

### Troop Camp Certification Level One

After completing Troop Camp Certification Level One, adult volunteers may guide girls on approved group outdoor experiences that include indoor sleeping or cabin camping and outdoor experiences **without** tent camping, knife safety, fire building and/or outdoor cooking (propane stoves, charcoal or wood fires).

Troop Camp Certification Level One is completed as **two independent studies**

Materials – *Troop Camp Certification Level 1 Part A and Part B, Girl Scouts Safety Activity Checkpoints, Volunteer Essentials.*

### Troop Camp Certification Level Two

After completing Troop Camp Certification Level Two, adult volunteers may guide girls on approved outdoor experiences that may include overnight tent camping, knife safety, fire building and outdoor cooking. To receive Troop Camp Certification Level Two – complete **TCC Level One** and complete the **Troop Camp Certification Weekend**.

### Troop Camp Certification Weekend

*Prerequisite – Troop Camp Certification (Troop Leader Orientation is recommended)*

*Prerequisite – Troop Camp Certification Level One*

This course provides hands on learning in fire building, outdoor cooking, knife safety and outdoor skills to complete Troop Camp Certification Level Two.

Materials – *Girl Scouts*

*Safety Activity Checkpoints*

*Volunteer Essentials*

Packing List will be emailed to participants after they have registered.

**note:** Volunteers who have completed GSSOAZ Troop Camp Certification prior to September, 2011 are not required to re-certify.

Completion of the Qualified Troop Camper (QTC) course offered by Girl Scouts Arizona – Cactus Pines Council will be accepted as completion of Troop Camp Certification at Girl Scouts–Southern Arizona Council. If you have completed QTC, please contact the Volunteerism Team to arrange for a GSSOAZ Troop Camp Certification card.

Visit <http://girlscoutsoaz.org/> for a course schedule and to register for Volunteer Learning events.

### Troop Camp Certification Level 1 Independent Study – Part A

**Pre-Requisite:** None. Troop Leader Orientation Recommended

**Instructions:** Read *Troop Camp Certification Part A* and then answer the review questions. An answer sheet is provided. Submit your answer sheet to GSSOAZ, Attn: Volunteerism Team, 4300 E. Broadway Blvd, Tucson AZ, 85711 or email to [troopsupport@girlscoutsssoaz.org](mailto:troopsupport@girlscoutsssoaz.org)

**You will need the following resources to complete the independent study:**

- » [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) – A volunteer resource on our council website

Or print and send the completed review to GSSOAZ Volunteerism Team:

Fax : 520-795-3318  
Mail: Girl Scouts–Southern Arizona Council  
Attn: Volunteerism Team  
4300 E. Broadway  
Tucson, AZ 85711

You will receive notification of the results of your review within two weeks of submitting the review for part A and part B.

Now you're ready to move on to the training. Enjoy!

### Course Objectives

By the end of the training the participant will be able to:

- » Explain the seven Leave No Trace principles.
- » Determine their girls' camping experience level and plan for skill progression.
- » Describe appropriate clothing and packing considerations for outdoor activities.
- » List the steps required to plan a safe outdoor experience

### Content

- » Why Camp? The Value of Girl Scout Camping
- » Progression in the Out of Doors
- » Girl Readiness for Camping
- » Health and Safety
- » What to Wear
- » Introduction to Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics

### Why Camp?

#### The Value of Girl Scout Camping

The value of a camping experience in a girl's life is beyond measure. It is a time for creating memories that will last a lifetime. It has been an important component of the Girl Scout experience since the organization's inception. The outdoors provides the setting for girls:

- » to stretch their minds and muscles;
- » to appreciate the uniqueness and beauty of the world in which we live;
- » to exercise leadership;
- » to learn a wide variety of new skills;
- » to be challenged as individuals and as groups working toward a common goal.

Camping offers many opportunities for girls to grow in areas such as self-confidence, independence, leadership, new skills and interests, comradeship, and decision-making ability. They develop lifetime friendships; they live and participate in a community that recognizes differences; they discover the value of being in a safe, supportive environment. Camping offers not only adventure and challenge—but it's FUN!

Camp is also a good place for reflecting on the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

Camping techniques and ethics have changed dramatically since Juliette Low first took girls on an overnight adventure along the Savannah River. In the early days of camping, the wilderness was conquered with little thought about human impact on the natural environment.

Things have changed! Later in this training module, you will learn the principles of Leave No Trace Camping—practical conservation techniques designed to minimize impact on the environment. LNT should become an important and integral part of all outdoor activities in Girl Scouting.

#### The Girl Scout Program Emphasis

Camping and outdoor activities present a whole new opportunity for learning for girls. As adults in Girl Scouting, we want our girls to learn more than just how to tie a knot or how to pitch a tent. We want our girls to grow with that knowledge, to gain confidence, to work with others, to see how her actions affect others and to make good decisions. That's a lot to expect from simply learning to tie a square knot, isn't it?

As adults we have a longer vision, and we can see how something as seemingly simple as playing a game or roasting marshmallows with friends can help shape a girl's life. What are the reasons your girls want to go camping? And what is it that you hope girls will learn from a camping experience?

As a Girl Scout volunteer, your challenge is to take the activities the girls want to do and direct those activities to meet Girl Scout program outcomes. Try it... The girls want to go hiking... while they are hiking why not do some fun activities to learn about protecting the environment? Or your girls want to stay up all night... okay, grit your teeth, prepare for a sleepless night, and play team-building games or tackle a big service project or learn about the night sky and satellites...

### Progression in the Outdoors

#### Is your troop ready to camp?

Use this scale for an overall view of your group’s readiness. Place an X on the graph at the point where you believe your group’s readiness is located. Space is provided to make note of the overall skill level of your group and what needs to be worked on.

| Need More Preparation   | 1 -----> 10 | Ready for Adventure   |
|---|-------------|---|
| Adults/Parents/Leaders want to go camping or think they must – girls are “going along” or do not know of plans. |             | Girls have expressed interest in camping and want to go.  |
| Girls need familiarity and reassurance  |             | Girls are not afraid to be away from home and family (and the family is prepared to let her go) |
| Girls will sleep, eat, and play only with best friends  |             | Girls are willing to sleep, eat and play with all girls.  |
| Girls are easily upset and frightened   |             | Girls can cope with unknowns, (darkness, strange places, noises and bugs)                       |
| Girls change in the bathroom, one at a time   |             | Girls are comfortable living with little or no privacy  |
| Each girl or clique struggles to have their own way   |             | Girls cooperate and give in graciously.   |
| Girls are focused on their own needs  |             | Girls function as a member of a group   |
| Girls still need to develop the skills needed to enjoy a camping trip   |             | Girls have the necessary skills to enjoy a camping trip   |
| Our overall skill level:  |             |   |
| What we need to work on:  |             |   |

### Girl Readiness for Camping

Girl Scouts need to be prepared emotionally and physically, have proven competency in skills involved, and want to go troop camping. Use these readiness indicators as a checklist to determine if each girl in your troop is ready to go camping overnight:

#### Emotional Readiness

- » Is not afraid to be away from home and parents overnight
- » Wants to go
- » Is willing to sleep, eat and play with all girls, not just with best friends.
- » Can cope in a strange place
  - Darkness (no electricity)
  - Woods and night noises, spiders, bugs, and worms
- » Can manage with little or no privacy
- » Doesn't always have to have own way
- » Can function as a member of a group

