



# Establishing Family Connections

Girl Scouting provides the best opportunities for girls, but when families play an active role in the troop, the experience becomes even more amazing! A girl will feel a special sense of pride when her family takes part and shows interest in the things she's doing with her troop!

**Share with families how the troop will communicate things like upcoming events or schedule changes.**

Don't try to juggle multiple ways of communicating, like texting information to parents, managing an email thread, and updating the troop Facebook page. Find a solution that works best for you, and let parents know how they will receive information and how best to reach you—then stick to the plan as much as possible to make a consistent and simple communication stream from the troop volunteers to the families. Utilizing the Volunteer Toolkit to share the year plan and send regular communication via email is a great way to do this!

**Talk to parents and caregivers to identify ways they will work as a team to support the troop—you never know which parent will make an awesome additional leader or troop cookie manager!**

If parents/guardians will be helping with the troop on a regular basis, they must complete the volunteer approval process, which includes obtaining proper clearances and registering as a volunteer.

**Help families understand what she'll do as a Girl Scout, and how you guide her along the way.**

Explain the Girl Scout Leadership Experience and how activities could range from earning badges, to field trips, to community service projects. Remind parents/guardians that your role is to work with and guide the girls, but the girls' troop and activities are based on what girls choose. Let them know that girls can complete badge requirements and earn patches outside of the Girl Scout meeting space, and attend events and resident camp, too, if they wish. There are plenty of activities and camp options for a Girl Scout to enjoy with her family, so be sure to show them where to find this information on [gswpa.org/activities](https://gswpa.org/activities).



Consider sharing the Family Connection Guide as another great family resource! Find it at [gswpa.org/familyconnection](https://gswpa.org/familyconnection).

It is important for families and leaders to agree on what the troop pays for and what families pay for individually. This can be done during a family meeting, and topics include:

- ☆ **Girl Scout Membership:** This fee is paid to Girl Scouts of the USA to cover the cost of fundamental services supporting the Girl Scout Movement. This includes things like accident insurance for those participating in Girl Scout activities, program development, research, resources, training, technology, and so much more to improve the Girl Scout experience! Share that [financial assistance](#) may be available for the girl membership fee, if needed.
- ☆ **Potential for troop dues:** Let parents know that an amount and a payment schedule (every meeting, once a month, or once a year) will be discussed at the family/caregiver meeting. Encourage families/caregivers who are unable to pay troop dues to discuss concerns with troop leadership.
- ☆ **Uniforms, books, and other important basics**
- ☆ **Financial reports:** Let families/caregivers know financial reports will be available and how often—at each meeting, once a month, etc.

Outlining clear expectations, building a team, and engaging families in the Girl Scout experience is a great way to start off on the right foot. When families are involved, leaders have support, and when the troop has a plan, girls benefit!