

Media Guidelines

Media guidelines are necessary for any organization to ensure the right message gets to the right audience at the right time. Guidelines help organizations build strong contacts with media representatives and the community. Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council has a Marketing & External Relations Department that is responsible for developing and maintaining media relationships.

THE NEED TO TALK WITH THE MEDIA SHOULD BE CAREFULLY EVALUATED AND DISCUSSED WITH THE MARKETING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT BEFORE GIVING INFORMATION AND/OR INTERVIEWS.

AT NO TIME ARE YOU TO CONTACT THE MEDIA. ALL INQUIRES, IDEAS, CONTACTS, REQUESTS, ETC., MUST BE FORWARDED TO THE MARKETING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT.

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Who We Are

The Basics

Girl Scouts is the largest organization in the world solely dedicated to girls. As a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), we are part of a worldwide family of approximately 10 million girls and adults in 144 countries across the world. Founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) has grown from its very first troop of 18 girls to a phenomenal 2.6 million girls and almost 1 million adult members throughout the United States.

Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council is one of over 150 councils chartered by Girl Scouts of the USA to provide the Girl Scout program in our jurisdiction. With an area covering all of Riverside County and most of San Bernardino County, we serve more than 15,000 girl members and more than 5,000 adult volunteer members, both women and men. Our membership represents the diverse cultures of our region and reflects our goal to provide a meaningful, relevant program to the members we serve.

The Girl Scout Mission is to build girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place. This is accomplished through programs and opportunities with the help of adult volunteers. The Girl Scout Program is girl-driven and dedicated to teaching girls how to recognize their own potential, understand personal responsibility,

focus on goal-setting and experience the thrill of accomplishment. Girls can strive to earn patches as they accomplish goals and tasks assigned to certain activities. Some topics of interest covered by the Girl Scout Program include leadership and self-esteem, health and wellness, science, technology, engineering and math, the arts and travel and the environment.

Girl Scouting is open to all girls ages 5 to 17 as well as to adults 18 years and older who believe in the Girl Scout Promise and Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try:

To serve God* and my country,
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

The Girl Scout Law

I will do my best to be

honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong, and
responsible for what I say and do,

and to

respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place, and
be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Girl Scout Program Fundamentals

The new Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) engages girls in discovering themselves, connecting with others and taking action to make the world a better place and is based on the three keys to leadership: Discover, Connect and Take Action.

- *Discover:* Girls understand themselves and their values and use their knowledge and skills to explore the world.
- *Connect:* Girls care about, inspire, and team with others locally and globally.
- *Take Action:* Girls act to make the world a better place.

In Girl Scouting, it's not just "what girls do" (activities), but "how" (processes) they do them (activities). When used together, these processes—Girl Led, Cooperative Learning and Learning by Doing—ensure quality and promote the fun and friendship so integral to Girl Scouting.

- *Girl Led:* Girl led is just what it sounds like—girls play an active part in figuring out the what, where, when, how and why of their activities. They lead the planning and decision-making as much as possible. This ensures that girls are engaged in their learning and experience leadership opportunities as they prepare to become active participants in their local and global communities.
- *Learning by Doing:* A hands-on learning process that engages girls in continuous cycles of action and reflection that result in deeper understanding of concepts and mastery of practical skills. As they participate in meaningful activities and then reflect on them, girls get to explore their own questions, discover answers, gain new skills and share ideas and observations with others. Throughout the process, it's important for girls to be able to connect their experiences to their lives and apply what they have learned to their future experiences.
- *Cooperative Learning:* Through cooperative learning, girls work together toward shared goals in an atmosphere of respect and collaboration that encourages the sharing of skills, knowledge and learning. Working together in all-girl environments also encourages girls to feel powerful and emotionally and physically safe, and it allows them to experience a sense of belonging even in the most diverse groups.

Interviews and Media Comments

There are times when the media will "just show up" at a local event or at a program. During these cases, you are expected to escort the media. Please follow these steps below:

1. Immediately call the Council media team in the Marketing & External Relations Department. Contact information is listed above. You may ask any office to contact the Marketing & External Relations.
2. If at a school site, contact the school Administration Representative.