#### Physical Readiness

(Accommodate girls' physical development and special needs)

- » Does not tire quickly
- » Is strong enough to carry own gear, bucket of water, pot of food, armload of wood.
- » Has strength and coordination needed for planned activities

#### Has Necessary Skills and Knowledge for the experience

May include the following:

- » Can plan a simple trip
- » Can plan a simple menu
- » Can use a hand operated can opener, grater, peeler, paring knife
- » Can read and follow a recipe and a kaper chart
- » Can wash dishes, clean up, and store food properly
- » Can build a fire and/or operate camp stove
- » Can dress properly for the weather
- » Can sweep the floor and clean a toilet
- » Knows how to operate a flashlight
- » Demonstrates a concern for safety
- » Can follow directions satisfactorily
- » Has been on a series of day trips, cookouts, and sleep outs
- » Can pack and keep track of her gear and roll and tie or stuff a sleeping bag

### Behavioral Expectations

Knowing what is expected ahead of time will help the girls behave in an appropriate way. With adult guidance, the girls should make their own group agreements as a troop. These may include the following:

- » Stay with the group, don't wander from camping area
- » Use the buddy system
- » If lost, stay where you are, and blow a whistle
- » Avoid contact with strangers
- » Report suspicious sounds, activities, or people to an adult
- » Follow safety rules
- » Complete campers on time
- » Respect other campers' property
- » Leave a place better than you found it
- » Make no unkind remarks
- » Be a friend to all

Remember this is a guideline! These standards are intended to ensure that each girl will feel capable and comfortable while on the campout and will have an enjoyable experience.

### Are you ready for camping?

You've taken a look at girl readiness. Are you ready? Ask yourself these questions and rate yourself on a scale of 1–5.

1–strongly disagree   2–somewhat disagree   3–somewhat agree   4–strongly agree   5–very strongly agree

- I feel comfortable with my role in planning outdoor activities with girls.
- Overnight experiences away from home are an important part of growing up for girls.
- I am comfortable with the idea of being responsible for the safety of a group of girls on outdoor adventures.
- I like to spend the night away from home.
- I know to where to find the Safety Activity Checkpoints and use them to ensure our troop follows Girl Scout safety guidelines.
- I feel confident with my outdoor skills
- I love the outdoors
- I can survive without my electronic marvels (i.e. MP3 player, blackberry, laptop, curling iron, blow dryer, microwave, etc.)
- I can survive a night without sleep
- I don't notice peas (or rocks) under my mattress
- Bugs and other critters are an interesting part of the outdoor experience.
- I have first aid/CPR training and/or have another troop volunteer as our First Aider
- My idea of roughing it is to stay in a four star hotel
- I look forward to helping girls learn to care for nature and become courageous and confident young women of character who make the world a better place.

Now you have some idea of what to expect. The Troop Camp Certification course is designed to provide you with the knowledge and tools that will help you prepare yourself and your girls for camping “the Girl Scout way”. So where do you begin?

### Progression in the Outdoors

If you have been in Girl Scouts for even a short time, you most likely have heard the term “progression”. We believe that girls enjoy experiences best if they have previously had other experiences to prepare them. This is particularly true when it comes to camping.

Taking a group of girls camping with no preparation is likely to lead to frustration and confusion on the part of both girls and adults. Here is an example of camping progression. It does not have to be followed exactly, but it does give a good idea of how to proceed in preparing girls for camping.

» **Look Out**

Your troop is just getting started to observe the out-of-doors. They do an activity that gets them looking out the window at nature.

» **Meet Out**

Your troop steps out of your meeting place to observe the sight, sounds, touch, and smell of nature. They learn nature songs and games. They learn about protecting and improving the world around them.

» **Move Out**

Your troop takes a walk around the block to see what they can see. They do an activity to help them explore nature a short distance from their homes.

» **Explore Out**

Your troop is ready to plan a hike. They learn what to wear and take, make a snack, and how to stay safe outdoors. They plan and take a hike.

» **Sleep Out**

Your troop is ready to sleep out. This is practice for going camping. They learn about camping gear and what to pack and eat. They plan an overnight close to home.

» **Cook Out**

You’re trained in fire building, stove use, and cooking outdoors. Your troop is ready to plan a cook out. They learn about fire safety, lighting a stove, building and putting out a fire, preparing a meal and cleaning up. They plan and cook a meal outdoors.

» **Camp Out**

Your troop is getting ready to camp out. They have done a sleep out. They learn about tents, knife use, and simple first aid. They plan and go on a camp out or group experience such as an encampment.

» **Travel Out**

You will want more specialized and advanced training for your troop to do more extensive outdoor travel such as backpacking.

### Girl Activities

#### **The Clean Sweep Obstacle Course Relay (Group Living)**

Make an obstacle course for each team to sweep around, under, and through. Scatter paper or, if outside, dry leaves along the course. Position one team member at the end of the course with a dustpan. The sweeper sweeps their dirt into the dustpan and the dustpan holder then runs to the trashcan lined with a plastic grocery bag and empties the dustpan.

There is another team member waiting at the trashcan that takes the bag out of the can, ties it up, runs to a cardboard box labeled dumpster, and deposits the trash. Another team member is waiting at the dumpster and when the trash is deposited, they run back to the starting place where there is a bucket of water, toilet brush and a squirt bottle of water. They squirt the water around the rim of the bucket, brush the inside of the bucket then ring a bell. First team to ring the bell wins. (They have now learned to sweep the floor, empty the trash, and clean a toilet.)

#### **Bug Detective Walk**

Divide your troop up into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a magnifying glass and a notebook and pencil. Tell your girls that you are going on a hike to look for bugs. If they find a harmless bug, stop and look at it through the magnifying glass and record the number of legs, how many body sections it has, and does it have antennae or wings.

Take a short walk around your meeting place or in a park. Make sure you define the boundaries of where the girls can go. After time enough has elapsed to observe a few bugs, blow a whistle for everyone to meet at a central place. Have insect identification books available for girls to look up their bugs. Then have them share their observances.



### Handling Girls' Fears

You have used a progression of experiences to enhance the girls' readiness, prepared them with skills, and practiced those skills in your meeting. Some ways to deal with challenges for which the girls may not be ready:

- » Create a safe, non-threatening environment.
- » Recognize that girls come from different backgrounds.
- » Help the girls set group agreements (safety rules, no unkind remarks, everyone helps)
- » Let girls know what to expect (night noises, kapers, caring for own belongings, bathroom facilities)
- » Plan activities to help girls get over their fears and build excitement for camping (for example: stargazing, night hikes, or a bug experience)
- » Plan a day trip for the troop to visit camp area prior to the trip, if possible

### Keeping Girls Engaged

Girls plan the activity. Keeping their grade level abilities in mind, encourage girls to take active leadership roles in organizing the details of the activity, planning menus and establishing group agreements for living and on-site activities. One of the key processes in Girl Scouting that builds leadership skills for girls is that activities are girl led.

### When the Trip is Over; Evaluate the Activity

Outdoor activities are learning and growing experiences. To gain the full value from an outdoor activity the girls should talk about what they did, what they learned, what they would change if they went again. Applying the lessons learned to the next activity is a sure sign that this experience was worthwhile.

