

Animal Rescue Mission Planning Guide

This theme turns animal care into an interactive mystery where girls follow their curiosity, share ideas, and decide how to help. It brings learning to life as girls solve clues, help animals in need, and explore problem-solving and collaboration.

Event Structure (K-5)

Theme: From Clues to Caring—Solve the Mystery to Help Animals in Need

Teams of girls work together to solve a mystery and discover what each animal needs to stay healthy and safe.

Overall Event Flow

Receive the Case File → Investigate → Solve → Celebrate

Why This Works for K-5

- Mystery format keeps girls engaged and curious
- Collaboration builds teamwork and social skills
- Problem-solving builds confidence and critical thinking

Recruitment Benefits

- Girls feel: “This is fun! I get to be creative here.”
- Caregivers see: “She gets to be herself, make choices, and feel proud of what she can do.”
- You show: Girl Scouts is a place for you.

Collaborating with Community Partners

Consider working with a local animal shelter, park, or zoo for more space for exploration.



How to Plan and Deliver an Animal Rescue Mission Event

Plan the Event:

- Girls are divided into groups of 2–4
- Each group receives one Mystery Case File.
- Girls explore Evidence Box 1 to figure out who the animal could be.
- Then they look through Evidence Box 2 to figure out what might have happened.
- Then they visit the Solution Basket and choose the item they think would help most.
- Finally, they draw and share their solution.

This guide contains three different mysteries to solve. Choose one, two, or all three mysteries based on your group size and available space. If you have a large group, include all three mysteries. Smaller groups could focus on one or two.

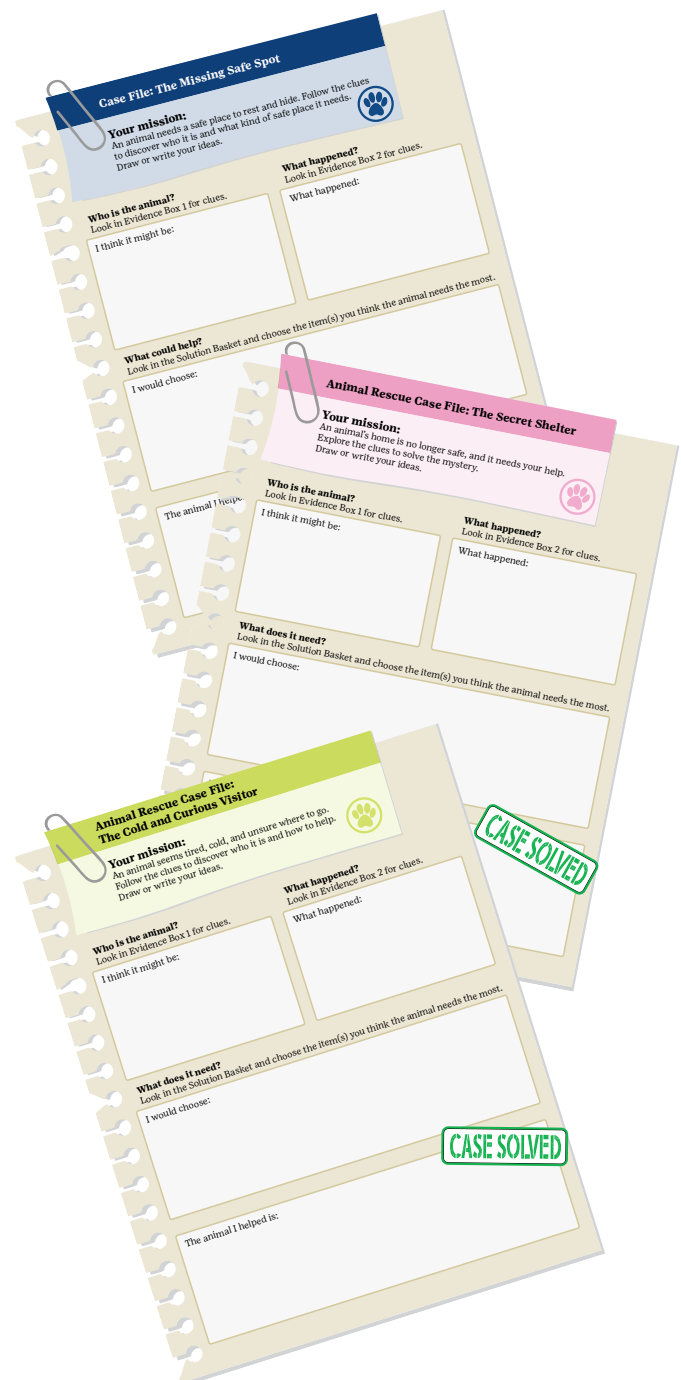
- **Mystery 1: The Missing Safe Spot**
(Confidential answer: A rabbit)
- **Mystery 2: The Secret Shelter**
(Confidential answer: A bird)
- **Mystery 3: The Cold and Curious Visitor**
(Confidential answer: A kitten)

Share this Planning Guide with staff or volunteer helpers and assign roles.

