

***Safety-Wise* Supplement**

This piece provides information that supplements the topics in *Safety-Wise* and interprets the items in *Safety-Wise* where further clarification is necessary. This piece is to be used with *Safety-Wise*. It does not replace *Safety-Wise*.

Table of Contents

Accident, Incident, and Crisis Reporting

Community Boundaries

Contracts/Waivers

Documentation of Equivalent Experience

Firearms

Group Money-Earning Activities

GSVSC Procedures That Support Safety

Horseback Riding Stables

Laser Tag

Non Girl Scout Outfitters

Parent Permission

Pickup Trucks and Parades and Trip Permission

Smoking

- Girls who smoke

Transportation

- Girls under 18 driving others to and from troop meetings
- Should a child be released into the care of an adult who shows the characteristics of someone who has been drinking?
- Safety recommendations for 15-passenger vans
- Charter buses

Appendix: *Safety-Wise* Quick Reference

Accident, Incident, and Crisis Reporting

Complete and file an Accident, Incident, and Crisis Report (#1089) for any of the following situations. Follow the instructions in the GSVSC Emergency Procedures (#1088).

Accident/Injury

Any situation in which someone is injured or becomes suddenly ill for which first aid or treatment is provided by a first aider or medical professional (doctor, nurse, rescue squad, or medical facility).

Incident

Any situation including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- Individual(s) who do not observe rules or policies of GSVSC or GSUSA
- An allegation of inappropriate use of Girl Scout funds
- Any situation involving violence or the threat of violence (verbal or physical)
- An alleged theft
- An allegation of physical, mental, emotional, or sexual abuse, harassment, or neglect
- Intruders, vandalism, or property damage
- Product tampering
- Girl Scout image or media issues
- Name calling; cultural, religious, or racial slurs

Crisis

Any situation including but not limited to any of the following:

- An injury or illness that is likely to result in death or disability
- A serious behavior problem
- A site emergency or evacuation such as a fire, flood, or other natural disaster
- Missing persons

Documentation

Complete the Accident, Incident, and Crisis Report (#1089 – R 3/2006) within 48 hours and fax to the attention of the director of operating systems at 540-777-1150 or mail to: Director of Operating Systems, GSVSC, 3663 Peters Creek Road, NW, Roanoke, VA 24019. Documentation may include insurance claim forms if appropriate; see the *Volunteer Resource Manual* for details.

Community Boundaries

The following information determines what the boundaries of a service unit are when requests are made for trip/activity permission. When the county is listed, this includes any towns within that county's jurisdiction.

Alleghany/Bath: Covington; Alleghany County; Bath County

Amherst: Lovington; Lynchburg; Amherst County

Appomattox: Appomattox County
Bedford: Bedford; Bedford County
Beverly Manor: Staunton; Waynesboro; Augusta County
Blacksburg: Montgomery County
Botetourt: Botetourt County
Buckingham: Buckingham County
Buggs Island: South Boston; Mecklenburg County; Henderson, North Carolina
Carroll: Galax; Carroll County; Grayson County; Cumberland Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway; Sparta and Surry Counties in North Carolina
Charlotte: Charlotte County
Charlottesville: Charlottesville; Albemarle County
Chatham: Danville; Pittsylvania County
Christiansburg: Montgomery County
Craig: Roanoke; Salem; Craig County; Roanoke County
Culpeper: Culpeper County; selected program sites in Warrenton; Luray Caverns; Skyline Drive; Big Meadows
Danville: Danville; Pittsylvania County; Eden and Greensboro, North Carolina
Fairystone: Martinsville; Henry County; Eden and Greensboro, North Carolina
Falling River: Lynchburg; Campbell County
Floyd: Floyd County
Fluvanna: Fluvanna County
Franklin: Martinsville; Roanoke; Franklin County
Galax/Grayson: Galax; Carroll County; Grayson County; Cumberland Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway; Sparta and Surry Counties in North Carolina
Golden Link: Roanoke; Salem; Roanoke County
Greene: Charlottesville; Albemarle County; Greene County
Halifax: Halifax County; Oxford, North Carolina
Harrisonburg: Rockingham County; local calling area from Harrisonburg City
Highland: Highland County
Jefferson Forest: Bedford; Lynchburg; Campbell County
Juliette Low: Roanoke; Salem; Roanoke County; Botetourt County
Louisa: Louisa County
Lynchburg: Lynchburg; Campbell County
Madison: Madison County
Massanutten: Harrisonburg; Rockingham County
Monticello: Charlottesville; Albemarle County; Nelson County
Nelson: Charlottesville; Albemarle County; Nelson County
North Augusta: Augusta County; local calling area for Rockingham County within this service unit
Orange: Fredericksburg; Orange County
Otter River: Lynchburg; Campbell County
Patrick: Martinsville; Henry County; Patrick County; Mt. Airy, North Carolina
Pendleton: Pendleton County
Pulaski: Pulaski County; Radford
Rainbow: Giles County; Montgomery County; Monroe County, West Virginia
Rappahannock: Culpeper; Front Royal; Warrenton; Rappahannock County
Rivanna: Charlottesville; Albemarle County
Rockbridge: Rockbridge County

