Extended Travel
Welcome to the Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois’ Extended Travel training. This course prepares an adult Girl Scout leader to guide their older girls on a trip of three or more days.

Vital travel resources:


When finished, **you will:**

- Know how to involve girls in planning
- Coach girls through the travel process
- Build your team
- Learn vital safety tips
- Develop skills
- Help girls build Take Action Projects based on their experiences.

If you have any questions, email [AdultLearning@Girl ScoutsToday.org](mailto:AdultLearning@GirlScoutsToday.org).
After taking this Extended Travel course, you will:

- Be able to outline the planning steps and develop a timeline for trip or travel activities.
- Be able to determine the readiness of a group and themselves for trip or travel activities.
- Be able to list five resources for information on trip planning.
- Be able to define hotel safety guidelines.
- Understand the council requirements for taking trips.

Appendix: For travel volunteers, *Volunteer Essentials* gives troop/group leaders an overview of Girl Scout travel, and contains information on progressing girls from one trip event to another, teaching girls more complex travel skills as they mature. There are Travel Security and Safety Tips for any trip involving a stay at a hotel, motel, hostel, or dormitory. You will find information on trip organization, insurance, trip finances, involving chaperones, and staying safe during your trip. Whether you are going on a camping trip or staying in a motel, you will find this information invaluable in your trip planning process.
Through travel, girls

- Develop self-confidence
- Learn leadership skills by planning, earning money and venturing to other places
- They make lifelong friends with the girls they travel with and new girls they encounter along the way
- They gain an appreciation for differences and similarities, and a broadened perspective.

As girls mature in Girl Scouts, many consider travel one of the most exciting aspects of their membership.

A Girl Scout trip is an opportunity for fun, adventure and learning. Trips enrich on-going activities in your troop/group, generating an interest in a new activity or by wrapping up a Journey, badge work or interest project. A Girl Scout trip is NOT planned by adults for girls. It is something girls plan themselves with adult guidance and support.
Everything girls do in Girl Scouting is based on the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Girl Scout trips are no different. Girls will discover, connect and take action at every stage, from budgeting to traveling.

The diagram above shows the components of the leadership experience and how they tie in with the larger goal of Girl Scouts: developing courage, confidence and character to make the world a better place.
## Benefits to Girls

**Outcomes**

As girls take part in Girl Scouting, adults can review the outcomes, and the signs of those outcomes, to gauge the benefits of the experience. The signs of the outcomes reflect what girls might think, say, and do — during and after the experience — and help adults determine the success of the experience. The following chart shows the leadership outcomes and indicators specific to girl travel.

In the appendix you’ll find forms to use with girls to evaluate their travel experiences. Use these forms as a means for you and girls to explore how they’ve grown from this experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls develop a strong sense of self</td>
<td>I learned it’s okay to be different from other kids around me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I did things that made me feel good about myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls gain practical life skills.</td>
<td>I learned how to do things I didn’t think I could do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls seek challenges in the world.</td>
<td>I tried new activities even if they were hard to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls develop critical thinking</td>
<td>I tried to solve problems for myself before asking for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I was willing to change my mind about something if I learned new information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls develop healthy relationships</td>
<td>I learned that I could disagree with someone and still be friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People made me feel like I belonged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls promote cooperation and team building.</td>
<td>I worked together with other girls towards a common goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I volunteered to help or lead during this program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I helped plan the activities I did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls feel connected to their communities</td>
<td>Connecting with other girls helped strengthen my feelings of being part of the Girl Scout community. This travel helped increase my interest in being a leader in my local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls educate and inspire others to act.</td>
<td>I will share with others what I learned from my trip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls feel empowered to make a difference.</td>
<td>I made decisions about what we were going to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I feel empowered to make a difference in my community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What’s so great about the Girl Scout Leadership Experience is that by infusing the processes of girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning into activities, you’re guaranteeing that girls will have a meaningful, relevant, and fun time.

An Open, Inclusive Environment

As you partner with girls, keep in mind that your enthusiasm and support in the travel process are essential to helping girls build confidence and leadership skills.

Start off on the right foot by:

- Creating a safe and open environment for girls to communicate with each other and you.
- Establishing roles. How do you envision your role? How do the girls envision theirs? Encourage girls to give input—make it a two-way conversation.
- Helping girls reach solutions by asking questions. Asking questions will guide them in the right direction.
- Having fun!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>What It Means</th>
<th>Why It Works</th>
<th>What It Looks Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girl Led</td>
<td>Girls make decisions and choices about what they do and how they do it.</td>
<td>Girls feel they “own” their group and experiences. They’ll also have more fun.</td>
<td>Girls plan, organize, and implement their travel projects with as little supervision as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning by Doing</td>
<td>Girls have opportunities for hands-on activities followed by reflection and discussion time.</td>
<td>Girls strengthen their critical-thinking skills and are more likely to apply what they learn to their lives.</td>
<td>Girls reflect on what they’re experiencing by journaling and being part of group discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>Girls work towards a common goal as well as knowledge and skills in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation.</td>
<td>Girls build healthy relationships and communicate effectively. This will help in their travel experiences and in other areas of their lives. Plus, cooperative learning is fun!</td>
<td>Girls create a team agreement, reflect, and speak openly and often about how they are functioning as a team. Girls do activities in pairs or small groups. Girls set group goals that can only be achieved through interdependent efforts (e.g., sharing resources, helping).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Day Trips to Globetrotting

Progression is the backbone of Girl Scout travel. Girls build on positive basic trip experiences and new skills over time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>18-24 Months Prior to Trip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coach Girls Through:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charting their past travel experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing a travel location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the purpose of their trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working out general trip details</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Your To-Do’s |
| Get familiar with the council’s travel guidelines in *Volunteer Essentials* Appendix: For travel volunteers. |

- Start with simple local trips such as visits to the park or firehouse. Walk, use cars, or ride public transportation.
- Take day trips to a nearby city. Then travel to neighboring states, if doable.
- Progress to overnight trips—one to two nights in a nearby state. Stay in a hostel*, hotel, motel, or campgrounds.
- Venture across the U.S. for multiple days. Use different accommodations and modes of transportation.
- Trot the globe in Girl Scout style.