Set up all the supplies, signage, and membership materials.

Make a plan for following up after the event.

Review the [Recruitment Activation Toolkit](#) for additional guidance and support.



You will need:

- 1) Welcome Table: Welcome attendees and invite them to fill out their Detective name tags. Display signage with QR codes to join Girl Scouts.
- 2) One large table for each Mystery that attendees will solve (1, 2, or 3). Evidence Boxes should be closed, labeled, and on/under each table.
- 3) A large basket, box, or table containing “Solution Basket” items such as:
 - water bowl
 - blanket
 - leafy cover
 - rabbit burrow image
 - open sunny field image
 - loud toy (real or photo)
 - soft grass/hiding space image for a small animal like a rabbit
 - nest (or twigs, hay, yarn, leaves)
 - tree image
 - underground tunnel image
 - cat bed
 - cat toy

Two “Evidence Boxes” for each mystery that attendees will solve (i.e., plastic dishpans, boxes, etc.). Label each box clearly with the name of the mystery and the box number. When filled, place them under the tables.



Add-on:

Invite girls to bring their favorite stuffie as their detective assistant. As an icebreaker, girls can introduce themselves and share why their assistant is ready to solve the case!

5) Supplies for each Evidence Box. See the list below:

**The Missing Safe Spot
Evidence Box 1:
Who is the animal?**

- Carrots or lettuce (real or a picture)
- Picture of small paw prints (rabbit)
- Image of soft fur
- Habitat picture showing grass or a burrow area
- Cotton ball or soft brown felt

**The Secret Shelter
Evidence Box 1:
Who is the animal?**

- Feathers (picture or real feathers)
- Picture of bird footprints or scratch marks
- Twigs, yarn, leaves

**The Cold and Curious
Visitor Evidence Box 1:
Who is the animal?**

- Picture of small paw prints
- Picture of kitten fur
- Index card that says: "This animal likes cozy places."
- Index card that says: "This animal curls up into a ball when it's tired."
- Picture of a cardboard box outside, in the dark
- Picture of fish bones

**The Missing Safe Spot
Evidence Box 2:
What happened?**

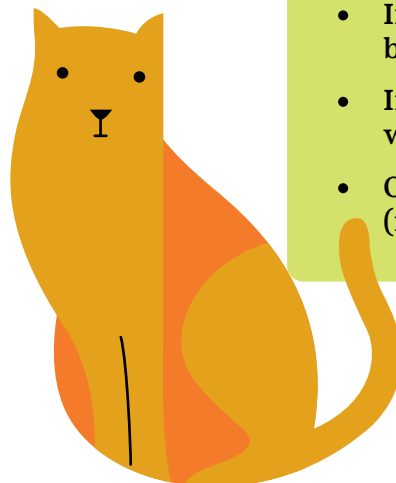
- Picture of a disturbed hiding place, such as a garden, building site, etc.
- Image of an open area with no cover
- Image of a hunting hawk
- Index card that says: "This animal likes quiet places to hide."
- Index card that says: "This animal does not feel safe out in the open."

**The Secret Shelter
Evidence Box 2:
What happened?**

- Picture of a branch without a nest
- Index card that says: "This animal hides in the trees."
- Index card that says: "There was a strong windstorm last night that blew branches and leaves everywhere."
- Twigs, yarn, leaves

**The Cold and Curious
Visitor Evidence Box 2:
What happened?**

- Index card that says: "This animal is cold."
- Index card that says: "This animal doesn't know where to go."
- Index card that says: "This animal likes people."
- Image of empty food bowl
- Image of puddle of water
- Old cat toy (real or picture)



