

Tips for In-Person Girl Scout Activities during COVID-19

When meeting in person, be sure to follow the most up-to-date [GSNETX In-Person Activity Guidelines](#) and keep in mind that no in-person meeting is completely safe, even when guidelines are followed. Girl Scouts might look and feel a little different year but that's ok.

Meeting Outdoors: While weather in Texas can change from day to day, outdoor activities are an option throughout the year. When it's warmer, meeting in the morning or in the evening makes getting together outside a little more comfortable. When it's cooler, afternoons could be a great option. Some outdoor locations to consider include:

- Parks, trails, and outdoor pavilions
- City hall, county court, or other government office grounds
- Parking lots - for example: church, school
- A troop member's yard or driveway
- School fields - baseball, softball, soccer, football

When planning, consider whether restroom facilities are available and let participants know ahead of time. Encourage girls to bring their own water bottles to make sure everyone stays well-hydrated.

Meeting Indoors: Health officials suggest coronavirus is spread more easily indoors than outdoors. However, meeting indoors in large a space that allows for social distancing is still possible. Some options could include:

- Basketball courts, cafeterias, or gyms at recreation centers or schools
- Places/Houses of worship
- Library activity rooms
- Community rooms at banks, fire stations, or grocery stores
- Retail store classroom spaces, especially craft stores like JoAnn Fabrics and Michael's
- Mall food courts

Availability of these meeting spaces varies by community. The meeting site should be cleaned and disinfected by adults, following CDC guidelines, before and after the meeting.

Helping Girls Manage Social Distancing: Younger girls may need some help in remaining safely distanced. Consider clearly marking each girl's personal space so the troop can more easily follow social distancing rules.

- Have each girl sit or stand in her own hula hoop or on her own beach towel, picnic blanket, or yoga mat
- Make and have girls use a Girl Scout classic – sit-upons- to stay in their own space.
- Use sidewalk chalk or lay down tape to draw a “personal space” square for each meeting participant. Girls can decorate their own square while you meet!
- Consider bringing pop-up tents to provide shade and help designate participant “zones” to maintain social distance requirements.

Managing Group Size Limits for Larger Troops

Larger troops can meet by dividing into teams of 10 or fewer and having the teams stay separated. For example, a multi-level troop may divide into smaller groups by program grade level or a troop of 16 can split into two groups of 8, though the groups should not intermingle during a single meeting. Consider having designated separate parking areas or staggered arrival times to ensure team do not mix together.

Be sure to submit the [2020-2021 GSNETX Activity Approval Request Form](#) and receive approval before planning any gatherings larger than 10 people in one location, even if they will be broken into teams of 10 individuals or fewer.

Girl Scout Traditions at a Distance

You can still do some of the traditional Girl Scout activities, no matter the distance- sing a song, recite the Promise and Law, and even the famous Girl Scout Friendship Squeeze. Instead of holding hands, when the “squeeze” gets to her she can:

- Do a hand motion or dance move
- Use a noise maker or musical instrument (actual or DIY)
- Tug on a piece of yarn that is spread out for the girls
- Have each girl say, chant, or cheer her name

Planning Socially Distanced Group Activities

Badge-earning steps are certainly on the list of activities that can be managed following health safety guidelines, but consider some of these additional options, as well.

- Drive-in Movie – each girl stays in the car with her caregiver, but go as a troop
- Drive-through zoo or safari - each girl stays in the car with her caregiver, but go as a troop
- Picnic or tea party – each girl brings her own food and drinks but eat together as a group. You can suggest everyone follows the same recipe, tries something new, or sticks to a theme.
- Geocaching
- Bike riding
- Kite flying - get kits for her girl to build her own kite
- Stargazing
- Yoga
- Butterfly release - purchase caterpillars, watch them crystalize, then meet to release

Giving Back to Your Community

- Drive thru food drive to support your local food bank or the North Texas Food Bank
- Trash pick up
- Participate in the [Kindness Rocks Project](#)
- Use troop funds to put together care packages for essential workers
- SWAPS – make SWAPS to leave on neighbors’ porches to show you’re thinking of them

Do you have other creative ideas on how you are making in-person activities work right now?

Please send them to us at connect@gsnetx.org so we can share them with other volunteers.

Shout out to our friends at Girl Scouts of Central Texas and Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council for many of these ideas!