*Hostels are affordable accommodations with dormitory-style rooms and common spaces in which to meet fellow travelers. Go to www.girlscouts.org for GSUSA’s partnership with Hostelling International USA.
Check Your Knowledge

What have you learned so far? Test your knowledge by answering the following questions:

1. What benefits do girls gain through travel?
   a. They develop self-confidence
   b. They make lifelong friends
   c. They gain an appreciation for differences and similarities
   d. They learn leadership skills by planning, earning money, and venturing to other places
   e. All of the above

2. Everything girls do in Girl Scouting is based on what?
   a. The Cookie Sale Program
   b. Camping
   c. Patches and Badges
   d. The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

3. What outcomes may girls gain as they connect with others through their trip?
   a. Girls develop healthy relationships
   b. Girls promote cooperation and team building
   c. Girls feel connected to their communities
   d. Girls gain practical life skills
   e. All of the above
4. The following are processes to guarantee girls will have a meaningful, relevant and fun time in the Girl Scout experience:

a. **Girl Led**
b. **Leader Led**
c. **Learning by Doing**
d. **Cooperative Learning**
e. **All of the above**

5. The following are progression steps you can do to help girls build on positive basic trip experiences and new skills over time:

a. **Girls play games at the troop meeting**
b. **Girls visit local landmarks in their community**
c. **Girls take a day trip to a nearby state**
d. **Girls stay overnight in a campground**
e. **Girls go across the U.S. for several days**
f. **All of the above**

6. 18-24 months prior to your trip, what should you be doing to coach girls?

a. **Charting their past travel experiences**
b. **Tell them where they are going**
c. **Determining the purpose of their trip**
d. **Working out general trip details**
e. **A, C, D**
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
Sorry, that's incorrect. Try again!
Experience Counts

Ask girls to chart their experiences and skills from previous activities to gauge their own progression. Assist girls as they reflect on trips they've taken, awards they've earned, events they've participated in, and experiences they've had in their Girl Scout troop/group and beyond. Encourage girls to think specifically, but also big picture. Travel requires practical knowledge and skills as well as patience, adaptability, and the ability to problem solve.

**Travel Guidelines**

- Be a registered Girl Scout Cadette or above.
- Align trip purpose to Girl Scout Leadership Experience.
- Travel as a group.
- Make sure there are at least two adults (see *Volunteer Essentials* adult-girl ratio).
- Obtain the council's approval and adhere to safety standards (see *Volunteer Essentials*).
- Submit all required forms.

**Things I’ve learned at...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Outings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Activities or Projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badge Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Stays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl Scout Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A successful trip requires sound planning and teamwork by the troop/group. The trip would be based on ongoing troop/group activities and interests. Each girl should participate in the decision-making process about where the group will go and her goal in taking this type of trip. With an inexperienced troop/group the leader might give the girls a few suggestions and then let them start to develop their own list.

Discussion

**Where are we going?**
**Why are we going?**
**When are we going?**
**How will we get there?**
**How much will it cost?**
**How can we get ready?**
**Will everyone be able to go?**
**What safety factors must we consider?**
**What will we do when we get there?**
**What will we do when we return home?**

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We planned all parts of the trip with minimal adult guidance. We learned how complicated a trip can be, but also how to accomplish every step.

—Brenna, 17

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An itinerary (including specific activities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location and accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates and times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A list of girls traveling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A list of adults traveling, including gender and their roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the girls’ skill levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A list of consultants or resource people who will be involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A list of groups or other organizations that will be involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of planned safety precautions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of specialized equipment to be used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mode of transportation you will be using</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any required special agreements or contracts (for example, hiring a bus or using designated premises)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Checkpoints 18-24 Months

Between 18 and 24 months, create a checklist to ensure the trip is on track. Use the following questions as a guide.

**Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determine your trip location?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify your trip purpose?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorm ideas for trip activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planted the travel seed with the girl families?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtained permission with your council?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined how many adults are needed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have any other groups gone to this place? What can we learn from them?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have the fitness necessary for this type of trip?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the activities age appropriate?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Talk to people you know who have already been on at least one other trip.”
Yelean, 14

Trip Tip:
Book group reservations early for well-attended locations and activities at least one year in advance.
Before girls can figure out how much money they'll bring on their trips, they'll need to know the total cost of their travel as well as how to afford it. In fact, they'll learn a lot about financial literacy—earning, saving, and allocating dollars—through trip planning.

Thinking about travel expenses provides a good opportunity for girls to look at their own spending habits. Do the following “Individual Spending Plan” activity with the girls to get them thinking about where their everyday dollars go.

**Crunch the Numbers**
Make up a list like the following and hand out to girls. Say: “Please estimate the total amount of money you spend in one week based on the categories in the chart.”

Then say: “Use the Other category to account for expenses that occur occasionally (such as makeup, activity fees, or dues). Figure out, on average, how much you spend per week on all those things and add them to your list.”

And lastly: “Take each category’s total and multiply by 4.5—that’s about how much you spend in one month. Then, take the weekly total and multiply by 52—that’s about how much you’ll spend on everyday items in a year.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly/Monthly/Yearly Expenses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for one week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One week total X 4.5 (equal to one month)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One week total X 52 (equal to one year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discuss It!**
Guide girls by asking:

- What surprised you most about your totals?
- Did you think the amounts would be more or less? Why?
- If you spread the cost of your trip out over the period of one year, how much will it cost you each week?
- How can you save for your trip? What categories can you spend less on?
- How can you save for your trip? What categories can you spend less on?
Before you go money-earning crazy, you'll need to know how much money your trip will cost. Fill in the boxes below to create a budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>$ for Group</th>
<th>$ for You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passport (if needed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souvenirs, gifts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission fees (museums, theater, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discuss It!