Host the Event: Sample Script

- *“Welcome, Detectives! Today you get to solve an animal mystery.”*
- *“First, I’m going to put you in teams of 2–4. Each team will be investigating one mystery together.”*
- [Hold up one case file and read it together—do not hand them out yet. Talk through the station(s). Explain that each mystery has two boxes of evidence.]
- *“The first box will help you discover what kind of animal needs help. The second box will help you find out what happened. Then you’ll choose one or two objects from this Solution Basket that you think would help your mystery animal the most.”*
- *“After you solve the mystery, use the back of your Case File to draw or write how you would like to help your animal.”*
- *“Girls, you have a very important role: you are the detectives! Share ideas, follow the clues, and work together to solve the mystery.”*
- *“Families, you have an important role, too. Your job is to encourage, listen, and support. Let girls take the lead and make the decisions, even if you might have other ideas.”*
- *“Girls, that doesn’t mean you have to do everything yourself! You’re the leader, and sometimes leaders need advice or help. Ask each other or your families!”*
- *“Any questions? Is everyone ready? Let’s go! Come to me and pick up your mystery, detectives!”*

Examine the clues to solve the mystery

As girls explore the clues, move around the space and encourage them. Help them talk about their ideas, ask questions, and share their thoughts. This is a chance for caregivers to see girls leading, problem-solving, and making the experience their own.

Share and Reflect

Close with a sense of accomplishment and an invitation to keep exploring.

Form a friendship circle and ask questions like:

- *“What was a challenge you faced, and how did you solve it together?”*
- *“Why is it important to care for animals in need?”*
- *“What small actions can you take to help animals every day?”*

If the group is a little shy, invite girls to share with a partner first. A smaller moment can help them get comfortable sharing.

Post-Event Follow-up: Refer to the [Recruitment Activation Toolkit](#) for guidance.

Case File: The Missing Safe Spot

Your mission:

An animal needs a safe place to rest and hide. Follow the clues to discover who it is and what kind of safe place it needs. Draw or write your ideas.



Who is the animal?

Look in Evidence Box 1 for clues.

I think it might be:

What happened?

Look in Evidence Box 2 for clues.

What happened:

What could help?

Look in the Solution Basket and choose the item(s) you think the animal needs the most.

I would choose:

The animal I helped is:

CASE SOLVED



Animal Rescue Case File: The Secret Shelter

Your mission:

An animal's home is no longer safe, and it needs your help.
Explore the clues to solve the mystery.
Draw or write your ideas.



Who is the animal?

Look in Evidence Box 1 for clues.

I think it might be:

What happened?

Look in Evidence Box 2 for clues.

What happened:

What does it need?

Look in the Solution Basket and choose the item(s) you think the animal needs the most.

I would choose:

The animal I helped is:

CASE SOLVED

Animal Rescue Case File: The Cold and Curious Visitor

Your mission:

An animal seems tired, cold, and unsure where to go.
Follow the clues to discover who it is and how to help.
Draw or write your ideas.



Who is the animal?

Look in Evidence Box 1 for clues.

I think it might be:

What happened?

Look in Evidence Box 2 for clues.

What happened:

What does it need?

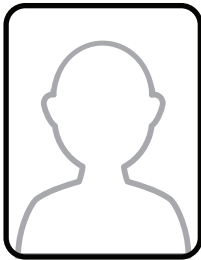
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I would choose:

The animal I helped is:

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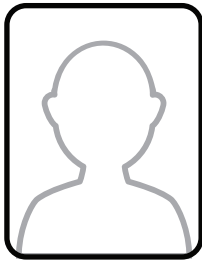
Animal Rescue Mission



Hello, I am Detective:



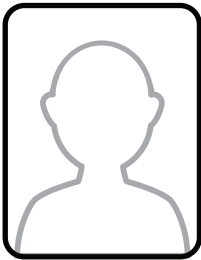
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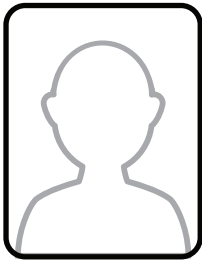
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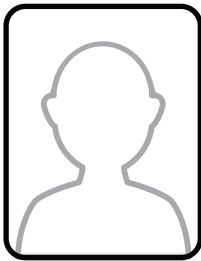
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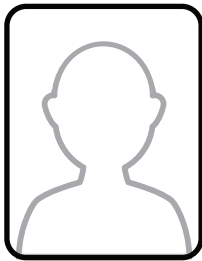
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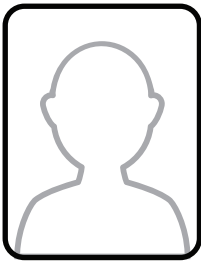
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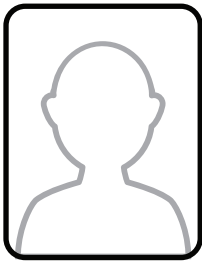
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