Then plan another trip reinforcing what they liked and working on what needed improvement. Be sure to incorporate further progressive steps to help the girls gain more skills and grow in their experience.

Remember: Practice, practice, and practice! If the girls know the skills before you go, the trip will be a breeze.

### Health and Safety in the Outdoors

#### » Read *Safety Activity Checkpoints – Group Camping*

#### **Plan for Safety First**

How can you, as a Girl Scout volunteer, determine whether an activity is safe and appropriate? Good judgment and common sense often dictate the answer. What is safe in one circumstance may not be safe in another. An incoming storm, for example, might force you to assess or discontinue an activity. If you are uncertain about the safety of an activity, call your council staff with full details and don't proceed without approval. Err on the side of caution and make the safety of girls your most important consideration. Prior to any activity, read the specific Safety Activity Checkpoints (available on your council's Website or from your support team in some other format) related to any activity you plan to do with girls.

When planning activities with girls, note the abilities of each girl and carefully consider the progression of skills from the easiest part to the most difficult. Make sure the complexity of the activity does not exceed girls' individual skills—bear in mind that skill levels decline when people are tired, hungry, or under stress. Also use activities as opportunities for building teamwork, which is one of the outcomes for the connect key in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

#### **Security and Risk Management**

More and more in today's world, leaders need to consider not only how to keep the girls safe from accidents but also safe from other people.

Consider the items below to help ensure a safe trip:

- » Girls should always use the buddy system (stay with a buddy at all times).
- » Train the girls on how to react to a stranger in the campsite.
- » Plan for proper adult supervision. Remember the girl/adult ratio when you leave your meeting place. You may need more adults along.
- » Train the extra adults! You let the girls know what is expected of them; do the same with the adults!
- » If you are at a public park or campsite, check with the supervisor or local law enforcement on the security history of the campsite. Would they camp there with young girls?
- » Before you go, inform law enforcement officials of where you plan to camp. Ask if they can increase patrols in the area.

If at all possible, visit the site before you go with girls. Look for:

- » fencing or other perimeter security
- » location of telephone and site manager's office
- » available lighting
- » distance from tent sites to toilet facilities
- » whether tents can be pitched within sight of each other
- » closeness of tent sites to roads or other boundaries
- » nearby parking so that you can safely store your equipment in your car
- » what other groups will use the campground when you are there
- » other public buildings nearby, and do they make you more or less comfortable with the site? (for example, would you feel safer knowing the sheriff's office or a bar was ¼ mile away?)
- » availability of cell phone coverage at this site?
- » Firearms are a danger to the girls. If you feel you need firearms for protection at the site, choose another site. Safety Activity Checkpoints requires that firearms be left at home.
- » Leave pets at home. You'll want to focus on your Girl Scouts. Imagine how torn you'd be if something happened to your pet, but your responsibility was to your girls first.
- » Develop an alarm system to signal your girls in an emergency.
- » Design a plan to evacuate the girls if an emergency arises (flooding, for example). Do you have enough cars? If not, how will you quickly arrange transportation?
- » If males accompany the group, they will need separate sleeping and toilet facilities.

## Girl Activities

Do these activities before taking girls camping.

### Use impromptu skits to discuss and practice ways to stay safe:

- » staying with a buddy (the buddy system)
- » what to do if there's a stranger in camp
- » what is okay to tell a stranger
- » staying with the group
- » what to do if you get separated from the group
- » how to help yourself be "found"

### Develop an alarm system.

An example is to give each girl a whistle to wear around her neck. (I know, you're rolling your eyes at the imagined racket! You might designate two full minutes for the girls to blow the whistles as soon as they get them. You know they want to, so roll with it!) Set up an emergency signal plan. Practice using whistles. See "Staying Found".

### Staying Found

When taking girls outdoors, it is important to teach them good safety skills. Practice safety procedures with girls until they can teach someone else. Nobody intends to become lost, but if they do here are some steps to follow.

- » Stop as soon as you realize you are lost.
- » Calm down. Don't panic
- » Think. Try to figure out where you are or where you have been. Does anything look familiar?
- » Settle. Provide for protection for yourself. Find or make a shelter. Leave at least two signals that can be seen by others.
- » Attract attention.

Using whistles is a good way to attract attention and signal for help. Be sure that you only use whistles in an emergency, especially on council property. Camp Managers take whistle signals very seriously and will assume that you need help.

**Everyone should have a whistle on a planned outdoor activity.** (Tuck the safety cord inside your shirt to make sure it doesn't catch on objects during activities.)

Prepare the girls by having them learn the proper use for whistles and making sure they do not use them unless they really need help.

The following is the universal code for help.

- » **Three short toots** – I need help
- » **Two short toots** – I am coming (responder)
- » **One long toot** – pay attention/listen

If it becomes necessary for someone to use their whistle, be sure to remind them to listen for a response and keep using their whistle when signaling. Example: A lost person whistles three short toots; Searcher whistles two short toots back. They repeat the signals back and forth and until the lost person is found. It is better for the lost person to remain in place until the searchers find them.

### Girl Activity

#### Whistle Hide and Seek

This game is played in groups of three at a time to practice being found. One girl is "lost" and hides. Another girl is the searcher. The searcher wears a blindfold while the third person acts as guide to make sure she doesn't trip while trying to locate the "lost" girl. The person to be found blasts three short toots on her whistle and the searcher replies with two toots as she tries to find the hidden girl. The guide stays with the searcher to make sure she doesn't trip.

Once found, rotate so that everyone has a turn to play each role.

### Health Issues

Follow Safety Activity Checkpoints for First Aider requirements. All adults and girls should practice how to recognize potentially harmful plants and animals as well as how to respond to illness or injury.

- » **Dehydration** – Always drink plenty of water. Even on cool days, a lot of moisture is lost and may go unnoticed. Watch for signs of dehydration such as headaches, exhaustion and/or difficulty concentrating. Help prevent it by taking frequent breaks to drink water. Try offering “a toast” for something – “We saw a squirrel, a toast for squirrels!” – or for a rock, a bird or each other. The girls will all take a drink and have fun at the same time.
- » **Heat Exhaustion** – usually causes complaints of headache, upset stomach, sweating, and cool moist skin. Move to a cool place and sip cool water.
- » **Heat Stroke** – shows a high body temperature and red, dry skin. Breathing may be shallow and rapid. This serious emergency requires immediate medical attention.
- » **Hypothermia** – is a cool-weather problem and may become serious if not treated early. Shivering, numbness, listlessness, decreasing pulse and breathing rate are all signs of hypothermia. Be aware that hypothermia may occur even when the temperature is in the 50s or 60s, especially if the person is wet or the day is windy. Remove wet clothing and warm the body slowly.

### Wildlife - Plants and Animals

When visiting the out-of-doors, girls may come into contact with the plants and animals that make these places their home. Teach girls to respect all wildlife.

#### Poisonous Plants

**Poison Ivy and Poison Oak** may be found in Arizona. Help the girls learn to recognize it and follow the adage “Leaves of three, let it be!” Also be aware of “hairy vines.” Touching poison ivy vines can also cause a reaction.

If a child comes into contact with poison ivy wash her skin with alcohol, flush with cold water, and then wash with soap and water. Rashes can be treated with cold cloths, oatmeal baths, or with the parent’s permission, calamine lotion. (Poison oak is less common, looks similar, and requires the same treatment.)