Guide girls by asking:
- Where are you going to stay?
- Will you be attending events?
- Are there registration costs?
- Will you sightsee?
- How much do the museums, performances, etc. cost?
- How much will you need to spend on food? What if you get the midnight munchies?
- Don’t forget to include personal expenses, such as souvenirs, film, postcards, gifts, etc.
- Airfare
- Local travel within the area (trains, buses, streetcars, taxis, etc.)
- Sightseeing tours, museum fees
- Emergency funds
- Personal expenses
- Tips for guides
- Travel pack/luggage
- Guidebooks or other resources
Group Money-Earning

When girls participate in money-earning projects, they build practical skills that benefit their groups, communities, and, most importantly, themselves. Girls learn:

- Budgeting
- Goal Setting
- Marketing
- Customer relations
- Good business practices

To support girls in money-earning projects for travel:

- Create, with girls, a detailed and realistic budget. Include figures for transportation, food, tips, insurance, recreation, admission fees, taxes, fees for travel documents, and emergency funds.
- Get council approval for all money-earning projects and follow money earning guidelines in Volunteer Essentials.
- Check with fund development at GSEIWI before soliciting funds from local organizations, foundations, or businesses.
- Encourage girls to present travel plans to potential contributors—but leave the “ask” to adults.
- Define for the girls personal and group expenses.
- Set up a group travel bank account to be overseen by a designated adult.
- Have just one person responsible for group funds and keep a daily account of expenditures. However, all funds should not be held by just one person at any time during the trip.
- Make decisions in advance about how to pay bills that occur before, during, and after the trip.

Our troop has always worked on a one-third, one-third, one-third plan. The girls earn one-third individually, parents contribute one-third, and the troop earns the final third. It is amazing how much the girls can earn babysitting!

—Pam, Massachusetts

Cool Ideas for earning money

- Participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program
- Babysit at special events
- Collect litter after sporting events
- Wash cars
- Do face-painting at a community event
- Hold a bottle and can drive
- Care for pets
- Hold a dinner fundraiser

Build Support

With the approval of your council, talk to local organizations, and media outlets about the girls’ travel plans. Planting seeds now and here can bring an unexpected harvest of financial support.
Money earning as part of a group is a great cooperative learning experience. To guide the process, suggest girls create guiding principles. For example, what happens if one girl doesn't earn the same amount of money as others?

Consider posing questions to girls like:
- How will you hold each other responsible?
- How will you motivate each other?
- How can you have fun while earning money?

The Power of Goal Setting
Don’t be discouraged if girls’ families cannot contribute. Many Girl Scouts reach financial goals through hard work and perseverance. A volunteer from Texas reported that the girls in her troop earned half the money they needed from troop activities and the rest from after-school jobs. And one very committed Girl Scout from Massachusetts spent almost 3 years collecting cans and bottles to redeem. The money she earned not only benefited the environment, but covered the cost of her trip to go whitewater rafting, including spending money.

The Adult Team
Planning a trip is a big undertaking and girls will need parents or guardian buy-in from the beginning. Once trip basics are decided on, ask girls to organize a meeting so the group can discuss itinerary, timelines, and finances with their families. Consider holding family update meetings every two to three months.

Guiding Principles

Chaperones
Start by asking who would make the best chaperones. Chaperones will have a big impact on girls’ experiences, so it is important to let girls have their say. If you have your heart set on your sister being your co-chaperone but the girls prefer someone else, you’ll have to compromise.

Let girls take the lead on discussing, selecting, and reaching out to potential chaperones. Of course, candidates will need to be approved by the council and become Girl Scout members. Make sure you have at least two adults—one of whom is female—for 20 Cadettes or for 25 Seniors/Ambassadors on the trip. Add one adult for every 10 additional Cadettes or 12 additional Seniors/Ambassadors.

5 Things to look for in a Chaperone:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality/Characteristic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 years old or older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has prior traveling experience with girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is someone I could trust to turn to for help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is knowledgeable (or willing to be) about Girl Scout travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handles pressure and stress well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reality Check
Are you the best travel chaperone for your group? Your instinct is probably to give a quick yes, but really think about your answer. If you can’t be objective, ask another adult who is for her/his opinion.
12-16 Months Prior to Trip

Coach Girls Through:

- **Budgeting**
- **Building adult networks**
- **Money earning**
- **Increasing travel readiness**

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**Your To-Do’s**

- Provide families with general information about the trip.
- Get trip and money-earning approval from your Girl Scout council.
- Set up a group travel bank account, if necessary.
- Make sure you have at least two adults—one of whom is female—for every 20 Girl Scout Cadettes or 24 Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors on the trip. Add one adult for every 10 additional Cadettes or 12 additional Seniors/Ambassadors.
- With girls, expand the group’s adult network by considering and reaching out to possible chaperones.
- Integrate progression into trip preparation by planning smaller trips that build up to larger trips.
- Consider girls’ maturity by evaluating their adaptability, decision-making abilities, and other specific skills and interests.
8-12 Months Prior to Trip

Discuss It!

Guide girls by asking:

How much can we really fit in a day?

Do we need to buy tickets in advance or book additional travel?

Do we need to build in time for travel delays?

How much will that cost?

What are the opening and closing times of that attraction?

What is our backup plan?

Coach Girls Through:

• Building the itinerary
• Team building
• Preparing for safe travel
• Determining fitness levels
• Getting a passport

Checklist

Before you move on to the next phase of planning your trip, did you:

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Make sure reservations for transportation and lodging are made.

Determine fitness level of trip and make necessary adjustments.

Determine training needs:
  - CPR
  - First aid
  - Council-specific training

Have an emergency plan.

Arrange for parent/guardian permission to travel.

Remind girls and their families to obtain needed immunizations or health exams for the trip.
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Check Your Knowledge

What have you learned so far? Test your knowledge by answering the following questions:

1. What travel guidelines should you know about when planning a trip?
   a. Travel as a group
   b. Be registered as Girl Scout Cadettes or above
   c. Made sure there are at least two adults
   d. Obtain council’s approval and adhere to safety standards
   f. All of the above

2. In the decision-making process, the troop leader might give girls a few suggestions, but let them plan their own trip.
   True False

3. At 18-24 months before your trip, you should be planning the following:
   a. Determining your trip location
   b. Brainstorming ideas for activities
   c. Obtaining permission with the council
   d. Learning from other groups who have gone before
   e. Are the activities age appropriate?
   f. All of the above

4. How is the chart for Weekly, Monthly/Yearly Expenses used?
   a. To get the girls thinking about where they spend their money every day
   b. To figure out how much money the girls may need for their trip
   c. To punish girls for spending too much money
   d. To find out where girls spend most of their money
   e. None of the above
   f. A, B, D
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
5. It is important that you know how much your trip will cost and create a budget early in the planning stages.
   - True
   - False

6. What skills will girls learn through participation in money-earning projects?
   - Budgeting
   - Goal Setting
   - Marketing
   - Cheating
   - Customer Relations
   - Good Business Practices
   - All of the above except D

7. Girls do not need to check with fund development at GSEIWI before soliciting funds from a local organization.
   - True
   - False

8. One person should be responsible for keeping a daily account of expenditures during the trip.
   - True
   - False

9. Girls should set guiding principles before earning trip money.
   - True
   - False

10. What characteristics should girls look for when picking a trip chaperone?
    - 18 years old or older
    - Has prior traveling experience with girls
    - Is someone girls can trust/turn to for help
    - Is knowledgeable about Girl Scout travel
    - Handles pressure and stress well
    - All of the above
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!

✓
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
How well girls blend as a group will play a major factor in how smooth the trip will go. Allocate ample meeting time to focus on activities that promote team building. Even if the group has been together for years, trip planning offers a whole new dimension to the Girl Scout experience.

What are the dynamics of your group? Have an open and honest conversation about it with girls. Girls will feel a sense of ownership and pride in their group by determining what the group dynamic is now and where it needs to be for the trip, and by charting their own progress along the way.

**Team Building**

**Discuss It!**

As a group, what are our strengths and weaknesses?

Can everyone follow as well as lead?

Can each participant function as a team member?

Will everyone accept the group leader’s direction?

Are there some girls who work better with one another than others?

What parts of team building do we need to work on?

How will we handle emergency or unexpected situations?

**Troop Tip:**

Four Responsible Traveler Tips

1. Learn as much as you can about customs, values, practices, and religion.
2. Be aware of people’s behavior, dress, and body language.
3. Ask before you take someone’s photo and offer to send copies.
4. Respect the environment.
Create a group agreement on a large piece of paper or newsprint before you leave for your trip. This tried and true activity encourages girls to be accountable to themselves and each other. The group agreement can also serve as a reference point to make certain the group is on target with its goals or to see if the group needs to modify its plan.

A group may agree to:
When consensus is built around the written agreement, have each girl sign her name. Keep the group agreement posted in a prominent place whenever the group meets. Ask girls how they want to “bring” the group agreement on the trip. One suggestion is to write the agreement on index cards and have each girl (and adult) carry one.

As girls come up with ground rules, they’ll be discussing their own values and expectations. Therefore, ask girls to explain fully to be sure that everyone understands all the ideas. Remind girls about the value of the Girl Scout Promise and Law and that they can use these principles as the framework for the group agreement.

If the girls need help developing their group agreement, use the following ideas.

### Discuss It!

Guide girls on developing their group agreement by asking:

- How do I want to be treated and how do I want to treat others?
- How will we give each other honest feedback?
- How will we deal with broken rules?
- How will we support each other in sticking to the agreement?
- How will we track our progress as a group following the agreement?

Respect each other

Listen (not hold side conversations)

Treat what is said as confidential

Give members the right to pass (meaning “I’d rather not” or “I don’t want to answer”)

Maintain a non-judgmental approach

Be sensitive to diversity

Be accepting

Have a good time

Be present

Pay attention

Speak the truth

Be open

Create a safe environment
Safety can be a big source of anxiety for girls, even if they don’t mention it—and it’s a concern for parents, too. Put everyone’s mind at ease by preparing for safe travel.

Consult Volunteer Essentials, Appendix: for travel volunteers, to make sure your trip meets safety guidelines. When preparing for any activity with girls, always begin with the Girl Scout Safety Activity Checkpoints written about that particular activity by accessing our website at http://www.gseiwi.org/volunteer/checkpoints.asp.

**Preparation is Key**

Here are a few things you and the girls can do to prepare for safe travel:

- Have girls create emergency contact cards. Include family contact information and who to contact when unable to reach family members.
- Encourage girls to role-play potentially unsafe situations and brainstorm solutions. Have girls create a “worst-case scenario” game, with each girl imagining an emergency situation. Girls write their ideas on index cards, then discuss as a team how to handle each one. This will reinforce safety and risk management. It will also give girls a chance to discuss some of their travel fears.
- Quiz girls, game-show style, on the travel and safety guidelines. Girl can create the concept of the game themselves. Play the game several times, say once a month, leading up to the trip.

**Before the trip, girls should know:**

- What to do if they accidentally get separated from the group.
- What to do if emergency help is needed
- How to navigate a crowd
- How to perform basic first-aid procedures
- Appropriate behaviors
- How to appropriately represent Girl Scouts
- Which adult they are accountable to while on the trip
- Contents of the “Stay Safe” section of this guide

**Troop Tip:**

Designate a back-home contact person. This person would be responsible for calling parents or guardians in case of an emergency, scheduling conflict, or transportation delay. The contact person should have the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of all parents and guardians. Having a contact person back home allows advisers and chaperones to stay focused on the girls and their travel.
Stay Safe

When on the road, safety comes first (second and third, too!). Go over the safety tips below with girls to make for smooth traveling.

- Use the buddy system at all times.
- Know what to do if you are separated from the group.
- Do not wear your name monogrammed where strangers can see it. It’s better to all dress alike with the same color t-shirts, bandanas, or backpacks when visiting crowded areas. This makes group identification easy.
- Know how to phone home, the police, or fire department.
- Carry only as much money as you need inside a pocket or money belt. Avoid purses. Store the rest of your money in the hotel safe.
- Know what to do in case of fire; make a plan with escape routes for each new place you visit.
- Don’t roam the hotel halls alone. Even if you are going to another girl’s room, always take a buddy and check with your chaperone before leaving and when you get back. Only open your door to someone you know, never to strangers. Always keep your door locked.
- If carrying a backpack, pin the zipper down with a large safety pin. It may be a little inconvenient to use, but it will help prevent theft from behind.
- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. Be careful of laying down packages, backpacks, and purses—while watching entertainment, eating at a restaurant, riding public transportation, etc.
- Don’t say your hotel room number out loud in front of strangers.
- Carry identification with you in an inside pocket or money belt.
- Always have an emergency plan.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times to avoid losing track of the larger group.
Get Physical

Are you planning to sightsee from the bus? Or, are you expecting to walk, hike, carry bags, and fully engage physically, if able? Depending on your answer, you may need time to prepare physically for the trip. It’s important for the girls, and you, to assess fitness levels.

Doctor's Orders

Prepare your body for travel.

Stay healthy before you go by eating sensibly, getting rest, and taking care of health issues. Encourage girls to do the same.

Remind girls that a big trip is not the time to start a crash diet, go off medication, or stay up nights on end. Illness not only affects the individual but the entire group.

Results

If your answers were mostly A’s:
Your fitness level is a 3.
You’re in great condition. Keep it going!

If your answers were mostly B’s:
You’re right in the middle of the fitness meter. If your trip has intense physical activities, you’re going to need to bump your fitness level up notch.

If your answers were mostly C’s:
Your fitness level is a 1.
Your trip may be physically challenging for you. The good news: you have plenty of time to get yourself into better condition. Ask your doctor or an adviser for health recommendations that will prepare you for your trip.

1. **Cardio respiratory health**
   Run up two flights of stairs (at least 32 steps) without stopping. How do you feel?
   a. I can talk comfortably and could run up another two flights.
   b. I’m too winded to talk.
   c. Where’s the ambulance?

2. **Endurance**
   Take a three-hour hike. How do you feel?
   a. I could do another three hours.
   b. The first hours and a half was a breeze. But, now I’m tired.
   c. I’ll just lie here until someone rescues me.

3. **Muscle-Strength**
   Carry a 30-pound bag for 20 minutes. How do you feel?
   a. No problem. Where to now?
   b. I did it, but I’m ready to put this thing down now.
   c. I had to ditch the bag after five minutes.

4. **Overall fitness**
   How do you feel after completing this test?
   a. What test? I feel great!
   b. I’m a little bit sore and tired.
   c. I’m ready for a vacation.
The physical activity level of your trip can range from mild to strenuous, depending on where you’re going and what activities you will be enjoying. Have girls look critically at each activity in your itinerary and rate each activity using the scale below. Assign a one, two, or three depending on how much physical exercise your trip will require.

Light walking and hiking for an hour or two a day. Bags stay at our place of lodging the whole time.
Moderate hiking, biking, rafting, kayaking, and other activities that require only an average/moderate level of fitness to enjoy. We have to pick up and go with our bags every couple of days.
Hiking, trekking, or cycling of up to eight hours a day or other activities that require a high level of fitness. And those bags go where we go.

How does the physical activity level required for your trip match your personal fitness level? If there’s a gap, use your preparation time to get in shape. Marathon runners don’t just one day decide to run 25 miles—they build up endurance and stamina over time. You may not be running a marathon, but follow their example by gradually building up your personal fitness so you’re ready when trip-day arrives. Take frequent hikes or brisk walks so you will be prepared to endure long days on the road. Work out at the gym, play sports, take a dance class, lift light weights, and take the stairs instead of the elevator. Grab a buddy and find your own enjoyable way to get in shape.

Discuss It!

Guide girls by asking:

What fitness level are you at?
What can you do to help a sister traveler whose fitness level is lower than what’s needed?
What if it’s one of the chaperones?
What can the group do together to get fit?
If you haven’t already done so, fill out your Trip Approval/Information form found online at girlscoutstoday.org/form-bank.

Additional insurance must be purchased for longer than two nights.
- If a nonmember attends such a Girl Scout activity, additional insurance must be purchased for the non-member(s).
- Do you know who will be going with you? Refer to Troop Trip Standards in Volunteer Essentials for more information.

Does your group have a designated first-aider? Check with your group adviser or chaperone. This is a must!

There was a lot of communication in the months before the trip—through online groups and message boards. The girls and adults were able to discuss what we wanted to do, what to expect, and who was going to do what.
—Della, 13

Don’t cram too many activities into a short trip. Instead, spend lots of time on things you really want to see—unless, of course, you only want an overview.
—Melissa, 17

Have an open mind...NOT everything goes according to plan, but that’s what makes it more exciting!
—Sarah, 16

Checklist
Before you move on to the next phase of planning your trip, did you:

- Apply for a passport (if needed)?
- Create a detailed daily itinerary?
- Agree on a code of behavior with your group?
- Discuss safety and communication agreements for the group such as having phone calling cards and wearing the same color t-shirts?
- Prepare your emergency contact card?
- Identify your fitness level?
- Rate the physical activity level of your trip activities?
- Determine if you need to make adjustments in your fitness level?
- Fill out the appropriate council forms?

8-12 Month Checkpoint

Don’t cram too many activities into a short trip. Instead, spend lots of time on things you really want to see—unless, of course, you only want an overview.
—Melissa, 17

Have an open mind...NOT everything goes according to plan, but that’s what makes it more exciting!
—Sarah, 16

If you haven’t already done so, fill out your Trip Approval/Information form found online at girlscoutstoday.org/form-bank.

Additional insurance must be purchased for longer than two nights.
- If a nonmember attends such a Girl Scout activity, additional insurance must be purchased for the non-member(s).
- Do you know who will be going with you? Refer to Troop Trip Standards in Volunteer Essentials for more information.

Does your group have a designated first-aider? Check with your group adviser or chaperone. This is a must!
Check Your Knowledge

1. If girls want to add an item to the itinerary that doesn’t fit with your plans, you should have them take it off the list.
   - True
   - False

2. 8-12 months prior to your trip, you should be guiding girls by asking:
   a. How much can we really fit in a day?
   b. Do we need to buy tickets in advance or book additional travel?
   c. Do we need to build in time for travel delays?
   d. How much will delays cost?
   e. What are the opening and closing times of our attractions?
   f. What is our backup plan?
   g. All of the above

3. Team building plays a major factor in how smoothly the trip will go.
   - True
   - False

4. A group agreement is a way to embarrass girls when they don’t follow what was decided on.
   - True
   - False

5. What safety-related items should the girls know before their trip?
   a. What do if they separate from the group
   b. Appropriate behaviors
   c. What to do if emergency help is needed
   d. How to appropriately represent Girl Scouts
   e. How to navigate a crowd
   f. Which adult they are accountable to while on the trip
   g. How to perform basic first-aid procedures
   h. All of the above
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
Check Your Knowledge

6. Where should you look to make sure your trip meets safety guidelines?
   a. Volunteer Essentials
   b. Safety Activity Checkpoints
   c. Leadership Experience Guide
   d. A and B

7. It is OK for a girl to go alone as long as she is just going to another girl’s room.
   True   False

8. Have girls carry identification in their purse.
   True   False

9. When visiting crowded areas, it’s better to have girls dress alike with the same color clothing or backpacks.
   True   False

10. To prepare your body for travel, you should:
    a. Stay healthy
    b. Get rest
    c. Take care of health issues
    d. Eat sensibly
    e. Get fit
    f. All of the above

11. Additional insurance must be purchased for an overnight.
    True   False

12. You may find your Trip Approval form on our website.
    True   False
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
Get Down to Details

You’re down to crunch time! With less than three months to go, use this time to ensure you are up to date in completing all steps within the timeline. Go back and review the to-do list that begins each section.

Revisit the Itinerary
Lock in daily itinerary items. Double-check places, dates, and times. Confirm your lodging.

Safety Check
Go over all the travel safety guidelines again. Are all girls well-acquainted with procedures? Review your trusted Volunteer Essentials.

Family Meeting
Hold a group family meeting to go over final details. Have a communication plan so families will know where the group will be at all times. Also, discuss safety plans and use the time to have parents and guardians fill out any forms that haven’t been completed.

Coach Girls Through:
Finalizing details
Checking paperwork
Confirming plans

Your To-Do’s
• With girls, finalize itinerary and budget.
• Complete all safety and risk-management planning.
• Inform families with full and final details of trip.
• Recruit and train the back-home contact person.
• Complete other council-specific requirements.
• Check with U.S. State Department for travel warnings (refer to www.travel.state.gov).
• Continue to strengthen group team-building.
•
So, you’ve researched where to go, saved money, and ordered a passport. Before hopping on that plane, get your monetary ducks in a row. Review budget and balance it against troop funds. Is it looking good? Answer any outstanding questions. By this point, tickets, lodging, transportation, event fees and whatever can be purchased in advance should have been done. All troop funds should be collected.

Familiarize yourself with the different options for carrying money. Here are pros and cons on currency.

**Cash**

**Pro:** Cash is universally accepted

**Con:** Once money is lost or stolen, you can not replace it. Carrying a lot of cash around may not be safe.
Know About the Dough (cont’d)

ATM/Debit Card

Pro: ATM machines abound, giving you access to cash virtually any time.
Con: ATMs can carry fees as high as $5 per withdrawal, so it might be a good idea to look for ATMs with free withdrawal fees.

TIPS
Make sure your ATM card is linked through one of the major networks (PLUS, Cirrus, Mastercard, Visa, etc.)

Travelers Checks

Pro: If they are lost or stolen, they can be replaced within 24 hours. They can be used directly at many stores.
Con: Most banks add a surcharge for issuing them. Also, you’ll need to find places during your trip that accept travelers checks.

TIPS
Travelers Checks come with serial numbers that you should record and keep in a safe place—without those numbers, there’s no refund!

Credit Card

Pro: Credit cards are like insurance—hopefully you won’t need them, but if you run out of or lose your money, they come in handy.
Con: Not every card has the same replacement policy.
TIPS
Most credit cards are widely accepted, but check your card’s policy on replacing a lost or stolen card.
If you’ve followed the tips provided, the last month before your trip will be smooth sailing. Now’s the time to confirm logistics and focus on team building. And don’t forget to pack!

TIP:
Take a breather from last-minute details and find some time to relax before you trip. Encourage girls to do the same. Plan a spa day with the troop and get some well-deserved pampering and rest.

**Coach Girls Through:**
Packing appropriately
Reflecting on who they are “pre-trip”

**Your To-Do’s**
- Collect:
  - Signed parent/guardian permission slips
  - Girl and adult health forms (must be reviewed by first aider)
  - Special Accommodations, Medical
  - Emergency Statement
  - Photo release forms
  - Girl Health Examination Record
  - All trip monies
- Confirm:
  - All transportation
  - Lodging
  - Payments made/received
  - Trip details, safety procedures, contact information (with family)
  - Additional insurance purchased if required
  - Continue to strengthen group team building

**Checklist**

**Before you move on to the next phase of planning your trip, did you:**

- Balance and finalize the budget?
- Decide what kind of money you’re going to bring with you?
- Finalize the trip itinerary?
- Meet all safety guidelines?
- Purchase transportation tickets?
- Finalize accommodations?
- Submit all required forms?
- Review all trip information with parents and guardians?
Know what you have to work with. Check airlines to find out about restrictions on luggage size, weight, and carry-on.

Go light and easy to wash. Choose an easy-care wardrobe that can be mixed and matched and adapted to unexpected occasions and unpredictable weather. Hand-washables and clothing that dries fast are good travelers. Layering is important, especially when traveling at different altitudes. Minimize bulky items, like shoes, coats, and sweaters.

Pass on the bling. Keep expensive jewelry at home. Avoid appliances and electronics like hairdryers and laptops that can weigh down your bag. Instead, use that space for an extra pair of contact lenses, sunglasses, socks, etc.

Go label crazy. Label your luggage, clothing, and equipment inside and out with your name and address.

Leave a little room. Where are you going to put all the funky things you bought? And don’t forget SWAPs and souvenirs. Unless you’re prepared to ship things home, leave some wiggle room in your bags.

Bring special supplies with you. Get extra film and sanitary supplies. Travel can sometimes disrupt menstrual schedules.

