

# Our Rights, Our Responsibilities Patch for Junior Girl Scouts

Junior Girl Scouts now have the opportunity to earn the **Our Rights, Our Responsibilities** participation patch. By participating in this initiative, Junior Girl Scouts will join with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides internationally and gain a greater awareness of human rights and why they are essential for children worldwide. The activities encourage girls to take constructive responsibility for claiming basic rights for themselves and for others. In the process they are empowered to become effective citizens in their local and global communities.

The name of this initiative, "Our Rights, Our Responsibilities," comes from the current triennial theme of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). The initiative is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a human rights treaty adopted in September 1990. The treaty was designed to encourage countries around the world to safeguard the rights of children. The convention highlights the need to protect children from abuse, violence, and exploitation, as well as to provide access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, and primary education.

This participation patch, which will be in effect through 2005, can be earned by completing at least one activity from each of the six theme areas:

- The right to be me
- The right to learn
- The right to be heard
- The right to live in peace
- The right to be happy
- The right to work together



## The Right to Be Me

1) People from many ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds reside in the United States. Find a girl who celebrates a traditional cultural activity or event, such as a song, dance, or special holiday other than one you celebrate, and ask her to share it with you.

- 2) Review the list of basic human rights found in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. (See the Resources and Links section below and links at right.) Discuss them as they relate to your own life. Which of these rights would be the most difficult for you to live without? Why?
- 3) Play the Wants and Needs game on the UK Children's Rights Web site [[www.therightssite.org.uk/](http://www.therightssite.org.uk/)] or make up your own game having to do with the difference between "wants" (things you'd like to have) and "needs" (basic rights that every child should have).

### **The Right to Learn**

- 1) The education of girls is not encouraged in some parts of the world. Discuss with others why you think girls need to be educated. Talk about how you would feel if only boys could go to school.
- 2) Read a book that describes life for a child in another country. Share your book with others in a book fair or book group, or at an event that promotes explorations of other cultures, such as World Thinking Day.
- 3) Share a folktale from a culture other than yours. In your group, discuss what the tale is trying to teach.

### **The Right to Be Heard**

- 1) Attend or view a public hearing on an issue that is important to you and your community, such as the need for a new library, a new stop sign, or a school district meeting. Discuss with others why such a hearing is important and, if possible, find out how the issue is resolved.
- 2) Find out what concerns children in other countries. Visit the Voices of Youth Web site [[www.unicef.org/voy/](http://www.unicef.org/voy/)] with an adult and explore some of the issues youth from around the world are discussing.
- 3) Plan to speak up on an issue you are concerned about, whether at school, home, in your group, or in your community. The goal should be to create a change in how others perceive an issue. Organize your thoughts and focus on making your points clearly. Suggest some ways your audience can effectively address the issue. Following the event, review your presentation and your feelings about the issue with

a friend or with your group. Do you feel your speech achieved the desired result? What would you change in your speech, if anything?

### **The Right to Live in Peace**

- 1) What does peace mean to you? How do you think you could make a more peaceful community?
- 2) Visit Planet Tolerance [[www.tolerance.org/pt/index.html](http://www.tolerance.org/pt/index.html)] online with an adult. Do at least two of the activities for kids and discuss what you learn.
- 3) Whether the conflict is a civil war or an argument between best friends, there are certain things all conflicts have in common. What are some of the basic reasons conflicts arise? Could the president of a country at war and a teacher mediating a conflict among her students use some of the same skills to bring about peace? Brainstorm a list of what some of those skills would be.

### **The Right to Be Happy**

- 1) Find out what it is like to live in another country or culture as a child. How is your life the same or different from that of a child in another country or culture? Share your discoveries with others.
- 2) Plan a celebration of happiness for yourself or others. It might be a birthday party or a ceremony to mark a special achievement. Design an invitation, activities, and menu for the occasion.
- 3) Have a recipe-for-happiness party! Ask each girl to create her own recipe for happiness. Think about the ingredients that should go into the recipe, that is, the actions you must take to create happiness. Share your recipe with the other girls and talk about the similarities and differences that you find.

### **The Right to Work Together**

- 1) Think of a big task that must be accomplished to make a difference in your community or school, such as keeping your school clean or planting a community garden. Take five minutes and list all of the things that you would do to accomplish this task by yourself. Then sit down with others who have

been focusing on the same task and record how you would approach the same problem as a group.

2) With other girls, organize a display about an issue of national or international concern: for example, hunger, the fight against HIV/AIDS, or homelessness. Pay particular attention to how this issue might affect children. Find a way to address educating others about the issue, with possible actions that they might take in their own community.

3) Think of a time when you got something you really did not need as a gift. How did you feel? Would the gift have been different if you had been asked what you wanted or if you had gone shopping with the person who gave you the gift? Or think of a service someone provided for you that wasn't really what you wanted or needed. Discuss ways that the recipient can be involved with the person giving the gift or providing the service in the decision-making about the kind of help or gift to be offered. Can you apply what you discover from this discussion to helping others in another country or here in the United States? Identify some programs that involve the recipient of the gift or service in the process.

## **Resources and Links**

### **Girl Scout Resources and Program Links**

#### *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*

- Communication
- Being an Active Citizen
- Fight Prejudice and Discrimination

#### *Junior Girl Scout Badge Book*

- Celebrating People badge
- Communication badge
- Global Awareness badge
- My Community badge
- World Neighbors badge

#### *Additional Badges*

- Ready for Tomorrow badge (online only)
- The World in My Community badge (online only)

### *Additional Girl Scout Resources*

- Connections for Junior Girl Scouts
- Follow the Reader for Junior Girl Scouts: A Girl Scout Family Reading Project
- Girl Scouts Go Global! Girl Scouts Take a Closer Look at the World
- In the Zone: Living Drug Free for Junior Girl Scouts
- Read to Lead for Junior Girl Scouts

### **Helpful Links Related to this Project (See links above)**

- According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), children have the right to basic health and welfare, education, leisure, cultural activities, and special protection measures. To view the complete text of the convention on the Rights of the Child, visit [www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm](http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm).
  - For a simpler interpretation of the CRC, visit the Celebrating Peace Web site, [www.celebratingpeace.com/about\\_rights.htm](http://www.celebratingpeace.com/about_rights.htm), which includes an explanation with simple drawings.
  - Voices of Youth, established by UNICEF in conjunction with the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, gives youth and teachers the opportunity to participate in dialogues with other youth and educators about global issues. [www.unicef.org/voy/](http://www.unicef.org/voy/)
  - The Rights Site, created by the United Kingdom National Committee for UNICEF, is geared toward youth and includes interactive games that help explain children's rights. [www.therightssite.org.uk/](http://www.therightssite.org.uk/)

### **How to Order the Patch and Additional Information**

Upon completion of the work, the patch can be ordered from the National Equipment Service at 1-800-221-6707 (UPC #26139). Cost per patch is \$.90.

For more information, please contact: Chinwe Okorie, International Relations Coordinator, at 212-852-6547 or [InternationalUnit@girlscouts.org](mailto:InternationalUnit@girlscouts.org).

We'd love to hear what you're doing. Write us at [Internationalunit@girlscouts.org](mailto:Internationalunit@girlscouts.org) about the activities you've done and what you've learned. The information you provide may appear in articles or help us to develop new programs.