**Plants and seeds** may be toxic. Always check before using plant parts or seeds for jewelry or crafts.



### Animals

Seeing wildlife can be an exciting and memorable part of adventures in the outdoors. With the many ecosystems to be found in Arizona – there is an abundance of wildlife. You may encounter burros, raccoons, skunk, deer, antelope, coyotes, javelina, mountain lions, bobcats or bears. In some areas these animals may be acclimated to humans and human activity. They are generally peaceful unless cornered or protecting their young. Any animal may cause harm if it feels threatened. Attacks on people are rare and almost always involve deliberate feeding. Do not approach wild animals. Never touch or feed wild animals.

If an animal appears aggressive or too bold:

- » Scare the animal away by making loud noises (do not scream)
- » Be big! Group together to make yourself bigger
- » Remain calm, do not shriek or scream
- » Back away slowly - do not run
- » If possible – move toward group activity

### Venomous reptiles



**Rattlesnakes** – Many different species of rattlesnakes make Arizona their home. Rattlesnakes have triangular heads—a sure sign of a venomous viper. Color may vary, especially in the rattlesnake, which can range from tan to black. More than half of poisonous snakebites involve children, and most occur between April and October. Baby rattlesnakes are capable of a venomous bite from birth.



**The Western Coral Snake** is less common and rarely seen, but highly venomous. Signs and symptoms of a coral snake bite are different than those of a pit viper. Rather than leaving two distinct fang marks, the coral snake leaves one or more tiny scratch marks in the area of the bite. There is little pain or swelling and the patient's tissue usually does not turn black and blue. Usually, there is no pain or swelling at the bite site. However, one to eight hours after the bite, the patient will experience blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, increased salivation and sweating.



**The Gila monster** (*Heloderma suspectum*) is one of only two known species of venomous lizards in the entire world. These animals are highly dangerous to humans, and are found in Sonoran desert areas. Close contact with these animals should be avoided.

Unlike venomous snakes, the Gila Monster's venom glands are located in its lower jaw, and its teeth are grooved - not hollow. The venom is secreted into the animal's mouth through a number of ducts that are located between its teeth and lips. While the bite-delivered toxin can certainly overpower the Gila monster's enemies and prey, it is very rarely fatal to humans, even though it is about as potent as that of the western diamondback rattlesnake. It is, however, quite painful and has other negative and undesirable effects.

The priorities of **emergency care for venomous reptile bites** are to maintain basic life support - airway, breathing and circulation - and limit the spread of the venom and to transport the patient without delay.

1. Move the patient away from the animal to prevent repeated bites or bites to yourself. (Snakes cannot sustain prolonged rapid movement so are often within a 20 foot radius of where the bite first occurred.)
2. Have the patient lie down and keep her quiet.
3. Reassure her to slow the metabolism and subsequent spread of the venom.
4. Cut and suck methods are useless. According to one study, the most you can get is six percent of the venom. Many people do far more damage when they cut than they do good.
5. Keep the bitten extremity at the level of the heart.
6. Remove any rings, bracelets or other jewelry that could impede circulation if swelling occurs.
7. Clean the wound gently with alcohol, soap and water, hydrogen peroxide or other mild antiseptic.
8. Do not cool or chill or apply ice.
9. Do not attempt to tie any type of tourniquet or constricting bands.
10. Transport the patient as soon as possible to the hospital.

Nonpoisonous reptile bites are not considered serious and are generally treated as minor wounds; only venomous bites are considered medical emergencies. If you don't know – assume venomous!  
For further information, or in time of need, you can contact the Arizona Poison Control and Drug Information Center by calling 1- 800-362-0101 or 1- 800-222-1222

### Insects, Spiders and Scorpions



**Ticks** - A bite by a tick could infect you with one of several diseases. Encourage all campers to do a thorough daily tick-check of themselves. Remove a tick by pulling it slowly and smoothly away from the skin. Wash thoroughly and make note of the date. See a doctor if flu-like symptoms develop within 10-14 days.

**Bark scorpions**, like all scorpions, are eight legged. They are small, light brown scorpions common to the southwestern United States and Baja and Sonora New Mexico. They can reach a length of 2 - 3 inches long with a very thin tail. The stinger is located in the tail. The sting is venomous and can be lethal, especially to small children. The bark scorpion is unusual since it is the only species of scorpion that regularly climbs walls, trees and other objects with a rough climbing surface. It cannot climb smooth plastic or glass.



The sting of a Bark Scorpion can be very painful, producing swelling at the site of the sting, numbness, difficulty breathing, frothing at the mouth, respiratory paralysis, muscle twitching, convulsions, and in extreme cases it may cause loss of use of the affected limb or death. The young and the elderly are at extreme risk from the bite of the Bark Scorpion. For the rest of us, medical attention is still in order.

The sting victim should stay calm and relaxed and not consume alcohol or other sedatives. Apply pressure and ice packs to the sting site. If possible, capture the scorpion for identification. Once again, seek medical attention. Death is rare because stings are uncommon and antivenin is effective.



**The Black Widow Spider** is extremely poisonous. A bite from one of these spiders can be fatal if left untreated. The bites are particularly dangerous to the very young, the old, and the ill. Sometimes the victims of these spiders are not even aware of what happened. They simply fall prey to the symptoms such as a pinprick, then pain throughout the body, stomach cramping (with or without vomiting), and an increase in blood pressure, sometimes accompanied by a ringing in the ears.

Black Widows seldom make their homes inside houses, preferring dark areas with little traffic, such as woodpiles and the undersides of flowerpots kept outside. Their normal habitat is a hot climate, and they can be found in almost any dark, warm place throughout the world, especially in the low deserts. The female Black Widow uses her silk to make messy-looking, tangled webs. Caution is your best defense against the Black Widow spider.

If bitten,

1. Immediately and thoroughly wash the spot (it will usually have the appearance of a reddish bull's-eye) with soapy water
2. Apply ice
3. Get medical attention (If you are woozy, then get someone to drive you, or call for an ambulance. If you are having trouble breathing, medical care becomes even more critical)

### Precautions:

To prevent coming into contact with spiders and scorpions, do not leave your shoes, boots, clothes or wet towels outside. Shake towels around swimming pools. Develop the habit of shaking out clothes, socks and shoes before putting them on. Do not pick up objects such as rocks or flowerpots without checking underneath it first. Wear gloves and shoes when working outside. These hints will work with most dangerous insects. And for those that aren't dangerous, there's no need to have a squished bug in your shoe all day. When hiking in the low desert, be alert and aware. They love the desert as much as you do!

### Flying Insects

More common than any of the "dangers" above are stings from bees, yellow jackets, hornets... Girls with allergies to stings should bring medications. Allergies can develop over time, so always monitor someone who has been stung. Watch for trouble breathing or severe swelling. Cold cloths may help lessen the pain of a sting



**Africanized honeybees** have moved into the southwest and are here to stay.

Africanized bees acquired the name killer bees because they will viciously attack people and animals that unwittingly stray into their territory, often resulting in injury or death. It is not necessary to disturb the hive itself to initiate an attack. In fact, Africanized bees have been known to respond viciously to mundane occurrences, including noises or even vibrations from vehicles, equipment and pedestrians.

Though their venom is no more potent than European (native) honeybees, Africanized bees attack in far greater number and pursue perceived enemies for greater distances. Once disturbed, colonies may remain agitated for 24 hours, attacking people and animals within a range of a quarter mile from the hive.



