges and programs.

Daisy: K-1

Junior: 4-5

Senior: 9-10

Brownie: 2-3

Cadette: 6-8

Ambassador: 11-12

Do I need to register as an adult?

To ensure we are creating a safe space for our Girl Scouts, we require that adults be registered as “Friends and Family” volunteers. You will also be asked to complete our Background Check and sign our Volunteer Agreement.

As an adult, how do I participate at the GS Center?

We ask all supportive adults who are attending a GS Center to get involved, much like parents do in a volunteer-led troop. Below are some examples of ways to support at a GS Center:

- Activity Leader
- Game/Song Leader
- Refreshments Coordinator
- Timekeeper
- Clean Up Leader

For more detail on these roles and other options available, see our 4 Her Promise sheet attached.

We also encourage any adults who would like to start their own troop or learn how to support an Independent Girl Member (IGM) to ask questions. We work with a great team of Membership Support Executives and Volunteer Support who will walk beside you on your path to becoming a Leader.

If I become a troop leader, am I taking over the GS Center?

No, the minimum requirement to form a new troop is 5 girls and 2 unrelated adults. We encourage you to network with other parents/guardians attending the GS Center to find a core group of girls/families to form a new troop. As the leader of a volunteer-led troop, you have more flexibility to work with a close-knit group of families to customize what works best for your troop (e.g. meeting day and time, number of meetings per month, meeting location, etc.).

How can I learn more about being a Troop Leader?

Each Service Unit, or geographical area, in our Council is supported by a Member Support Executive (MSE) who can provide resources and guidance for becoming a Troop Leader. Ask the staff team at your GS Center who your assigned MSE is, and they can put you in touch. You can also reach out to our Customer Care Team for additional assistance via reghelp@girlscoutsaz.org or 602-452-7030.

The Girl Scout Experience

GS Center

- **Life-long friendships:** Girls can meet other girls their age and grow together as they try new things and explore Girl Scouting.
- **Introductory GS Programs:** Girls will be introduced to GS traditions and activities to get a taste of the GS experience. Girls typically will not complete full badges, however they can be completed independently at home.
- **Meeting Frequency:** Schedules for GS Centers may vary by site but typically meet 1-2 times per month for approximately 1.5 hours.
- **Multi-level Programs:** GS Centers are open to girls in grades K-12. Programs are generally tied to patches or general GS traditions to accommodate all ages.
- **Product Programs:** Girls will have the opportunity to participate in the Product Programs (Fall Product/Cookie Program) as Independent Girl Members and will earn individual Program Credits to be used at the Council Shop, Summer Camp, and/or to attend other Council Programs.
- **Field Trips:** Due to staff capacity, this is not something we typically can accommodate at Centers.
- **Camping:** Centers may get a “Taste of Camp” by participating in a 1-day Outdoor Program at one of our camp properties.
- **Troop Travel:** Centers do not currently offer any travel opportunities.

Volunteer-led Troop

- **Life-long friendships:** Girls can meet other girls their age and grow together as they try new things and explore Girl Scouting.
- **Troop-specific Programs:** Girls decide what kinds of activities they want to focus on throughout the year.
- **Meeting Frequency:** Troops can determine how many times per month (weekly/bi-weekly/monthly) dependent on availability and troop needs.
- **Level-specific Programs:** While many troop leaders may choose to lead a multi-level troop, there is opportunity to narrow the age range served in a troop so that girls can focus on badges designed for their specific level/age.
- **Product Programs:** Girls can decide if their troop will participate in the Product Programs (Fall Product/Cookie Program) and how they choose to use their proceeds (Council Shop, Summer Camp, Council Programs, Travel, Field Trips, etc.).
- **Field Trips:** Girls and families are able to determine what places they want to visit to enhance their Girl Scouting experience.
- **Camping:** Troops can participate in their Service Unit’s encampment or coordinate a Troop encampment at any of our four camp properties.
- **Troop Travel:** Travel requires long-term planning and budgeting that is more easily executed at a Troop level. This can range from a group overnight trip to international travel planned out over years of saving.