Salem Skyline: Roanoke; Salem; Craig County; Roanoke County
Shenandoah: Rockingham County; Shenandoah County
South River: Staunton; Waynesboro; Wintergreen; Augusta County
Spotswood: Harrisonburg; Rockingham County
Staunton: Staunton; Waynesboro; Augusta County
Trefoil: Roanoke; Salem; Roanoke County
Western Albemarle: Charlottesville; Albemarle County
Wythe: Marion; Wythe County; Mt. Airy, Sparta, and West Jefferson, North Carolina

Contracts/Waivers

If you are asked to sign a contract when arranging for use of a facility (buildings) or to participate in an activity sponsored or coordinated by outside providers (bus, parade, event, etc.), it must be signed by authorized council staff.

If you are asked to sign an individual waiver/permission for minors, you may not do so. Those must be signed by parents or legal guardians. Girl Scout volunteers or staff are not authorized to sign on behalf of any individual other than themselves or their own child.

Documentation of Equivalent Experience

Safety-Wise provides for the qualified leadership of certain activities to be adults with documented training and experience, indicating knowledge and skill in teaching and/or supervision specific to the activity. To begin the documentation process, refer to the coded piece, Documentation of Equivalent Experience (#2580 and #2581).

Firearms

Personal firearms for which an individual is licensed must not be carried on the body (adult or girl) when participating in a Girl Scout activity. These firearms must be unloaded and placed in the locked trunk of the car or, if located on a rack in the cab of a truck, the truck must be locked. Law enforcement officers if required to carry their sidearm must be sure it remains holstered with the safety catch on.

Group Money-Earning Activities

Girl Scout groups should be realistic about the scale of their projects and trips and choose ones that can be funded by their participation in council-sponsored product sales and other money-earning activities permitted by council policies and practices.

Girl Scout groups requesting council approval for money-earning projects cannot be given permission to sell items they create with the Girl Scout service mark or other Girl Scout marks without prior approval from GSUSA. Girl Scout councils are not authorized to grant this approval.

GSVSC Procedures that Support Safety

Group leaders, service unit managers, trainers, event directors, and camp directors need to be aware these supplements exist and use them as guides as appropriate:

- Emergency Procedures (#1088)
- Accident, Incident, and Crisis Report (#1089)
- Procedures for Using Vehicles in Girl Scouting (#2263)
- Procedures for Documentation of Equivalent Experience (#2580 and #2581)
- Procedures for Finding Lost, Missing, or Runaway Persons (#2156)
- Guidelines for Swimming (#2178)
- Guidelines for Programs Which Include Human Sexuality (#2222)

See also these GSVSC publications: *Volunteer Resource Manual*, *Program Centers Manual*, *Outdoor Education Resource Book*, *Event Guidelines*, *Camp Director's Manual*, *Service Unit Manager Manual*, and *Extended Trips Manual*.

Horseback Riding Stables

Horseback riding is a very popular activity. To protect girls and ensure that stables meet the *Safety-Wise* requirements, the council has set up a system to visit and approve stables.

Stables owned and operated by other Girl Scout councils are automatically approved for use. Stables approved by other Girl Scout councils may be used upon receipt of written verification from that council of their approval.

Stables can be added to the approved list at any time. If you know of a stable that would be interested in being added to the list, contact the director of outdoor program and provide the specific location of the facility plus a name and address of the person to be contacted at the stable.

Call your service unit manager or membership services manager for the most up-to-date list or see the council website: www.gsvsc.org.

Laser Tag

Laser tag is not recommended for Girl Scouts. It is considered the same type of activity as paintball, which is not permitted as a Girl Scout program activity.

Non Girl Scout Outfitters

As Girl Scouts progress through program age levels, more challenging activities are often a part of the program. Whitewater rafting, rock climbing, high ropes courses, spelunking, and rappelling appeal to the adventuresome spirit of young women.

How can a leader evaluate an outfitter's compliance with *Safety-Wise* standards, especially if they are located in another part of the country?

Check the approved adventure outfitter list available at www.gsvsc.org. If the outfitter is not listed, contact the director of outdoor program to have the outfitter added to the approved list. If the outfitter is listed, you may proceed with your planning.

Complete the Activity and/or Trip Permission form (#2129).

Parent Permission

Parent permission is not needed when leaving the meeting place during the meeting to walk around the block or to go a short distance to take advantage of an unplanned opportunity. A note should be left on the door to the meeting place to inform parents who might need to find their daughter. The troop should be back at the meeting place by the scheduled ending time for the meeting.

Parent permission is needed if a vehicle is used to transport the girls during the meeting-time activity and/or the activity to be done requires it.

Pickup Trucks and Parades and Trip Permissions

Q Can girls ride in the back of pickup trucks in parades?

A Yes, girls and adults may ride in the back of pickup trucks in a parade.

Code of Virginia § 46.2-1156.1:

No person under sixteen years of age shall be transported in the rear cargo area of any pickup truck on the highways of Virginia. The provisions of this section shall not apply to transportation of persons in the bed of any pickup truck being operated (i) as part of an organized parade authorized by the Virginia Department of Transportation or the locality in which the parade is being conducted or (ii) on or across a highway from one field or parcel of land to another field or parcel of land in connection with farming operations. (2000, c. 736.)

Check with local law enforcement and parade organizers to be sure that they do not have more stringent regulations about children riding in pickup trucks for parades.

Please note that girls must be sitting on the bottom of the truck bed, not on the wheel well, and the tailgate must be closed. The girls must have a handhold and only be in the pickup truck on the parade route. Adult supervision is required.

This interpretation is a change from the one made previously. We have carefully researched state laws and other authorities and feel that letting girls ride in the back of pickup trucks in parades will be safe and will enhance their participation in parades.

Q What trips require written permission from a person authorized by the council?

A Trips outside of the defined community boundaries. (See pages 2-4 for definitions of community boundaries.)

Activities that involve travel outside of the community.

Activities that are held inside or outside the defined community boundaries that include:

- Camping, including backyard camping
- Programs that include human sexuality and controversial issues
- Activities that present a greater risk than usual, including but not limited to: roller skating, ice skating, hiking, backpacking, canoeing, boating, swimming, rock climbing, rappelling, sailing, hayrides, rock wall climbing, bicycling, and other activities that require a certified first aider and/or a qualified expert

These are the minimum requirements. Some service units require trip permissions for all trips outside the meeting place.

Smoking and Use of Tobacco Products

For adults who smoke, please refer to the Standards of Acceptable Behavior (#3485), section named “Role Model Guidelines for Adults in Girl Scouting Who Smoke.”

Conditions under which girls are permitted to use tobacco products: If the participant in an event/activity or trip is of legal age in her state (18 in Virginia) to purchase tobacco and has written permission signed by a parent/guardian stating that they allow her to use tobacco products and that they give their permission for her to do so on the trip/activity, then that use will be permitted under the following condition:

- The participant must agree to follow the “Role Model Guidelines for Adults in Girl Scouting Who Smoke” that are in the Acceptable Standards of Behavior (#3485).

Rationale: This is a safety issue. If a girl uses tobacco products, has her parents’ permission to do so, and is old enough to do so, then she needs to abide by the same rules and guidelines as adults. By knowing this, the group involved in the trip/activity can establish rules related to times and places where the use is permissible for the comfort of all, what are safe conditions, and that while traveling, all group members are to follow local ordinances/laws.

This is not an endorsement of tobacco use. It is our effort to deal safely and carefully with a girl’s (age 18) personal choice that has the permission of her family.

Transportation

Under Age 18 Drivers

Girls under age 18 with valid driver's licenses (not a learner's permit) may transport other girls to and from regular troop/group meetings only with written approval from the driver's parents and the riders' parents and observing state regulations for number of passengers.

Should a Child Be Released into the Care of an Adult Who Shows the Characteristics of Someone Who Has Been Drinking?

