

# GSNI Behavioral Guide

In advance of addressing any youth behavior, it is important that a Troop Agreement (see page 2) is created with the troop members and that a Troop Code of Conduct Agreement (see page 3) has been reviewed and signed by the youth and parent/guardian. After these documents are signed, keep them in a safe place with your troop records. If a behavior comes up which goes against the Troop Agreement and/or Troop Code of Conduct Agreement, please follow these steps, as needed, in managing the behavior:

## Step 1 – Correct the Behavior

- Use the helpful tips to [Manage Conflict and Communicate Effectively with Girls of Any Age](#) in Volunteer Essentials.
- Praise in public; correct in private (along with another adult). This prevents the youth from being embarrassed when you point out their mistakes in front of others.
- Talk with them, not at them. Share what Troop Agreement or expectation was not being followed.
- Discuss what will be done to correct the behavior.
- Document the date, behavior, and correction for your records.
- Submit an initial GSNI Incident Report (Form B) [here](#).

## Step 2 – Take a Break

- Request the youth step away from the group to take a break from the situation to make sure they are still in a safe space within sight of troop leadership.
- Share what Troop Agreement or expectation was not being followed. This may be done before or after the break but make sure they understand the reason for the discipline. Provide support as needed.
- Briefly inform the parent/guardian of what happened.
- Document the date, behavior issue, correction, and length of the break for your records.
- Submit the GSNI Incident Report (Form B) [here](#).
- You may repeat this step as needed if it continues to be effective, and the youth is learning/growing.

### **Step 3 – Have a Meeting with the Youth’s Parent/Guardian**

- If the behavior does not improve, repeat Step 2 and set up a time for troop leadership to meet privately (visually) with the parent/guardian(s)\* via virtual platform or in-person.
- Remind the family of the Troop Code of Conduct and Troop Agreement. Explain that all youth in the troop worked together to create the Troop Agreement.
- Describe all incidents that have occurred in sequence.
- Keep the conversation open, calm, honest, and respectful.
- Discuss how you will work together to ensure the youth has a positive experience in Girl Scouts:
  - Assure the family you look forward to working with their youth.
  - Ask for help from the family – is a parent/guardian or other trusted adult able to attend meetings with their youth until the behavior improves?
  - Ask how the family may help their youth recognize the expectations in the Troop Code of Conduct Agreement and Troop Agreement.
  - Assure the family you will keep in touch with them about their youth’s behavior.
- Document the meeting date, talking points, the family’s response to the discussion, and next steps for your records.
- Submit the GSNI Incident Report (Form B) [here](#).

### **Step 4 – Contact Your Member Support Specialist**

If the behavior has not improved, work with your Member Support Specialist to contact the parent/guardian(s) to decide the next step of action.

\*If parent/guardian(s) are unwilling to comply with a request to meet with the troop leadership or address your concerns, contact the Member Support Specialist.

# Creating a Troop Agreement

The purpose of this guide is to support volunteers in facilitating a discussion with youths about supporting appropriate conduct and behavior during Girl Scout activities. Creating a Troop Agreement is a great way to establish clear expectations and should be used along with the Troop Code of Conduct Agreement form. Complete the following steps with your troop to guide youths through the creation of your own Troop Agreement.

## Step 1 – What is a Troop Agreement?

- Share with the youths that a Troop Agreement is a document, created together by the troop, with guidelines for behavior that every troop member agrees to follow.
- Share that a Troop Agreement helps make sure everyone can feel safe and included, while having fun at Girl Scouts.
- A new Troop Agreement should be created each year to incorporate new members and allow for growth and development.

## Step 2 – Review the Girl Scout Promise and Law and Troop Code of Conduct Agreement

- Review the Girl Scout Promise and Law as well as your Troop's Code of Conduct Agreement with members.
- Ask troop members what words or phrases they like in the Promise and Law? How does it feel to be friendly? Helpful? What things will you do if you are being considerate? How does it feel when someone is being friendly, helpful, and considerate toward you?

## Step 3 – Brainstorm Ideas for your Troop Agreement

- Ask the troop members to give examples on how they should behave at troop meetings.
- Share the platinum rule. "Treat others as they would like to be treated." Ask the members what they think that means. How should you treat others at troop meetings?
- Brainstorm ideas for your Troop Agreement. Topics could be related to your meeting space, materials, how to treat others, and the best way to arrive and leave. Each youth should have a chance to share. If members are talking over one another, consider using the Girl Scout talking sign.

- Change negative statements into “can do” positive statements. For example: change “don’t talk when others are talking” to “listen when others are talking.”
- As a troop, choose at least five items for your final Troop Agreement. Examples include:
  - Live by the Girl Scout Law
  - Work together
  - Be a friend, not a bully
  - Support one another
  - Leave a space cleaner than you found it (a common Girl Scout practice)
  - Be a good listener

#### **Step 4 – Create a Troop Agreement Poster**

- On poster board, use markers and optional decorations/stickers to create your Troop Agreement poster.
- Members can work as a group or take turns, writing each agreement on the poster.

#### **Step 5 – Sign the Troop Agreement Poster**

- Once the poster is completed, review the consequences for breaking agreements in the Troop Code of Conduct Agreement.
- Have each youth sign their name on the Troop Agreement poster.
- Display the poster at each troop meeting along with the Promise and Law.

# Code of Conduct Agreement

Troop # \_\_\_\_\_



## Girl Scout Promise

*On my honor, I will try:*

To serve God and my country,  
To help people at all times,  
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

## Girl Scout Law

*I will do my best to be*

honest and fair,  
friendly and helpful,  
considerate and caring,  
courageous and strong, and  
responsible for what I say and do.

*and to*

respect myself and others,  
respect authority,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place, and  
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Our mission is to build Girl Scouts of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place. To do this, we strive to work together in creating a fulfilling, safe, and inclusive environment for everyone modeled after the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Please sign this document, pledging that you will help build a positive and encouraging environment for everyone.

## Youth Agreement – I will:

- Do my best to honor the principles of the Girl Scout Promise and Law through my words and actions.
- Follow all troop safety guidelines.
- Honor my commitments.
- Stand up for what is right.
- Work with others to find solutions for disagreements.

**If I do not abide by the Girl Scout Promise and Law, troop leadership may:**

1. Ask the member to adjust their behavior to be in alignment with agreements.
2. Remove the member from the activity to review agreements and discuss steps to correct behavior.
3. Request parent/guardian assistance in resolving the issue.
4. Request parent/guardian attendance at future meetings and trips.
5. Seek assistance from Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois regarding the matter and in possibly locating an alternate activity for the member.

## Parent/Guardian Agreement – I will:

- Model the principles of the Promise and Law for my youth.
- Support my youth in honoring the Troop’s Code of Conduct.
- Be cooperative, honest, and respectful.
- Arrive on time to drop off and pick up my youth.
- Abide by my troop’s drop off and pick up procedures.
- Provide current emergency contact information to troop leadership.
- Inform leadership of circumstances that may affect my youth’s welfare (ex. providing information and legal documentation about additional individuals picking them up).
- Notify troop leadership if my youth is unable to attend a meeting or activity.
- Find solutions for any disagreements in a private and appropriate manner.
- I will respect the troop leadership’s time, energy, and resources in a non-paid, volunteer position.

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Please tear off this portion and return to your troop leadership.

Youth Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

We agree to accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law and display appropriate conduct at all times.

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Member/Youth Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature