

Understanding the Multiyear Transition Period

Girl Scouts of the USA trusts councils to manage the transition by balancing national action plans with local needs. The goal is to provide girls with a unified, national Girl Scout experience by fall 2010.

Because of the extent of transformational change under way, Girl Scouts of the USA wants to reassure members that the transition period extends through 2010. Fall 2008 marked *the beginning* of the transition to the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, and now, as we look to Fall 2009, we are still in the midst of the transition

To manage this transition, Girl Scouts of the USA is providing guidance on managing membership and program over the next several years with specific attention to:

- New Membership Grade Levels
- New Program Resources and Awards
- Existing Resources and Awards
- Uniforms

The concluding **Challenges and Suggestions** list offers solutions for specific challenges related to transitioning to the new grade levels and managing a variety of membership needs, including multi-grade and multi-level troops, home schooled girls and individually registered girls.

The Model, Pathways, and Journeys

Understanding the New Lingo on the Road to Leadership

Leadership Model

The leadership model provides the design for what girls do in Girl Scouting. It illustrates how adult support strengthens girls' experiences and drives and displays all the elements that must be in place to create a positive impact on girls' lives.

Girl Scout Pathways

A "pathway" is how girls and volunteers join and experience Girl Scouts—whether through an on-going troop, a short-term camp, or a virtual (online) pathway.

Journeys

A "journey" represents the experiences Girl Scouts engage in to achieve leadership outcomes. For each Girl Scout grade level, GSUSA is creating a series of Journeys accompanied by new resources and new awards.

New Membership Grade Levels

The new grade levels address the charge of intentionally creating differentiated Girl Scout experiences that mirror girls' developmental needs.

Girls say it is important to be with other girls their age, and currently, they get bored by too much repetition. As one 13-year-old Girl Scout wrote, "It makes us more comfortable to be with the same age group as ourselves."

Research found that girls learn best and have the most fun when they are with the right developmental/social grouping. Girls identify with social groups based on

grades. Grouping by grade allows girls to be with peers who share a closer level of emotional and social maturity.

The new grade-level groups approved by the National Board are:

Girl Scout Daisy: Grades K-1

Girl Scout Brownie: Grades 2-3

Girl Scout Junior: Grades 4-5

Girl Scout Cadette: Grades 6-8

Girl Scout Senior: Grades 9-10

Girl Scout Ambassador: Grades 11-12

The grade-level groups provide "leadership levels" for girls as they progressively "step forward" through the New Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Existing Resources and Awards

Despite the coming transition to leadership journeys, which represents a significant new approach in Girl Scouting, no girls will lose out on experiences, projects, or awards they have already started. Girls at every level can continue to use all available existing materials as new resources are developed and phased in. Adults are invited to use their best judgment to assist girls in choosing projects that are appropriate for their grade level.

Symbols of Belonging: Uniforms and Awards

Girl Scout uniforms and awards unite Girl Scouts around the world as a sisterhood of leaders. Following the tradition of updating these important symbols of belonging periodically, the National Board of Directors approved a new policy, provided below, for implementation, beginning in fall 2008.

Based on this policy, girls at each level will have one official uniform item (e.g. tunic, vest, sash) so that they can proudly display the pins and badges they earn. Girls will wear their vests and sashes with their own white shirts and khaki pants, making it easier for more girls than ever before to show their pride as Girl Scouts!

Uniform Policy As Adopted by the National Board of Directors, August 2006

Required Elements:

Girl Scouts at each level will have one official uniform item (e.g., tunic, vest, sash) for the display of official pins and awards. This uniform item will be required when girls participate in ceremonies or officially represent the Girl Scout Movement.

The official dress code will unite girls as Girl Scouts. Girl Scout Juniors and older program age groups will wear solid white shirts and khaki pants or skirts with their official uniform item, which will be required when they participate in ceremonies or officially represent the Girl Scout Movement. Brownies and Daisies may still wear full uniform ensembles.

The adult uniforms will be a scarf worn with the membership pins for women and a tie for men. The scarf/tie and membership pins will be worn with navy blue business attire.

Available elements:

Girl Scouts at the Daisy and Brownie levels will continue to have a full uniform ensemble available.

Girl Scouts in high school will also have a scarf, uniting them in the WAGGGS tradition.

Girl Scouts of the USA will continue to develop and offer a range of appealing casual wear for girls and adults.

Leadership Journeys: The New Direction for Program Resources and Awards

For each Girl Scout grade level, GSUSA is creating a series of Leadership Journeys, accompanied by new resources and new awards.

Each leadership journey engages girls in exploring a theme through a series of linked experiences that, together, form a whole greater and more important than any one journey activity. Each journey is tied to some of the 15 national "Discover, Connect and Take Action" leadership outcomes for girls.

The journey concept builds on the rich tradition of linked Girl Scouting efforts like "program trails." It also grew out of an approach many councils already use informally as they weave activities and events around existing Girl Scout resources and awards to better suit their members' needs and interests.

While engaged in the new Girl Scout "journeys," girls and volunteers will be encouraged to add on "side trips"—outings, celebrations, and in-depth explorations—based on their own interests, time, and resources.

Beyond 2008: More Journeys

Additional journeys for each grade level, slated for release in 2009 and beyond, will continue to tie experiences to leadership outcomes while incorporating a variety of topics, especially science, math, technology, healthy living, the outdoors and the environment.

Preparing Adults

Facilitator Guides

Girl Scout volunteers have long asked for more concrete and specific guidance on "what to do" with girls. Recognizing that busy adults need "ready-to-go" materials for use with girls, Girl Scouts of the USA created detailed facilitator guides to accompany each Leadership Launch Journey.

These resources guide volunteers step-by-step through the journey with girls, and will make the use of girl-led, cooperative, and hands-on learning techniques easier than ever before to implement. Additionally, the facilitator guides show volunteers how journey experiences are intentionally tied to achieving the national leadership outcomes.

Challenges and Suggestions

Girl Scout Daisies: There is not currently enough program content available to manage the Daisy Girl Scout experience as a two-year experience. What about girls who use the existing Daisy materials as kindergarteners—what would they do as first-grade Daisies?

SUGGESTION: Girl Scouts of the USA encourages the following approach to the Girl Scout Daisy level:

Girls who are in Kindergarten in are Girl Scout Daisies, using the existing program resources (Leadership Journey and Daisy Petals) as they learn the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Councils continue to supplement this with local programming.

When these girls enter first grade, register them as first-grade Daisies, enabling them to use the second Daisy Journey (It's Your Planet, Love It series) and laying the foundation for their next leadership steps as Girl Scout Brownies.

Girl Scout Cadettes: Given that sixth-graders may fall into either elementary or middle school depending on their school district's grade structure, troops and service units might want to continue registering sixth graders as Girl Scout Juniors.

SUGGESTION: Girl Scouts of the USA recommends that girls entering sixth grade in register as Cadettes so they can enjoy the new materials for this level. Early adolescence can be a challenging time in girls' lives. The new grade grouping and age-appropriate journeys are designed especially to address girls' progression through the early stages of adolescence, ultimately preparing them for the next phase of life and the next phase of leadership in Girl Scouting. The multiyear transition allows for the option of taking some extra time as necessary to move membership to the new levels.

High School Membership: Ambassadors (11th-12th grades) are a brand-new level for young women in Girl Scouts. How will it be different then the experience of Senior Girl Scouts (9th-10th grades)?

SUGGESTION: Girl Scouts of the USA recommends that girls entering ninth or 10th grade register as Girl Scout Seniors. These girls will develop their vision of the world as they try out the new Senior Journeys, supplementing it with the array of existing resources. Girls in 11th and 12th grade are future-driven and can apply their leadership to setting a new, and possibly global, course—as Girl Scout Ambassadors. Girl Scouts of the USA invites girls entering the 11th and 12th grades to become "Girl Scout Ambassadors". In addition to completing—or even beginning—their Girl Scout Gold Award, they will try the new Ambassador Journeys. Ambassadors may also choose from the array of existing offerings for teen Girl Scouts, while they partner with GSUSA to shape their special Ambassador roles in Girl Scouting.

Multilevel Groups: In some places around the country, multilevel groups are working really well—serving girls from kindergarten through high school. What happens to them in the new level groupings?

SUGGESTION: Keep going! Diverse girls benefit greatly through opportunities to "give and get" from each other at different levels. All of the girls can be engaged in exploring what it means to be leaders based on the Girl Scout philosophy: Discover,

Connect, Take Action.

Just ensure that plans do not always rely on engaging "older" girls as "helpers" of younger girls. Teens need opportunities to network in their own peer group and participate in challenges especially for their level.

Multigrade Groups: Within one Girl Scout level, there could be two to three grades of girls represented. How are troops or groups best set up—single grade or multigrade?

SUGGESTION: When volunteers and logistical considerations make it possible, it's great for girls who are "slightly" older/younger to benefit from each other. There are several ways to manage this experience.

For example, Girl Scout Juniors are fourth- and fifth-graders. The fifth-graders could assist their younger peers on a Journey while having some "break out time" to plan their Bronze Award project.

Homeschooled Girl Scouts: In some areas of the country, home schooling is very popular. What Girl Scout level would home schooled girls participate in?

SUGGESTION: Girl Scouts of the USA trusts councils, in partnership with families, to assist every girl to have the Girl Scout experience that is best for her. As a general practice, girls say it is important to be with their "social peers"—groups that share the same developmental characteristics.

Individually Registered Girl Scouts: When girls do not have time to belong in a troop or the logistics of meeting times and places get in the way, they might choose to register "individually." What changes might need to be addressed for these girls to participate in the Girl Scout Leadership Experience?

SUGGESTION: Individually registered girls can participate in any pathway. The vision is all girls and adults join Girl Scouts immediately upon paying their \$12 membership dues and accepting the promise and law. They then decide which pathway(s) they'd like to participate in. They can participate in any or all pathways, and regardless of which pathway they participate in they are all "real" Girl Scouts!

Recommended Girl Scout Daisy-Brownie Membership During Transition

Entering Kindergarten 2007-2008	Entering First Grade 2008-2009	Second Grade 2009-2010	Third Grade 2010-2011	Fourth Grade 2007-08
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Daisy ▪ Use existing GS Daisy program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Daisy ▪ Use new GS Daisy Journey ▪ Supplement with existing GSUSA and local materials and awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Brownie ