

Short and Snappy Session

Start Your Girl Scout Year Off Right



With fall approaching, a new Girl Scout year is beginning. All summer you've been looking forward to meeting with the girls and exploring new projects, activities, and possibilities. So why do you have "new school year" jitters? Whether you are a seasoned volunteer or new to Girl Scouting, here are five steps to follow to start the year off right!

Five Steps for Success

1. **Set the Tone** you set the tone for the girls--whether they are new to Girl Scouting or returning Girl Scouts--you want everyone to feel comfortable.
2. **Have Some Fun** Need an icebreaker to get things started? Try some games or energy burners. Get them up and moving and before you know it, everyone's having fun! Check out the attached games and icebreakers.
3. **Mix It Up** It's only natural for girls to want to stay with what's familiar--but cliques aren't cool! Encourage the girls to make new friends within the troop or group. Remind them of that "Girl Scout classic: "make new friends, but keep the old...".
4. **Ask the Girls** Girl involvement is vital for success. Whether it's deciding which petals to earn, where to take a trip, or what type of community service project they do, girls need to have a say in what they do. Encourage the girls to visit the GSUSA site A World for Girls at <http://www.girlscouts.org/forgirls/> to get activity ideas and to get them thinking about what they'd like to discuss and do.
5. **Chill Out** Everyone has hectic schedules-- both you and the girls! They need to put their feet up, chat with friend, and have some down time. And so do you!

Remember--you have a lot of support. In addition to the wonderful staff at your GS council, GSUSA has a lot of resources. From new programming coming out (A Girl's Guide to Girl Scouts), to the latest research, there's a world of strategies available to you.

Welcome Everyone

How do you create a comfortable and fun environment? These tips can help the girls feel welcome, regardless of their age.

- **Call each girl by name.** Girls will sense that you view them as individuals.
- **Acknowledge their questions.** They will know you are listening and involved.
- **Share your experiences.** Girls want to connect with you, this is one way they can do so.
- **Get them moving.** Movement releases tension. Get the girls up for a game and watch their shyness or reluctance to participate disappear.
- **Mix and match.** Assign rotating "buddies," have the girls draw names from a hat or draw colored straws.
- **Ask girls what they want to do.** The latest research shows that if the girls don't have a say--they are not doing activities they enjoy--they will either act out or drop out.

What's a Short and Snappy?

- ◇ Short training/information segment provided at a Community Meeting
- ◇ Any Community Learning Coordinator or interested volunteer may lead a short and snappy.
- ◇ Short and Snappies are 15--20 minutes in length.



What You'll Need for This Snappy:

- ◇ Leaders
- ◇ Moderator
- ◇ Resources needed: Pick some icebreakers from attached list & play them. Ask leaders to share some favorite icebreakers.
Ask leaders to share favorite first of the year meeting ideas.
- ◇ 15-20 minutes

Ice Breakers & Team-Building Activities

Blanket Name Game

Have your group divide itself into two groups. Tell them to sit on the floor facing each other. Hold up a blanket between the groups so that each team can not see the other. A member of each team is quietly selected to move up to the blanket. On the count of three, drop the blanket so that each of the selected members are facing each other. Whoever says the other person's name first, wins. Whoever loses, goes to the other team.

Group Juggling

The group **starts** in a circle formation. The leader of the group will begin with one object in hand (i.e. a small ball). The leader will ask one group member to repeat their name, and then the leader will gently toss the object to that group member. The group member will reply "Thank you, (the leader's name)!" The leader will reply by saying, "Your welcome, (the individual's name)!" The object will continue around the circle in the same manner, making sure everyone has received the object, until the object ends up in the hands of the original leader. NOTE: During the first round, once a group member has tossed the object, have them cross their arms to prevent repetition. The same pattern will start again with the leader adding more objects. Once an object has been dropped, the pattern starts all over with the first object. NOTE: The leader should mix up sizes and shapes of objects (i.e. a rubber chicken, toilet paper, etc.).

Action Name Game

Have your group stand/sit in a circle. One person starts and they say their name and then something they like to do plus an action.

Ex: My name is Kate and I like to kayak. (Arms moving like paddling a kayak)

Then the next person goes and says their name and action, and then introduce the first person. This continues all the way around until the last person has to say everyone's name and like/action.

For a variation, you could have everyone repeat as you go around the circle.

Inner Circle/Outer Circle

Have group get into pairs and then form two circles with partners facing each other. You will need a game leader for this game. Have people move around the circle.

Ex: Inner circle move 3 people to the left. Outer circle move 5 people to the right.

Once they are at their new locations, give them a subject to talk about (favorite book, places to travel, etc.). Then give them 1 to 2 minutes to discuss. Once time is up have the circle move again and provide a new topic. All conversations should start with introducing themselves to each other.

People to People

Everyone stands in a circle with one person in the center. The person in the center yells, "people to people" and claps their hands together after each time they say people. They say "people," clap, "people," clap, twice and after the second time they will say 2 body parts. For example, they could say "head to foot." Then everyone including that person must try to find a partner and have a head touching a foot, whoever doesn't find a partner is then in the center.

Shoe Game

Have group get in a circle. Once in the circle have everyone take off one shoe and pile it in the middle of the circle.

Once everyone has done that they should join hands around the pile. Then everyone gets a shoe from the pile that is not their own. Then they need to find the owner of the shoe and help them get their shoe back on, without letting go of the hands they are holding.