### Africanized Honeybee Facts:

- » Are slightly smaller than the European honeybee, but only an expert can tell them apart
- » Defend their hive more rapidly than European honeybees
- » Usually sting in greater numbers
- » Are less selective about where they nest
- » Swarm more often than European honeybees
- » Do not have stronger venom than the European honeybee
- » Each bee can only sting one time – females die after stinging
- » Eat nectar and pollen and make honey
- » Are not native to the U.S – they came from Africa

### Precautions:

First and foremost, stay away from bee colonies. It is estimated that in Arizona there are about 250,000 wild bee colonies. They nest in a wide variety of locations, so be alert for groups of flying bees entering or leaving an opening. Listen for buzzing sounds. Be especially alert when climbing because bees will often nest under rocks or within crevices.

Wear appropriate clothing when hiking, this means light colored clothing. Avoid leather. Bees target their natural predators (bears, skunks), so they tend to go after dark objects. Keep in mind that bees see the color red as if it were black. So, if you're out hunting wear fluorescent orange.

Avoid scents of any sort, especially if it makes you smell like a skunk, but bees also like the sweet flowery scent of shampoos and perfumes. Bees communicate using scents. If riding, leave the lemony or citrus flavored products off your horse.

### What to do if you find bees:

- » Stay away from all honeybee swarms and colonies
- » Get away from bees as quickly as possible
- » While running away protect your face and eyes as much as possible
- » Take shelter in an enclosed area such as a car, truck or building
- » Do not hide in water or thick brush
- » Do not stand still and swat at bees (rapid movements will cause them to sting)
- » If the bees are located in or on your property, call a local beekeeper, pest control company or local cooperative extension agent for assistance.

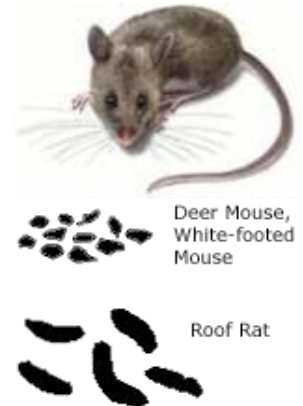
### What to do if stung:

1. Get away from bees
2. Pull or scrape stingers from skin as soon as possible. (Most venom is released within one minute.)
3. Wash stung area with soap and water like any other wound to prevent infection
4. Apply ice to relieve pain and swelling
5. Seek medical attention if:
  - Breathing is difficult
  - Stung many times
  - Allergic to bee stings

### Hanta Virus

The deer mouse and the white-footed mouse, carry viruses that can lead to hantavirus pulmonary syndrome. Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS) is an infectious respiratory disease endemic to North and South America. While the disease is frequently fatal, it can be very easily prevented.

In the United States, the Hantavirus is found in over half of the lower 48 states. In fact, cases of the disease have occurred in at least thirty states. The virus is not very infectious except under certain circumstances. As such, when someone contracts HPS, the incident is frequently considered to be a random "freak accident". In this regard, contracting the Hantavirus: (a) doesn't happen very often, (b) is worth avoiding, and (c) can be prevented very easily.



#### Precautions for hikers and campers:

- » Avoid coming into contact with rodents and rodent burrows or disturbing dens (such as pack rat nests)
- » Do not use cabins or other enclosed shelters that are rodent infested until they have been properly cleaned and disinfected.
- » Do not pitch tents or place sleeping bags in areas in proximity to rodent feces or burrows or near possible rodent shelters (such as garbage dumps or woodpiles)
- » If possible, do not sleep on bare ground. Use a cot with a sleeping surface at least 12 inches above the ground or use tents with floors.
- » Keep food in rodent proof containers
- » Promptly bury (or preferably burn, followed by burying, when in accordance with local requirements) all garbage and trash, or discard in a covered trash container.
- » Use only bottled water or water that has been disinfected for drinking, cooking, washing dishes and brushing teeth.
- » Refrain from stirring up dust, especially if you are entering a building or room that has been closed up for an extended period.
- » If you find rodent droppings, don't sweep! Instead, follow proper clean-up methods.

#### Proper Clean-up Method:

1. Wear rubber gloves and a facemask.
2. Do not stir up dust by vacuuming, sweeping, or any other means.
3. Thoroughly wet contaminated areas including trapped mice, droppings, and nests with household disinfectant or a 10% bleach solution: Mix 1½ cups of household bleach in 1 gallon of water (or 1 part bleach to 9 parts water). Let everything soak in disinfectant for 10 – 15 minutes
4. Remove all of the nest material or dead mice with a long handled shovel. Double bag the rodent securely with plastic bags and dispose of them in the trash. Rural areas may bury the waste as deeply as possible to prevent dogs from digging it up.
5. Remove any droppings with a damp paper towel, and then mop or sponge the area with bleach solution.
6. Double bag all paper towels, rags, and sponges used in the cleanup.
7. Steam clean or shampoo upholstered furniture and carpets with evidence of rodent exposure.
8. Disinfect gloves with disinfectant or soap and water before taking them off.
9. After taking off the clean gloves, thoroughly wash hands with soap and water (or use a waterless alcohol-based hand rub when soap is not available).

### Be Bear Aware

Most conflicts between humans and black bears arise as the result of human supplied foods. Eliminating access to human foods can reduce conflicts.



- » Keep your camp clean
- » Never leave human food, pet food or garbage available and unsecured
- » Never feed bears
- » Do not cook in your tent or sleeping area
- » Store all foods, toiletries and other scented items well away from sleeping areas and unavailable to bears.
- » Wash-up, change clothing and remove all scented articles before retiring to sleeping area.

### What to do if you meet a black bear.

- » Do not run. Remain calm, continue facing the bear and slowly back away.
- » Keep children and pets close at hand
- » Make lots of noise. Yell, rattle pots and pans, whistle and break sticks
- » Travel in groups
- » Stand upright. Do not kneel or bend over. Wave arms, jackets or other materials.
- » Never approach or corner a bear
- » Never offer food to a bear
- » Be aware of the presence of cubs and never come between a bear and its cubs
- » Fight back aggressively if a bear attacks you.

### First-Aid

A first-aider is an adult volunteer who has taken Girl Scout–approved first-aid and CPR training that includes specific instructions for child CPR. A First Aider is required for all outdoor activities.

There are two categories of first-aiders:

- » **First-aider (level 1):** The presence of a first-aider (level 1) is required for many group activities. The course required to be a first-aider (level 1) is one that offers standard first-aid and CPR, preferably with a focus on children. The Safety Activity Checkpoints state clearly when a first-aider (level 1) is needed.
- » **First-aider (level 2):** The presence of a first-aider (level 2) is required at resident camp, and at any camp activity with more than 200 participants. In addition, some activities require a first-aider (level 2); the Safety Activity Checkpoints state clearly whether a first-aider (level 2) is needed. First-aiders (level 2) pass the same course as first-aiders (level 1), and also have emergency response/first response, sports safety, wilderness first-aid, and/or advanced first-aid and CPR training. Each organization has a different name for its training, so be sure to ask whether a training course fulfills the level-2 requirements.