3. Verify that the person is a reporter/photographer/etc. Ask for identification such as a business card.
4. Write down the person's information. Name, phone number and e-mail.
5. Write down the name of the Publication or media outlet.
6. Identify yourself to the reporter, stating that you are with Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council and your troop # and region.
7. Remember that everything you say may be printed. Answer questions positively. Never make up and answer or try to answer a question that is best answered by someone else. **NEVER PROVIDE PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE GIRLS IN WHICH WE SERVE. DO NOT GIVE GIRLS NAMES OR AGES.**
8. As soon as possible after the event/program (within 24 hours), notify the Marketing & External Relations team via e-mail about what happened. Please be detailed – what was asked, what you said, did they take photos, who did they talk to, etc.

Do not ever say, "I'm not allowed to talk to the media." Instead try the following talking points:

"Hello, my name is _____ . I am the troop leader of troop _____ for Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council."

"I'd be happy to help you as best as I can." Please direct them to a Council Staff member

OR

"I can help point you in the right direction in order to get your questions answered accurately."

Please be as helpful as possible. If you do not know the answer or get stuck, refer the reporter to the Marketing & External Relations Department. Simply state:

"That question is best answered by our Marketing Department. I'd be happy to pass along your information to them. You may also contact them directly. Here are their business cards."

OR

"I'd be happy to connect you with someone who can better answer that question."

OR

"I'd be happy to get that information for you."

Photos

When the media takes the photo - The media is a public entity and may take photos of anyone in a public venue without our permission. If you are at a school site, please refer the reporter to the Administration. If you are at another venue, due to the diversity of our membership base, please quickly let the participants know that photos are being taken. You may use the following talking point if needed:

“Hello everyone. _____ with the local newspaper is here to write a story about the great things you are doing in the community/here today. - _____ will be taking some photographs as well. Please see me if you would prefer not to be interviewed or photographed.”

When the Council or Service Area takes the photo - A signed Photo Consent Form MUST be signed when the Council or Service Area is taking photos for publicity purposes. Consent forms can be found online at www.gssgc.org and in the back of this training guide.

All completed release forms should be sent to the Marketing & External Relations Department along with any photos. Please be sure to identify all the girls and/or adults who appear in the photos.

Messaging Guidelines

To ensure our position in the community, it is critical that the appearance and exposure of the Girl Scout brand be consistent. We must speak with one voice and with one message in all areas – from the High Desert to the Low Desert, from Southwest Riverside County to Needles and Blythe.

Why is consistent messaging important?

- Builds trust among the community and within our own membership
- Demonstrates a level of professionalism
- Dispels myths and rumors about Girl Scouting in the community
- Unites the Girl Scout Movement under a common goal

The key to effective marketing is providing accurate, consistent messaging to the media and to the community. Talking points are distributed on a regular basis on various topics including Girl Scout Pathways, our new marketing pieces, and for Council-wide projects and campaigns such as the Annual Cookie Program. These talking points will be provided to you through your supervisor. It is your responsibility to review and understand the information.

In addition to verbal messages, written messages are just as important to the communication plan. To keep our messaging consistent, here are a few words that are sometimes used incorrectly in letters and e-mail:

<i>Do</i>	<i>Don't</i>
Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council Council**	San Gorgonio Girl Scouts council**
Girl Scout or Girl Scouts	Scout or Scouts
cookie dough	money for cookies
Girl Scout Leadership Experience	Girl Scout Program
Try-It	try-it
learning petals	Daisy petals or petals
badges	Badges
(800) 400-GIRL (4475)	1-800-400-4475

*Using the full name in first reference and then the single name, capitalized, is acceptable.
**When referring to Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio Council as the "Council" it is referring to a proper noun and should be capitalized. When referring to all of the Council's across the county, then lowercase.

Additional Materials

Several materials are provided as reference materials including a GSSGC Fact Sheet, photo release forms and copies of recent talking points. Please contact the Director of Marketing, External Relations & Diversity for materials and more information.