

The PBIS “Stop Walk Talk” Leader’s Guide to address bullying at troop meetings and events

Based on the curriculum by Scott Ross, Ph.D.; Rob Horner, Ph.D.; and Bruce Stiller Ph.D.



Serving New Hampshire and Vermont

Hello troop leaders! Bullying is an issue that children are currently facing in many different settings – at school, during extracurricular activities, online, and sometimes at troop meetings. We understand that bullying can be difficult to talk about and have compiled resources to help you address this challenging dynamic. The “Stop Walk Talk” guide can be used in conjunction with a troop activity to help your Girl Scouts understand what bullying looks like, and what they can do to help address it. If you have tried troop activities with them in the past and continue to see bullying behavior, you can implement the steps outlined in this Leaders Guide to help support the behavior and address the girls.

The “Stop Walk Talk” guide is part of a program put together for Educational and Community Supports by Scott Ross, Ph.D.; Rob Horner, Ph.D.; and Bruce Stiller, Ph.D. “Stop Walk Talk” uses Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) principles to address and extinguish bullying behavior. If you have concerns about other types of behavior in your troop, please contact GSGWM at 888-474-9686 or customercare@girlscoutsgwm.org and ask to speak to Troop Support for behavioral support information. We have lots of great PBIS tools to share with you!

Before we get started

The key to implementing every PBIS strategy is consistency, repetition, and patience. If you are able to respond the same way with every girl every time an incident occurs, it will help them learn and understand which behaviors are okay. With that in mind, please teach your Girl Scouts the following signals when implementing “Stop Walk Talk.” That way, they can expect the same response from any other troop member, volunteer, or council staff that they may interact with!

1. Stop

Say “stop!” in a neutral voice while making this hand signal:



2. Walk

If the person you asked to stop does not respect your request, stop interacting with them and move to a different area or activity without them.

3. Talk

If the person you walked away from does not respect your request, go to one of your troop leaders and let them know you need to talk about “stop walk talk.”

The rest of this guide will walk you through how to implement and follow up on this program.

Step One – Introducing “Stop Walk Talk” to your troop

Objectives:

- Establish rules and expectations for group discussions
- Teach 3 – 5 promises to keep for every Girl Scout event
- Teach social responsibility skills (“Stop Walk Talk”)
- Practice skills

Materials:

- Meeting space
- Large paper/poster board and markers
- Copy of the Girl Scout law

Procedure:

1. Establish a safe space for your meeting. Let the girls know that you want to address the bullying behavior that you have all seen in the troop. Let them know that no one is in trouble, but that you’re going to work together today to make sure that everyone feels understood and supported.
2. Let the girls know that this means establishing rules for the discussion. Start off by saying that you ask that the girls don’t use any names while talking and ask what else they think will be important. Wait for them to cover ideas such as “take turns” and “be respectful.”
3. Let them know that you would like to build some promises to keep for each other for every Girl Scout meeting and activity. Ask them to think about the Girl Scout Law – what does it mean? Why do we follow the Girl Scout Law?
4. Say that you would like to base your promises to keep on the Girl Scout Law. Girls who are comfortable writing can take turns putting what you come up with on your paper.
5. Ask the girls to come up with their promises to keep to each other and encourage them to use positive language. For example, if someone says “No name calling,” you can suggest, “How about we say ‘I will be a sister to every Girl Scout.’ What else does that cover?”
6. Let the girls know that you are going to help them learn a new technique called “Stop Walk Talk” to be sure that they everyone feels safe and supported.
7. Ask them to name some behaviors that *don’t* make them feel good that might happen in troop meetings, reminding them that they’re all sisters to every Girl Scout. Expect answers such as “name calling,” “teasing,” “ignoring.” Then ask them to name some behaviors that *do* make them feel good. Answers may include “sharing,” “helping each other.”
8. Tell them that those behaviors they *don’t* like need *attention* in order to continue. Taking away attention from these behaviors is like taking oxygen away from a candle – what happens when you do that? (“The fire goes out.”)

9. Let them know that they can take the oxygen away from the fire, and stop the behavior they don't like, by taking their attention away. This is where "Stop Walk Talk" comes in:
 - a. Tell the person doing the behavior you don't like to "Stop" and use the hand signal.
 - b. If they continue, walk away to another area or activity.
 - c. If you see another Girl Scout having a hard time, you can help her to walk away by walking with her.
 - d. If the behavior continues, talk to your troop leader or adult in charge.

Step Two – Practice "Stop Walk Talk"

Objective:

- Help girls understand how and when to implement "Stop Walk Talk." This should include 3 examples of the correct way to implement it, and 2 examples of the incorrect way.

Examples to pick from:

- Correct:
 - Susie pokes Sally in the back over and over again while they're waiting for meeting to start.
 - Susie teases Sally and calls her a negative name.
 - Susie hides Sally's snack.
 - Susie rips up Sally's project.
 - Susie hears Sally talking negatively about another Girl Scout.
- Incorrect:
 - Susie makes a suggestion for an activity that Sally doesn't like.
 - Susie steals the ball from Sally while they are playing basketball: a game where stealing is appropriate.
 - Susie continues to poke Sally in the back after Sally has asked her to stop.
 - Susie is working on badge work independently and lets Sally know she doesn't want to work on a different project right now.