### First-Aid Kit

Make sure a general first-aid kit is available at your group meeting place and accompanies girls on any activity (including transportation to and from the activity). Please be aware that you may need to provide this kit if one is not available at your meeting place. You can buy a commercial kit, or you and the girls can assemble a kit yourselves. The Red Cross offers a list of potential items in its [Anatomy of a First Aid Kit](#). You can also customize a kit to cover your specific needs, including flares, treatments for frostbite or snake bites, and the like.

In addition to standard materials, all kits should contain your council and emergency telephone numbers (which you can get from your council contact). Girl Scout activity insurance forms, parent consent forms, and health histories may be included, as well.

### Administering medicines

- » First Aiders should be aware of allergies in the group.
- » The First Aider keeps and administers all over-the-counter and prescription medications (except medicines such as asthma inhalers which might be needed quickly).
- » It is important to keep a written record of any medicine given, the time, and the reason it was given. A small notebook in your first aid kit will be handy for this record.

### Girl Activities

Be Prepared is the Girl Scout Motto. Make sure that girls are prepared for emergencies. Do these activities before taking girls camping. You'll find information to help you with the activities in Safety Activity Checkpoints

#### **Have a “Wild Safety” day for the troop.**

Visit a park. Learn to identify plants. Discuss what to do if you find a tick on you, and what to watch for after a tick bite. Learn to identify poisonous snakes from pictures or a nature center display. Practice what to do if you meet a black bear (look big and aggressive!), snake, or other animal on the trail.

#### **Offer basic first aid training to the girls.**

Even Brownies can learn to wash and bandage a scrape and when to call for help. Juniors and older girls should also learn to recognize and care for sprains, hypothermia, heat exhaustion, and dehydration. Review with the girls how to recognize and treat heat exhaustion, heat stroke, sunburn, hypothermia, and frostbite. Then divide into teams. Describe a set of symptoms and give teams 3 minutes to identify the problem and decide how to treat it.

Plan and practice what to do in case of weather emergencies and natural disasters (like wildfire or flooding). For instance, practice a **“lightning drill”** in case you are caught outside in a storm. Spread the girls out about 10' from each other. Have them squat down into a ball. If they have a sit-upon or day pack, use it for insulation between feet and the ground. Talk about ways the group can stay calm while sitting out a storm in this position. Maybe they have a favorite song to sing?

#### **Practice a fire drill.**

Choose a safe gathering spot in case of wildfire and surprise the girls with a fire drill during the day. Later, when you reach your campsite, locate safe gathering places and hold an emergency drill.

### What to Wear

Make sure you have the right clothing. Check the weather forecast before you go. Bring appropriate clothing for all planned activities. Bring clothing for unexpected rain or cold.

» **Dress in Layers**

A base layer, warm layer and weatherproof layer are the basic clothing layers. Put on and take off the pieces as you get warm or cold. Whenever possible, use clothes the girls already have.

» **Fabric Choices**

Cotton can be worn in warm weather. However, it won't keep you warm if it gets wet. Make sure the girls (and leaders!) have a warm jacket or sweater and rain gear with them. Warm layers should be of wool, fleece or a synthetic such as polypropylene. These days, many girls have fleece jackets and pants for sports activities. Nylon wind pants also make a good outer layer. Check second-hand stores for wool garments.

» **Shirts and Pants**

Leave tank tops, halter tops, crop tops and short shorts at home. Exposed shoulders or midriffs can easily get sunburned or bitten by insects! Long sleeves and long pants will help protect you from insects, poison ivy, or brambles. Shorts can be worn in warm weather but watch out for sunburn. Clothing should be loose enough to allow easy movement.

» **Shoes and Socks**

To prevent cuts, scrapes, blisters and general discomfort, closed-toe shoes and socks must always be worn for outdoor activities. Check that socks do not have holes in them. Tennis shoes are appropriate for most outdoor activities. Flip-flops and sandals are not allowed for outdoor activities. Shoes should be broken-in before going on long hikes. For extended hikes, wool or polypropylene socks are best but are expensive.

» **Raingear**

Regardless of weather forecast, each person should have a waterproof layer with her. An emergency waterproof layer can be a garbage sack with holes cut for the head and arms.

» **Hats**

Wear a hat with a brim. You'll appreciate the shade and the protection from sunburn. In cool weather pack a warm knit hat. Sleeping in it will even help keep your body warm.

» **Take off and put on layers as the temperature changes**

Dress in layers rather than in a single heavy coat. Put on or take off layers as your temperature changes. Sweat soaked clothes lose insulation value. Pay attention to what the girls are wearing. Often they will ignore the warning signs of getting chilled until they are thoroughly cold and will then have a hard time getting warm again.

### Odds and Ends

- » Bring gloves or mittens for cool mornings.
- » Sunglasses are recommended on sunny days.
- » A bandanna is a very useful clothing item. Its uses range from handkerchief to pot holder to blindfold to belt.
- » Be sure that loose, floppy or synthetic clothing is not worn around stoves or fires or around any moving parts (such as playground equipment or bikes).
- » See Safety Activity Checkpoints for more information about clothing related to specific activities

### Tips for Keeping Warm

- » **Take a Change of Clothes**  
Make sure everyone has a change of clothes. To prevent hypothermia, change into dry clothes as soon as practical after getting wet. Damp clothes and wet skin can cause chilling quickly. Keep a change of clothes in a plastic sack to keep it dry in case of rain.
- » **Avoid wearing too many clothes in your sleeping bag**  
With too many clothes on, you may compress the insulation, making you colder rather than warmer. In cold weather, wear long johns or long underwear made of a synthetic material for sleeping. Since you're not wearing it, your fleece jacket makes a great pillow!
- » **Sleep in dry clothes**  
Even if you don't realize it, your clothes get damp during the day during normal activities. Changing before bedtime means you are wearing dry clothes. Bring extra socks to change into before bed. Sleeping in clean dry socks will keep you warmer.

## Girl Activities

### Fashionable Camp Clothing

Have a fashion show. Show the girls a selection of clothing items. Describe an outing and the expected weather. Let them model the right clothes for the day.

### Clothing Collage

Clip pictures of a variety of clothing items from magazines or catalogs. Have the girls choose those that would be appropriate for a given activity or weather type. Some examples are: hot summer day hike; camping in the fall when overnight temperatures will be below freezing, spring cookout, etc.

### Test Fabric Types

Get three pairs of socks, one each of cotton, wool, and nylon. Have three volunteers put the socks on their hands, then dip one hand in water. After a few minutes, ask each to compare how the wet and dry hands feel, in terms of temperature. This is especially effective on a breezy day. The cotton should feel cold and clammy and wool the warmest.

### Introduction to Leave No Trace Ethics

How many times have you been in a park or forest and seen garbage? Or been disturbed by noise from other campers or picnickers? Do things like this detract from your enjoyment of the outdoors?

As Girl Scouts, we want to leave a place looking better than we find it and don't want to disturb other people around us. These things are considered in Leave No Trace ethics.

Leave No Trace is a program of outdoor ethics. It teaches principles and skills that encourage outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy the outdoors without loving it to death. In 2006, GSUSA partnered with Leave No Trace to make these ethics part of Girl Scouting.

