



Girl Scout Junior Essentials

Resources needed to complete the Junior Essentials self-paced home study are:

- *Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide Book*
- *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*
- *Junior Girl Scout Badge Book*
- *Agent of Change and Adult Guide*
- **Safety Wise*

Optional Resources available at the Council Shop

- *Transforming Leadership*
- *Juliette Low – Girl Scout Founder*
- *Let's Celebrate! Girl Scout Ceremonies*
- *Let's Play! Games for Girls*

*Some publications are available in Spanish

The *Agent of Change* Journey book and *Adult Guide* are the basic resource for girls and adults; the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook* and *Junior Girl Scout Badge Book* supplement the basic program.

Girl Scout Juniors

Membership

A Girl Scout Junior troop is comprised of girls who are in grades 4 and 5. Girls with developmental challenges should be registered as closely as possible to girls of their chronological age.

Characteristics of Girl Scout Juniors

General characteristics of Girl Scout Juniors are listed in the *Agent of Change Adult Guide* on pages 22-23.

When working with a group of Girl Scout Juniors, it's crucial to consider each girl as a unique individual with her own talents, gifts, personality, growth rate, intelligence, strengths, and weaknesses. At the same time, it's helpful to be aware of traits that generally characterize girls of this age.

Studies have shown that at about age 11, many girls start to lose self-esteem and feel less confident about their abilities and ideas. Thus, they are less likely to say what is on their minds.

This is a critical time for girls, and a time when Girl Scouting can help girls maintain and strengthen their self-esteem. The Girl Scout Junior is also more aware of herself as an individual. In turn, she may be more self-conscious and wonder how others see her. She strives for recognition, compares herself to others, reaches to achieve, develops her relationships, and deepens her sense of self-worth. It is important for her to learn that she is of value to her peer group, and is a skilled and unique person.

Reflections

Think of the ways you might describe girls in a typical Girl Scout Junior troop. Now list 3- 4 characteristics classic of this age Girl Scout. What qualities in girls do you most value and which qualities in girls do you least value?

List characteristics you need to know more about – or those which could become problematic. Do you think you consistently reward the behavior you most value? How might you need to change your reaction to some behaviors in girls? You may discover that your values about girls' behaviors and qualities differ from theirs. **How will you respond to those differences as you work with the girls and their adult partners?**

Girl Scout Junior Meetings

Look at the sample sessions in the *Agent of Change Adult Guide* and other Girl Scout program resources and make some tentative plans. Are there some activities that could be grouped into monthly themes? The *Junior Girl Scout Handbook* is not written to be used in a sequential order. You and the girls may begin anywhere in the book, or with activities from other Girl Scout resources, and follow a plan that works best for you. Check with the Council publication, *Program at a Glance*, for dates of any special opportunities planned for Girl Scout Juniors. Balance your year's program with the following suggestions:

- Involve girls in using their Journey books and handbooks to complete activities about themselves and others, on safety and skills.
- Include at least two service projects.
- Plan field trips that enhance program activities.
- Have 3-4 inter-troop activities – 1-2 with older girls and 2 with younger girls – this enhances Bridging concepts and completes some requirements.
- Participate in at least two Neighborhood activities.
- Include some activities at a Council camp.
- Participate in some outdoor skills activities.
- Participate in two Council activities – see *Program at a Glance*
- Participate in a summer activity.

The most important thing to remember is the year should start with girl/adult planning.

Girl Scout Juniors and Money

Review pages 26-29 in *Safety Wise*, read pages 24-27 in the *Junior Girl Scout Leader Guide*, and browse pages 26-27 in the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*.

Earned Grade-Level Awards

Troop Crests

The troop crest is not an award, but a symbol of the troop selected by the girls. Troops should think carefully about the crest they choose. It should have a special meaning to them, one they can pass along to new members each year. Every member should know what their crest is and what it means. A new crest is not chosen every year. Once chosen, a crest is used for the life of the troop. If a girl enters an established troop then she takes the crest of that troop. If an entire troop bridges to the next level and forms a new troop they may either keep the crest from the previous level or select a new one. If part of a troop bridges and forms a new troop, they too have the same option. The girls remaining behind may keep the old crest unless the focus of the troop has drastically changed from the time the original crest was selected. Stop by the Council shop and pick up an explanation sheet describing each of the troop crests. There are several southwestern troop crest designs unique to our Council.