This question is broader than just applying to someone who has been drinking, as it should incorporate anyone who is under the influence of any abused drug. As the question relates to a child's parent/guardian, neither a Girl Scout troop leader nor any other Girl Scout volunteer can stand between a child and her parents/guardians regardless of apparent intoxication. If a troop leader were to refuse to release a child to her parent/guardian upon the parent's/guardian's request, the troop leader could be charged with kidnapping. There is no alternative but to release the child into the custody of a parent/guardian. However, further action is appropriate. A phone call should be made to the local police informing them that a child has been released into the custody of a parent who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs and that you are concerned for the child's safety. Ask the police if they could keep an eye out for the vehicle in question by giving the police a complete description of the vehicle (i.e., color, make, model, license plate number if you have it, and any other vehicle features that will help the police identify it).

If the impaired person picking up the child is not her parent/guardian, the child should not be released, and a call should be made to the emergency contact provided by the parent asking that person to pick up the child.

From: **Quick Response**, *Answers to Questions Regarding Girl Scout Insurance Coverages and Issues*, by Palmer and Cay

Use of 15-Passenger Vans (Effective September 1, 2003)

GSVSC prohibits the use of 15-passenger vans that do not meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Crash Standards for school buses for any Girl Scout activity. GSVSC recommends that Girl Scouts traveling use personal automobiles, 7 or 12-passenger vans, or a charter bus service.

On April 1, 2001, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a Consumer Advisory regarding 15-passenger vans. ***Fifteen-passenger vans have an increased rollover risk under certain conditions.*** This advisory was reissued in April 2002 and again on June 1, 2004.

A 15-passenger van is a vehicle designed to hold one driver and 14 riders.

This would also apply to any outfitter or other organization that provides services or programs to Girl Scout troops, events, camps, etc.

For additional information, go to: www.nhtsa.dot.gov. Click on **HOT at NHTSA**; then click on **NHTSA Repeats Rollover Warning to Users of 15-Passenger Vans**.

Charter Buses

Many trips for Girl Scouts may require the use of a chartered bus service for transportation. Under a charter bus agreement, the bus company supplies the bus and driver. To protect girls and ensure that bus companies meet the *Safety-Wise* requirements, the council has set up a

system to approve bus companies.

Bus companies may be added to the approved list at any time. If you know of a bus company that would be interested in being added to the list, contact the director of outdoor program at GSVSC headquarters.

Call your service unit manager or membership services manager for the most current list of approved charter bus companies or see the council website: www.gsvsc.org.

APPENDIX

SAFETY-WISE QUICK REFERENCE

The following are some commonly asked questions relating to *Safety-Wise* (SW) and risk management grouped by topic.

FIRST AID

Question	Answer
Can the troop first aider also be the first aider for a large event our troop is attending?	No. The troop first aider needs to be with the troop while they are participating in the event, and the event first aider needs to stay at the first aid station for the event to be available for emergencies for the whole group.
When do we need a certified first aider for troop trips, events, etc.? When is a level-two first aider needed?	<p>Look in the <i>Volunteer Resource Manual</i> on page 24 (2005-2006 edition) for a chart indicating when a first aider is needed. Also see page 51 of <i>Safety-Wise</i> for additional information on the need for a first aider on trips.</p> <p>Level-two first aiders are needed anytime the activity in the activity checkpoints requires one (<i>i.e.</i>, <i>high ropes courses – SW, page 101</i>) and for certain other large events (see next question).</p>
What is a level-two first aider?	A level-two first aider is someone with basic first aid and CPR training who has also taken an additional training to provide care in situations where emergency services might not be readily available. <i>See Safety-Wise, pages 36-37, for details on which training courses meet that requirement and when a level- two first aider is required.</i>

LEADERSHIP

Question	Answer
Can a man be listed as the 01 for a troop? What other specifics are necessary for troop/group leadership?	<p>Yes, a man can be registered as the 01 although remember that the female role is essential to fulfilling the purpose of Girl Scouting and at least one member of the leadership team must be an adult female. <i>See Standard 13, page 69 (SW). Don't forget that at least one member of the troop leadership team must be a female adult not related to the other adults.</i></p> <p>Also, every adult must complete the volunteer application, screening, and appointment process and participate in the required training for the position he/she holds.</p>
How many troop leaders do we need to have to register a troop?	<p><i>SW, page 69, states: Each group has at least one adult leader and one or more assistant leaders.</i> Leaders and assistant leaders are registered in the 01 or 02 position, which means that both positions require training.</p> <p>This is the standard for which we strive. Every effort to recruit two leaders must be made. If a second leader/assistant leader cannot be found, the following steps must be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effort to recruit an additional leader must be documented. The documentation will be sent to council headquarters to be placed in the service unit file. 2. A parent or other adult must be at every meeting. The adult must have a background check and must be a registered member of Girl Scouts. The adult may register in the 03 or 14 position. In an effort to

expedite the background check information since no application will be completed, please put the service unit and troop number on the background check application form that will be mailed to council headquarters. If a troop number is not yet available, add the name of the leader as well as the service unit name on the application.