**Leave No Trace consists of seven principles:**

- » Plan Ahead and Prepare
- » Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- » Dispose of Waste Properly
- » Leave What You Find
- » Minimize Campfire Impact
- » Respect Wildlife
- » Be Considerate of Other Visitors

### Plan Ahead and Prepare

Planning ahead is doing all those things that help you enjoy your outdoor activity, keep you out of trouble, and keep you off the 6:00 news! Some level of planning is needed for every activity. Planning helps ensure safety of the group, reduces the chances of needing rescue, prepares the girls for a fun outdoor experience and prepares the girls to "leave no trace".

**Preparations include but are not limited to:**

- » making reservations
- » checking on facilities at the site
- » checking on restrictions or regulations for the site, including group size allowed
- » preparing the proper food, clothing and equipment for the outing
- » getting permission slips and checking health forms
- » getting approval from your membership team
- » checking weather forecasts
- » preparing an emergency plan.

When helping the girls plan an activity or choose a location, consider the skill level of the girls (remember the Progression in Outdoor Activities). Select destinations that match the goals, skills, and abilities of the girls.

Check with the land manager for the area to which you will be going. They can answer your questions and may have helpful ideas about where to go or what to do. Ask about regulations, permits, reservations, group size or other restrictions, and any hazards.



### Girl Activities

#### Ten Essentials

Materials: selection of items one might take on a day hike. Must include all the 10 essentials but should also include unnecessary items.

1. Have group split up into groups of 3-4. Let them look at the selection of items available for the day hike. Each group will list which items they feel should go on the hike.
2. Have each group call out an item they feel is necessary and why. Pack the daypack with that item. If the item is not needed, explain why.
3. Feel the weight of the pack at the end. Discuss how to lighten the load. Explain that more than 10 items might be needed in some circumstances

**Ten Essentials List** – yes, there are more than 10 items. It's a handy name

- » Flashlight
- » Weather Protection (Rain gear or large plastic sack, warm jacket, etc)
- » First Aid kit
- » Map and Compass
- » Whistle
- » Knife
- » Food and Water
- » Fire starter and Waterproof Matches or Lighter
- » Bandanna
- » Sunglasses and Sunscreen
- » Toilet paper/tissues and trowel

### Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Generally, Girl Scouts use established trails and campgrounds. The big exception is when backpacking, but that's another class.

#### What is a durable surface?

- » Durability refers to the ability of the surface or vegetation to withstand wear or to remain in stable condition.
- » It can take as little as 12-15 days use in one year to damage a site and as much as 2-15 years to recover
- » Examples of durable surfaces include rock, sand, gravel, established trails, snow, dry grass, pine needles, dirt, and hardened areas (an area that is already impacted and will not suffer further damage)

#### Guidelines for traveling and camping:

- » When hiking, stay on trails.
- » Avoid taking shortcuts or cutting switchbacks because they cause erosion.
- » It's best to go through a mud puddle rather than making a new trail on the edge.
- » If you go off a trail, try to keep to durable surfaces such as rocks, sand, gravel, leaves, and pine straw.
- » When camping, if there is a tent pad, use it. If not, look for a site for a location with a durable surface or a previously impacted (disturbed) area. Good surface choices include gravel, pine straw, dirt, leaves and short grass.
- » Don't make a new site. Don't cut plants, move large rocks, or rake the site. Moving small branches and pine cones is okay. Replace anything you move.
- » Unless sites are designated near the water or a trail, choose a location at least 200 feet from water sources and from any trails.
- » Locate your camp kitchen either on the most durable surface or in an impacted area.
- » Keep to footpaths or sidewalks when going to bathrooms, faucets, etc.

### Girl Activities

#### Stomp on the Surface

Materials: small zip-seal bags, each containing a sample of a different surface. Use materials such as gravel, wood chips, dry grass, moss, pine needles, mud, a Twinkie (to simulate a soft surface with a crust and also for fun).

1. Give one bag to each participant. Ask them to step on the bag—not too vigorously so as not to break the bag.
2. Discuss the results—how did the surface look after being stepped on? How might camping or hiking on such a surface affect the surface?

### Dispose of Waste Properly

You've probably heard the saying "Pack it In, Pack It Out" before. This applies even to day trips in the out-of-doors.

#### Cooking and Clean-up

- » Repackage foods to reduce the number of containers and reduce waste.
- » Taking only the food needed for an activity so you don't need to pack out or dispose of waste.
- » Choose foods with limited packaging—bulk items in a single bag for instance.
- » Bring reusable water bottles rather than purchased bottled water (cheaper too!)
- » Carry out all garbage and food scraps, even orange skins and apple cores.
- » When washing dishes, either dispose of water at the place designated by the campground or disperse it in a wide area at least 200 feet away from any water source. Make sure all food scraps are removed from the water before disposing of it.

#### Human Waste

- » Properly dispose of human waste to avoid water contamination.
- » Use toilets or outhouses if provided.
- » On day hikes away from toilet facilities, take a trowel with you and dig a cathode (a small hole dug 6 inches deep in which feces is buried. Choose a location at least 200 feet away from water and trails).
- » Pack out all toilet tissue and sanitary supplies. If sealed inside two sealable bags, these won't smell. They can then be disposed of properly when returning to the trailhead.
- » Do not burn toilet paper. Not only is this ineffective, there is the very real risk of causing a wild fire. Holes do not need to be dug for urine, but toilet paper should still be carried out.

### Girl Activities

#### Dig a Cat hole

Before going on a day hike away from toilet facilities, practice digging a cat hole with your troop.

#### Selecting a site:

- » Select a site at least 200 feet (60-70 adult paces) from water sources and trails. Select as inconspicuous a site as possible—on a hillside or behind a tree.
- » Try to find a place with deep organic soil, for example with lots of leaf mulch.

#### Digging a cat hole:

- » Use a small trowel to dig a hole 6-8 inches deep (about the length of a trowel blade) and 4-6 inches in diameter.
- » After use, fill the cat hole with the original dirt and disguise it with the leaves and sticks you removed before digging it.

#### How Long Does it Last?

Collect samples of commonly found garbage such as a drink can, plastic bottle, paper, cigarette butt, apple core or banana skin, glass jar.

Ask the girls to guess how long it takes for the various items to disintegrate in nature. You might form teams and put the items in order according to how long it takes for them to biodegrade.

- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| » Paper                     | 2-4 weeks         |
| » Apple core or banana skin | 3-5 weeks         |
| » Wool Cap                  | 1 year            |
| » Cigarette butt            | 2-5 years         |
| » Disposable diaper         | 10-20 years       |
| » Plastic bottle            | 20-30 years       |
| » Tin can                   | 80-100 years      |
| » Aluminum can              | 200-400 years     |
| » Plastic 6-pack holder     | 450 years         |
| » Glass jar                 | basically forever |

### Leave What You Find

This principle can be a difficult one to apply for youngsters. Everyone wants to take home that special rock or to pick just one flower. However, if everyone picks a flower, pretty soon, there are none left for others to enjoy. Plan ways for the girls to remember the experience without taking items from nature. For example, take photos or make a nature journal.

- » Leaving natural objects of beauty or interest is especially important. Objects such as antlers add to the interest of the outdoors.
- » Removing historical objects is illegal. Many old home sites exist in this area. While it is okay to explore them, avoid causing damage or removing any objects.
- » Minimize site alterations. Don't construct furniture from branches or rocks.
- » Avoid damaging trees by cutting branches or hammering in a nail.