Keep the important stuff close to you. Place airline tickets, cash, travelers checks, medicine, contact lenses, glasses, etc. in your handbag or money belt. Pack your carry-on luggage with one spare change of clothes just in case your checked luggage gets temporarily lost.

Pull your own weight. Take a walk around the block with all your luggage. If you come back huffing and puffing, unpack things that might not be so vital. As a rule of thumb, you should be able to run for a train with all your things.

Follow the provided packing list that you can make your own.

Trip Tip
Give everyone in your group the airline luggage restrictions and a list of must-have items for the trip. Ask them to pack a sample suitcase. Have them bring the suitcase to a group meeting and see how well they’ve packed. Plan a travel experience that incorporates local travel (i.e., subway, bus, ferries, walking, etc.). This gives girls a chance to see how heavy their luggage really is and make adjustments if needed.
## Packing Checklist

Packing for your trip has the potential to make you feel stressed, but stay positive and organized. Use the checklist below and add your own items. Remember: function over fashion!

### Important Stuff
- Airline tickets
- Copies of passport
- Health forms (if required)
- Wallet
- Cash
- Traveler’s checks
- Credit Card
- Itinerary
- Lodging information
- Emergency phone numbers
- Prescription medication in original containers
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________

### General Stuff
- Travel alarm clock
- Safety pins
- Spot remover
- Umbrella
- Raingear
- Calling cards
- Magazines, books
- Pen and paper
- Addresses
- Sunglasses
- Camera/memory card
- Batteries
- Towel/washcloth
- Comfort items (stuffed animal, blanket)
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________

### Toiletries
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Comb
- Hair ties
- Bandana
- First-aid supplies
- Sunscreen
- Feminine hygiene products
- Cotton swabs
- Baggies
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________

### Clothes
- Dresses
- Shirts
- Skirts
- Pants
- Shorts
- Swimwear
- Shoes
- Pajamas
- Underwear
- Socks
- Hats
- Comfortable shoes
- Sneakers
- Flip flops
- Sweater/sweatshirt
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
- __________________________
Encourage girls to bring a journal with them on the trip. A journal will help girls as they reflect on the day’s events. It should include pages for girls to record daily experiences, not just for memory’s sake but as a way to think deeply about what they saw, did, or felt. Recording daily insight is a means for girls to observe how they’ve changed, and can serve as inspiration to take action on something they care about.

Girls could write their first journal entry right before the trip begins. Ask them to answer the following pre-trip questions. While this is a journal entry that girls complete on their own, it’s pivotal to the end-of-the-trip reflection.

**Daily Journal**

**Date...........................................................................................................**

What three things are you most excited about?
What three things are you most worried about?
What three things do you predict you’ll miss the least about home?
What three things do you think you’ll miss about home?
My greatest single challenge on this trip will be….
How do you think your travel experience will change you?
Record how you’re feeling at this very moment.
Check Your Knowledge

1. Why is it important to have a family meeting 6-12 weeks before your trip?
   a. **Discuss safety plans**
   b. **Have parents fill out any forms that haven’t been completed**
   c. **Go over communication plan**
   d. **Go over final details**
   e. **All of the above**

2. The four options for carrying money are cash, ATM/Debit Card, Travelers Checks, and credit cards.
   - **True**
   - **False**

3. Travelers Checks is a good money option because most banks don’t add a surcharge for using them.
   - **True**
   - **False**

4. Using a debit card is a good money option, but may carry high fees.
   - **True**
   - **False**

5. What should you have done 4-6 weeks prior to your trip?
   a. **Finalize trip itinerary**
   b. **Review trip information with parents**
   c. **Submit all required forms**
   d. **Purchase transportation tickets**
   e. **Meet safety guidelines**
   f. **Finalize accommodations**
   g. **Balance and finalize the budget**
   h. **All of the above**

6. Packing luggage is an important part of your trip.
   - **True**
   - **False**

7. A journal helps girls reflect on each day’s event and should be included in your trip plans.
   - **True**
   - **False**
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that's incorrect. Try again!
Reflection Coach

Besides being manager of logistics and safety, the most important role you play on the trip is that of Reflection Coach. To deepen their experiences girls need to reflect on the day and apply lessons learned to future situations. The reflection process involves two components: group debrief and individual journal writing.

Group Discussion

At the end of each day, make time to debrief as a group. Besides reflecting on the day’s happenings, this is the time for adults and girls to check on group interaction (what’s working, what’s not) and logistics (next day’s plans, meeting time).

Discuss It!

Guide girls by asking:

- Does anyone have any questions about what we did today?
- What was the best thing about today?
- What was the biggest challenge today?
- What things went well?
- Are there any changes we need to make?
- Did today live up to your expectations? Why or why not?
- Does anyone have an issue she would like to bring up?
- How can we perform better as a group?
- Did anyone have an experience or see something today that could translate into a Take Action project?
- Is there anything you want to change—attitudes or behaviors—to make the group more like the environment you want?
- Is there anything that we are not saying to each other that we need to be saying?

Trip Tip:

______________________________

While traveling:
Let girls take the lead as much as possible
Make time for reflection on the day
Coach girls to solve problems together
Have fun
Problem-Solving

G-I-R-L-S: 5 Problem-Solving Guidelines

If your group is facing a big challenge or comes face-to-face with an issue girls cannot agree on (you know it’s bound to happen with travel), use the steps below. And remember: The key is to support girls in solving the problem or issue themselves.

G—Gather the facts.
Sometimes a visual can help a group. Brainstorm and list information on a big piece of paper. Be sure that all sides of the story are represented.

I—Indicate whether the problem is solvable by you and the girls exclusively.
Think of all the ways the problem can be solved. You may have to include other adults to act as mediators or objective listeners.

R—Recommend possible solutions as a group.
Discuss the consequences. Some actions may have a positive impact and some may have a negative effect.

L—Look for a mutually agreeable solution.
You can make decisions in a number of ways: by deciding for the group, by having the group vote democratically, or by having each person take a moment to share her opinion until everyone in the group reaches a consensus.

S—Solved? Make the solution happen.
Let the girls in your group try to implement their decisions on their own. Provide guidance and reminders to keep them accountable—and thus “responsible for what I say and do”—when needed.