Exceptions to the standard:

1. A troop/group that is meeting at a site where other adults are present in the building at all times. Effort to recruit an additional leader must be documented. The documentation will be sent to the council headquarters to be placed in the service unit file.

All girl/adult ratios for events, trips, and group camping must be met. See *SW, page 69*.

MEMBERSHIP

Question	Answer
How many girls are needed to register a troop?	<p><i>Safety-Wise states: Girls participate in groupings large enough to provide experience in self-government and small enough to allow for the development of the individual girl.</i></p> <p>The recommended group size as listed on <i>page 72 (SW)</i> is the standard for which we strive. Due to unusual circumstances, this is not always possible. GSVSC will not register one girl as a troop. At this point, it will be recommended that she be registered as a Juliette. GSVSC will register two or more girls as a troop.</p>

PERMISSIONS

Question	Answer
If a troop plans a trip where every girl will be accompanied by her parent, are trip permissions and parent permissions necessary?	If this is a Girl Scout activity, then all the required steps for taking a troop trip must be followed, including permissions. Parents have an expectation that if it looks like a Girl Scout trip and sounds like a Girl Scout trip, it is a Girl Scout trip; therefore, all the established safety precautions must be followed.
When is a trip permission form required?	If the troop is going outside its community boundaries (service unit), is participating in camping activities, is participating in activities involving human sexuality, or for any activity that involves a higher risk or a need for a specialized certification. <i>Refer to pages 35-36 of the 2005-2006 Volunteer Resource Manual and to the Trip Permission Form (#2129) for details.</i>
Can a troop leader sign a hold harmless waiver for the girls in her troop?	A copy of the waiver should be given to each parent/guardian for their decision and signature. A troop leader should never sign a waiver on behalf of troop members or their parents. Such a waiver is beyond the leader's authority and could subject her/him to personal liability for injuries or damages suffered by a troop member.

PROGRAM

Question	Answer
Are helmets required for activities such as horseback riding,	Yes, Yes, and Yes. Helmets are required for those activities

biking, climbing, etc?	and others as indicated in <i>Safety-Wise</i> . Remember that there is a difference between a horseback riding helmet and a biking helmet. Be sure to wear proper headgear that is fitted correctly. <i>Consult the "Info" section of the GSVSC website for more information.</i>
<i>Safety-Wise</i> says, "Leaders supervise from outside the main skating floor" for ice skating, in-line skating, roller skating, and skateboarding. Does this mean the leader cannot skate too?	<i>Safety-Wise</i> means that the girl/adult ratio (<i>SW</i> , page 69) needs to be met by adults outside the skating floor. Adults over that ratio may skate, and the adults should trade off so there are always adults watching the action.
Can girls take a ride on an elephant when attending the circus with their troop?	<i>Safety-Wise</i> does not specifically speak to elephant rides, yet on page 102 under "Horseback Riding," the point is made that girls must possess sufficient physical coordination and balance to participate in riding. This activity should only be approved for girls who are at the Junior age level or above.

TRAINING

Question	Answer
Does the troop leader (01) have to take all the training?	A troop leader must take Basic Troop Leadership I, II, and III, but First Aid, Outdoor Education, and other courses may be taken by an adult who is willing to work with the troop.

TRANSPORTATION

Question	Answer
When a troop is on a trip, does each car need two adults?	No. <i>Page 55 in SW states that there must be alternate drivers when a break is needed and those drivers should not drive more than six hours. A rest break should be taken every two hours (see the safe driver pledge on page 55, and read through the safety travel information on pages 52-54).</i>
If we take Daisies or Brownies on a trip, must they be in a car seat?	In 2003 the Virginia General Assembly amended state law, which now requires any child under age six to be seated and restrained in a properly sized and properly mounted car seat or booster seat. This could certainly mean that most Daisy Girl Scouts and even some Brownie Girl Scouts would have to be in car seats. Presumably their parents are already meeting the law and would have a car seat to use.

3/14/2006