**The one exception to leaving what you find: Trash. Take home all you can find!**

### Girl Activities

#### A Puzzling Find

Materials: three simple picture puzzles. Break the puzzles into their pieces. In a yard, sandlot, or playground, scatter all the pieces of one puzzle in a small area. In another location, scatter just two or three pieces and in another location, leave just one piece

1. Ask participants how scientists know what dinosaurs looked like. (They find fossils and reconstruct the skeletons.) It is important for scientists to find the pieces in their original positions (relative to one another) so that they can see how the pieces fit back together. The same is true for cultural human-made artifacts.
2. Split your group into three teams and have one group at each location recover the pieces. Ask each group to try and reconstruct the puzzle or describe the picture based on the pieces they found.
3. Ask each group how easy it was to reconstruct the puzzle. Was it frustrating if some pieces were missing? Discuss the importance to scientists of finding fossils or artifacts where they were originally deposited. Discuss the impacts of intentional vandalism or theft of fossils or artifacts. Discuss the effects of unintentional impacts, i.e.; driving off-road, hobby collecting, campsite construction. Ask the group if they can think of other ways in which fossils and artifacts can be lost or damaged. Discuss ways in which these resources can be viewed and enjoyed on-site without damage. Remind the group that it is against the law to remove or destroy these resources.

### Minimize Campfire Impacts

Fires and the outdoors go together. While no longer needed for cooking or warmth, a campfire is still very much part of Girl Scout camping. Even so, consider how to lessen the impact of any fires you have.

#### Cooking

- » With the use of camp stoves, it is no longer necessary to have a fire for cooking. In fact, cooking on a stove is faster, cleaner, and more reliable than cooking on a fire; most camp cooking should be done on a stove.

#### Campfires

- » When you have a campfire, use an existing fire ring.
- » Bring your own firewood. Most campgrounds are heavily used and firewood may be difficult to find.
- » Check for restrictions on fire building due to fire danger or air pollution concerns
- » Keep your fire small and allow it to burn completely to ash.
- » Put fires out with water. Scatter the cold ashes or dispose of them in a metal trash can.
- » Never throw trash of any kind in the fire. Foil and cans don't burn. Paper can cause embers that fly out of the fireplace. Burning plastics can emit toxic fumes.
- » To minimize impact in an area without a fire ring, build a mound fire.

#### Collecting Firewood

- » If collecting firewood, use wood that is “dead, down, and dinky”, about 1 inch across or smaller.
- » Both standing and fallen trees provide bird and animal shelter and should be left in place. Leave branches on trees.
- » Gather wood over a wide area to avoid depleting the supply in the immediate campsite area. Afterwards, scatter any unused wood.

Instead of having a campfire every night, spend an evening without one. Listen to the noises, take a night hike, or look at the stars.

### Girl Activities

#### A Cold Dinner

Share this scenario with your troop.

1. Imagine you are camping in the mountains. The air is a bit chilly as your group begins preparation for the evening meal. You plan to build a fire to cook hot-dogs and heat up cans of chili. The fire will also take the chill out of the night air. As you begin to pile sticks inside the fire ring, a ranger approaches your group and informs you that there is a ban on fires due to dry weather. You will not be able to build a fire.
2. How will your group solve this problem? What will you do about dinner? How will you deal with the chilly air? How will not having a fire change your night time activities?

#### Building a Mound Fire

Try making a mound fire on a lawn or sidewalk. When done properly, you won't be able to see that you've had a fire there at all!

1. Collect mineral soil, sand or gravel (about enough to fill a 5-gallon bucket) from an already disturbed source. Mineral soil is soil without too much organic material like leaves and pine needles in it.
2. Lay a ground cloth or garbage sack on the ground. Spread the soil on it, piling it into a flat top mound at least 6 inches thick.
3. Build your fire on top of the dirt. Use small sticks and allow them to burn down to ashes rather than using water to put them out.
4. When the ashes are cold, spread them widely or put them in a metal trash can. Return the dirt to where you found it and disguise the site.

### Respect Wildlife

“Look at that cute squirrel!” “Can I go pet the deer?” Or even better, “Take a photo of me next to the bear!” Have you heard any of those before?

#### When outdoors, your actions can disturb wildlife.

In extreme cases, you can cause an animal to abandon its young or to attack you to protect its young. While most wildlife adapt to humans, it’s best to learn about wildlife through watching quietly.

- » Observe animals through binoculars. If you notice an animal reacting to you, for instance, by looking up or moving away, you are too close and should move away yourself.
- » Travel quietly and in small groups. Do not follow animals or force them to flee.
- » Allow animals easy access to water by camping at least 200 feet from water sources.
- » Feeding animals may sicken them.
- » Animals sometimes carry diseases such as rabies. If you find a sick or injured animal, leave it alone. Notify a game warden or ranger.
- » Make sure animals can’t get into your food. Animals that have become accustomed to humans can become nuisance animals and may have to be relocated or destroyed.
- » If food storage rules are followed, bears are not a big problem when camping. If a bear does come into the campground, retreat and notify a ranger or the campground manager.

### Girl Activities

#### Role Reversal

1. Ask the girls to imagine that they have had a guest in their house who ate all the food, left trash on the floor and dirty dishes in the sink, walked on the carpet with dirty shoes, etc. Explain that, when we visit the outdoors, we have a responsibility to treat animals’ homes with respect.
2. Have each student pick their favorite wild animal. Give them each a minute or two to describe how they (the animal) would feel if it were shown disrespect by humans. Have them verbalize what an animal would say if it could speak its mind. Examples: a bear that had all its berries eaten, a beaver that had its lodge destroyed. Then ask each student how humans could have behaved in a way that would have shown respect.



### Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Girl Scouts promise to be considerate. Not only are we there to enjoy the outdoors but so are other people. There are many ways that a group can minimize its social impact on an area:

- » Travel in small groups, go in the off-season or during the week when possible, and avoid holiday weekends.
- » Be courteous when you meet other groups on the trail. Yield the right of way to other hikers and to all horse riders.
- » Take rest breaks off the main trail.
- » Let nature's sounds prevail. Try not to be too noisy in campgrounds and maintain quiet hours so other campers can sleep.
- » Leave radios and CD players at home.
- » If you are concerned about being able to spot your girls in an emergency, have each one carry a red bandanna or carry a white or orange trash bag (which can double for emergency shelter/rain gear) rather than wear brightly colored shirts or jackets.
- » Respect both public and private property. Leave gates as you found them. Don't leave any signs that you have passed through.
- » Pick up trash when you see it.
- » Be courteous when you meet other visitors.

### Girl Activities

#### Solitude Sit

The purpose of this activity is to increase personal awareness of solitude and quiet. If possible, have two sites available—one quiet with natural qualities, and one in a busy area. You may have to do the activity at two different times. If you can only do the activity at one site, use a quiet place since most people are more familiar with civilized sites.

1. Have each participant sit quietly in the selected site. Record impressions. What sights, sounds, smells and touches are there? What would you expect? What did you actually observe?
2. After experiencing each type of surrounding, ask participants:
  - How did your perception of solitude change in each area?
  - How were your expectations different from what you actually experienced?
  - Did anything seem out of place in either site?
  - From the point of view of solitude, how might a group of Girl Scouts affect each environment?

#### **Make Leave No Trace part of your outdoor experience, part of your attitude, and part of your life!**

For more information on Leave No Trace, including free downloadable teaching materials, go to [www.LNT.org](http://www.LNT.org).