Journey Awards

The *Agent of Change* journey offers three awards: The Power of One, The Power of Team and The Power of Community. Requirements for these can be found on pages 10 – 11 in the *Agent of Change Adult Guide*.

Bridge to Junior Girl Scouts

The Bridge to Girl Scout Juniors is for girls who were once Girl Scout Brownies and who completed special activities before becoming Girl Scout Juniors.

Girl Scout Junior Badges

There are more than 100 badges a Girl Scout Junior can earn; they are symbols of something a girl has learned or accomplished. Whether she has developed a new interest or has expanded on something she already enjoys, a girl earns a badge for completing activities to the best of her ability. Badges are only one part of the Junior program, and should never serve as the main focus of a girl's experience in Girl Scouting. If the emphasis has become the acquisition of badges, rather than participation in a balance of program activities, it may be time for more creative planning. The quality of program should come first. Stress program over quantity of earned badges.

Our Own Council's Badges

Councils develop their own badges to familiarize girls with the area or State in which they live. Check the Leader Resource Guide, council web site, Membership Resource Center, or your Neighborhood Consultant for a list of these badges.

Our Own Troop's Badges

You and the girls in your troop might have an interest in an activity for which no badge is listed. Or, while you were doing a badge, one of the activities may have been so interesting that you

want to work on it more. Maybe you've completed all the badges on the same subject but want to go further. Or, your community might be famous for something unique and you want to learn more about it. That's why Girl Scouts have an Our Own Troop's Badge. As a troop, you decide on the activities, the name, and the symbol of the badge. This badge then becomes special for your troop. To explore the possibilities of Our Own Troop's Badge contact your Neighborhood Consultant or an Area Team Member.

Girl Scout Junior Leadership Award

In the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*, page 200, are the description and outline of the requirements for earning the Girl Scout Junior Leadership Award. This award offers the girls the opportunity to develop leadership skills as they give service to the community.

Girl Scout Junior Signs

Signs are another kind of recognitions Juniors can earn. They include a wider range of activities than badges and are designed to recognize a girl's broad participation in Girl Scout activities. There are four signs: the Sign of the Star, the Sign of the Rainbow, the Sign of the Sun, and the Sign of the World. Read pages 189-197 in the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook* for complete information.

Junior Aide Award

The Junior Aide Award represents active assistance as a Girl Scout Junior, helping Girl Scout Brownies bridge to Girl Scout Juniors. Only Girl Scout Juniors can wear it. Read pages 198 – 199 in the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*.

Safety Award

Girl Scout Juniors may earn the Safety Award by completing a number of activities. These activities reinforce the importance of safety in everyday life and in everything we do in Girl Scouting. Check page 11 in your *Safety Wise* for requirements for this award.

Bronze Award

This is the highest award a Girl Scout Junior can earn. It shows you have made a promise to help others, improve your community and world, and become the best you can be. The requirements can be found on pages 202–203 in the *Junior Girl Scout Handbook*. Bronze Award requirement packets and training are both available through Council.

Bridge to Girl Scout Cadettes

During the last year of Girl Scout Juniors, you can begin to do the activities to bridge to Girl Scout Cadettes. You get to do a Cadette activity on the way to earning this award.

Girl Scout Junior Challenge Award

This award challenges Girl Scout Juniors to *really* live the Girl Scout Law. Requirements can be found on the GSUSA web site.

Reflections

What are the most important components to remember in planning a Girl Scout Junior year?
How will you help the girls balance their need to succeed and the need of their parents for their daughter to succeed?

Self Check

Where can the requirements for the Safety Award be found and what are they?

What is the highest award that a Girl Scout Junior can earn?

List several supplementary insignia focusing on participation and not set requirements.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (printed) _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

Email _____

Neighborhood _____ Troop # _____

Did the course content answer your questions?

Did you get enough information to begin your troop meetings?

What other information would you find useful?

Mail

Part I – Program Essentials - Self-paced Home Study AND

Part II – Girl Scout Junior Self-Paced Home Study

Leadership Essentials/Program for Adults

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Questions?

Contact the Leadership Essentials/Program for Adults Department at (602) 452-7048 OR the Membership Resource Center (MRC) at (602) 452-7196.