Procedure:

1. Teach girls the "Stop" signal including the hand gesture.
2. Model the use of the "Stop" signal when they experience behavior they don't like AND when they see this behavior affecting other girls.

3. Ask for girl volunteers to come up to the front to practice the “Stop” signal using the examples above.
4. Let the girls know that sometimes behaviors can continue, even when they’ve used the “Stop” signal. This is when they should “Walk.”
5. Model the use of “Walk” when they continue to experience behavior they don’t like AND when they see this behavior effecting other girls.
6. Ask for girl volunteers to come up to the front to practice “Stop” and “Walk,” continuing with the examples that you picked. Remind them that walking away is what removes the oxygen from the flame and helps the behavior to stop. Encourage them to support each other in walking away as everyone needs a little help sometimes.
7. Let the girls know that if the behavior continues, that it’s time to “Talk.” Let them know that there is a difference between talking and “tattling.” Talking happens after they have tried to resolve the problem themselves and need some more help dealing with it. **Important: If a girl is in danger, Stop and Walk should be skipped so that you can talk to the girls immediately.**
8. Describe to the girls how you will respond to the Talk step: You will thank them for coming to you. You will ask what the problem is. You will ask them if they used the Stop signal and if they tried to Walk away. You will practice “Stop Walk Talk” with them.
9. Practice the full “Stop Walk Talk” sequence with your girl volunteers continuing with the examples you selected.
10. Make sure the girls know that you will be following up with the girl that prompted “Stop Walk Talk”, but that they might not see it right away. Let them know that when people are upset, it’s important that they have time to cool down and to address the issue separately. Let them know you will ask if they would like to take a few minutes by themselves before rejoining the meeting.
11. Practice of “Stop Walk Talk” should be conducted over the course of several meetings to be sure the girls are using and understanding the skills. Take 5 minutes at the beginning of a troop meeting to model “Stop Walk Talk” with the girls until you are sure they understand. Use a different correct and incorrect example each time – as girls get comfortable with “Stop Walk Talk,” they can come up with their own examples. Continue to remind them that this is how they can make sure behaviors they don’t like stop.
12. Make sure the girls understand that everyone will have the “Stop Walk Talk” procedure used with them at some point, and it is important to respond appropriately, even if you don’t agree. Model how to respond if someone uses “Stop Walk Talk” towards you:
 - a. Stop what you are doing.
 - b. Take a deep breath.
 - c. Go on with your day.

Practice the full “Stop Walk Talk” sequence one more time, this time including how to respond when someone uses “Stop Walk Talk” towards you.

Step 3 – Consistent troop volunteer response

Objective:

- Understand how to respond and follow up on “Stop Walk Talk.”

How troop volunteers respond to “Stop Walk Talk” can really make or break how effective it will be for your troop. Generalization, or using “Stop Walk Talk” for normal childhood interactions can be a concern. It is very important for troop volunteers to praise girls when “Stop Walk Talk” is used correctly, and to gently model with them when it is used incorrectly. Positive verbal encouragement for using and responding to “Stop Walk Talk” correctly and for good behavior across the board is the best foundation to help your troop extinguish negative behaviors.

Procedure:

1. When a girl comes to you letting you know that she has a problem, thank her for coming to you. Ask her if she used “Stop” and “Walk.” If the answer is no, take a moment to model how to use “Stop Walk Talk” with her before moving to the next procedure. If the answer is yes, give her positive reinforcement for following the steps, then move on to the next procedure.
2. Ask the four W’s – Who did you use “Stop Walk Talk” with? What happened? When did it happen? Where did it happen?

Note: If the girl is using “Stop Walk Talk” for a behavior that is not bullying or negative, but just something that she does not like (i.e. other girl was busy with independent badge work and not available for an activity), reinforce the correct use of “Stop Walk Talk.” You can skip Procedure 3 in this case.

3. Ensure the girl’s safety: is this still happening? Is the girl at risk? Is she afraid of revenge? What does she need to feel safe? What is the severity of the situation? Some of this you will have to gauge for yourself based on what you can see from the girl’s presentation and description of the situation.
4. Thank her again for talking to you, and ask her if she needs a few minutes to herself before returning to the activity. You can suggest that she sit near your co-leader or one of her friends when she returns so that you can follow up with the other girl she used “Stop Walk Talk” with.
5. Wait for a few minutes, and then ask to speak to the girl that had “Stop Walk Talk” used on her. Speak with her away from the troop meeting, but somewhere that your co-leader can see you. Thank her for talking to you. Ask her if the other girl used “Stop Walk Talk.” Go through each step – if she responded appropriately, thank her. If not, practice with her how to respond. Remind her that she is not in trouble, but that we have all made promises to keep to each other and we want to make sure we can follow them. If there is a genuine bullying or behavioral concern, be sure to let the girl know that you will follow up with her guardians so that you can help support all the girls in being safe, following their promises to keep, and in using “Stop Walk Talk.”

6. Be sure to keep all parents and guardians up to date on “Stop Walk Talk,” how it is used, and the promises to keep the girls made. Let them know you will communicate with them about how it is going, and then make sure to communicate – both when things are going well and when negative things happen.
7. If guardians are having a hard time hearing feedback and supporting “Stop Walk Talk,” or if the behavior patterns are not extinguishing, please reach out to Troop Support through 888-474-9686 or customercare@girlscoutsgwm.org for more information about handling difficult conversations and using Positive Behavior Intervention Supports.