Positive Communication

- Make eye contact.
- Listen—girls want to be heard.
- Be mindful of girls’ feelings.
- Ask questions, but avoid questions that begin with “why,” a word that can put girls on the defensive.
- Paraphrase what you heard to be sure you and the girl are in agreement about what was said.
Welcome back! The trip is over and everyone will be excited to talk about her experiences, show photos and videos, and reflect on what she learned. Evaluate the trip with the girls: Discuss what was fun and worthwhile, decide what the group would like to change on future trips, and report back to the council with the group’s evaluation. This is also the time to pay all bills promptly.

What’s Different?
After girls have had a chance to reflect individually on their trip, bring the group together to discuss the impact of their travels. Support the Girl Scout process of “learning by doing” by having girls run the debriefing themselves.

Have girls answer the following questions:

What three things did you enjoy most?
What three things did you miss from home?
What three things bothered you or were the most difficult?
What three things from home did you not miss?

My greatest single challenge was:
How do you think this travel experience changed you?
What, if anything, will you do differently?
What, if anything, would you change about your trip?
What did you figure out about teamwork that you can apply to other situations in your life?
In what other areas of your life can you use the planning and goal-setting skills you developed?
What has your trip inspired you to do next?
Now is the time for girls to bring their Take Action projects to the forefront, refine them, and execute them. Support girls in organizing a Take Action kickoff party. The party will give girls the opportunity to celebrate the conclusion of their trip and to start talking about possible projects. Ask girls to bring their travel journals with them.

Your help will be invaluable as girls begin to identify issues they want to tackle in their Take Action projects. It’s best to approach this topic in two steps.

First go over the “You Got Issues (and Solutions)! Activity with girls as a group. This activity helps girls identify issues important to them.

You Got Issues (and Solutions)!

Begin your Take Action project by identifying an issue important to you. Go over your responses to the Take Action questions. Do you see any recurring themes? Did you identify something you felt passionately about? To take on an authentic Take Action project, the issue you’re identifying must meet two requirements:

Your issue needs to be something you feel passionately about.
Your issue must meet a community need.

Start by identifying three potential issues and then narrow them down to one.

As girls narrow down choices to one issue, they’ll need your support on size, scope, and feasibility. Emphasize that Take Action projects should reflect their passions. Projects do not necessarily have to take place in the location they visited or even benefit the people they met, but girls do need to draw from things they felt inspired by. For example, if girls were moved by poverty they observed in a city, they could create a Take Action project to benefit residents in that city or use the issue as an inspiration to tackle a project in their own communities.

Your role is to coach girls to think carefully about how they can have meaningful impact. A clearly focused project can have more impact than a big campaign.
As girls start to build Take Action plans, you can help them frame the details of their projects through the following prompts:

- My project focuses on this community issue:
- My project involves this realistic plan of action:
- My project will take this amount of time to complete:
- My project goals are:
- The impact of this project will be:
- This project could be sustainable if:
- I'll know I will have succeeded when /because:

You can help by recommending that girls write in their journals about these statements. Also remind them that the journaling they did on their trip is a treasure trove of information about their experiences: how they felt, what they noticed, and what their intentions were. Remind girls: “You’ll know you have carefully focused your issue and solution when you can write it in one short paragraph. This is what success will look like.”

As girls make progress on their projects, continue engaging them with reflection questions:

- While doing this project did you meet anyone new? What have you learned from that person?
- How is your network expanding through this project?
- What kind of impact do you think the project is having? Why?
- Have you experienced any setbacks? How did you deal with them?
- Are you on track with your time frame? Do you need to make any adjustments?
- If you were starting over, would you do anything differently?
Now that your travel experience has come full circle, take time to reflect. Have girls think about each statement below in relation to your travel experience, from the very first moments of brainstorming location ideas to working on their Take Action Plan. Put a check next to each statement they feel is true. “Because of my trip…”

**I have a stronger sense of self**
(For example, I learned it’s okay to be different from other kids around me. I did things that made me feel good about myself.)

**I gained practical life skills**
(For example: I learned how to do things I didn’t think I could do; I learned how to take care of myself.)

**I seek challenges and new opportunities to expand my knowledge**
(For example: I tried new activities even if they were hard to do.)

**I can think critically about and use different viewpoints to look at issues and ideas**
(For example: I tried to solve problems for myself before asking for help; I was willing to change my mind about something if I learned new information.)

**I developed healthy relationships with other girls and adults**
(For example: I learned I could disagree with someone and still be her friend; I felt like I belonged.)

**I know how to work together with other girls toward a common goal**
(For example: I worked with a small team of girls to research where we’d stay; I read maps and figured out where we were going while traveling.)

**I feel connected to my community and others**
(For example: Connecting with other girls helped strengthen my sense of belonging to the Girl Scouts; I interacted with people of different cultures and it helped me feel part of the global community.)

**I have educated and inspired others to act**
(For example: I will share with others what I learned from my travels.)

**I made a difference in the world**
(For example: I made decisions about what kind of Take Action project we would do; I felt empowered to make a difference in my community.)
Check Your Knowledge

1. When on your trip, at the end of each day you should:
   a. Talk about what went wrong during the day
   b. Reflect on the day’s happenings
   c. Check on group interactions
   d. Go over the next day’s plans
   e. All except A

2. Any issues that come up between the girls should just be ignored and viewed as stress.
   True   False

3. When you return home, girls should reflect on their trip on their own and without discussion as a group.
   True   False

4. Your role is to tell girls what Take Action projects will best fit with their trip experience.
   True   False

5. What questions can you ask girls to get them to reflect on their trip and think about a Take Action project?
   a. Did you see something you can do differently to help make the world a better place?
   b. Is there a community issue that you would like to address?
   c. Are there new ways of doing things that can benefit others?
   d. What new people did you meet with great ideas that inspired you?
   e. All of above

6. Reflection is an important part of the travel experience.
   True   False
Yes!
You are correct!
Yes!
You are correct!
Sorry, that’s incorrect. Try again!
Congratulations!
You have completed this session of Extended Travel Training

Please inform the Adult Learning Department that you have completed this session. Include your name, troop number and session name in the email.

Print a certificate of completion