

# How to Prepare to Meet with Your Troop Parents/Guardians for the First Time

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A parent/guardian meeting is a chance for you to get to know the families of the girls in your group, have them complete paper work, and collect registration fees and dues. **Before the meeting**, be sure you and/or your co-volunteers have done the following:

1  
If girls will attend this meeting too, arrange for a parent, another volunteer, or a group of older girls to do activities with the girls in your group while you talk with their parents/guardians (The girls must be supervised and occupied while you communicate with the parents/guardians).

2  
Practice a discussion on the following: Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law; benefits of Girl Scouting for their daughters, including how the GSLE is a world-class system for developing girl leaders; all the fun the girls are going to have; expectations for girls and their parents/guardians; and ideas of how parents and other guardians can participate in and enrich their daughters' Girl Scout experiences.

3  
Determine when the Girl Scout Cookie Program will happen; parents/guardians will absolutely want to know! (Usually between January and March)

4  
Create a one-page information sheet (your contact information, contact information of co-volunteers and helpers, the day and time of each meeting, location of and directions to the meeting place, what to bring with them, and information on how to get Journey books and other merchandise like sashes, vests, T-shirts, and so on).

Gathered or created supplies, including a sign-in sheet, an information sheet, health history forms, and GSUSA registration forms.

Determine what information parents should bring to the meeting & communicate this in advance. (Suggestion: Immunization records for Health History Forms & Checkbook for dues and registration fee)

## Sample Parent/Guardian Meeting Checklist:

Check off when done:

As the girls and adults arrive, ask them to create a name tag. Hand out registration forms and any other paperwork, including a one-page information sheet.

Open the meeting by welcoming the girls and adults. Introduce yourself and other co-volunteers or helpers. Have adults and girls introduce themselves, discuss whether anyone in their families has been a Girl Scout, and talk about what Girl Scouting means to them. Welcome everyone, regardless of experience, and let them know they will be learning about Girl Scouts today. (If you're new to Girl Scouting, don't worry—just let everyone know you'll be learning about Girl Scouting together!)

Ask the girls to go with the adult or teen in charge of their activity and begin the discussion.

### ***Discuss the information you prepared for this meeting:***

- All the fun girls are going to have!
- When and where the group will meet and some examples of activities the girls might choose to do
- That a parent/guardian permission form is used for activities outside the group's usual meeting place and the importance of completing and returning it as indicated
- How you plan to keep in touch with parents/guardians (e-mail, text messaging, a phone tree, fliers the girls take home, posting on an invitation-only group you create on Facebook are just some ideas)
- The Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law
- The Girl Scout program, especially what the GSLE is and what the program does for their daughters
- When Girl Scout Cookies (and other products) will go on sale and how participation in product sales teaches life skills and helps fund group activities
- The cost of membership, which includes annual GSUSA dues, optional uniforms, and any resources parents/guardians will need to buy (such as a journey book and the Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting)
- Troop dues, if any, to supplement the troop budget for badges and activities.
- The availability of financial assistance (if needed) and how the Girl Scout Cookie Program and other product sales generate funds for the group treasury
- That families can also make donations to the council—and why they might want to do that!
- That you may be looking for additional volunteers, and in which areas you are looking (be as specific as possible!)
- Collect the completed registration forms.
- After the meeting, follow up with any parents/guardians who did not attend, to connect them with the group, inform them of decisions, and discuss how they can best help the girls.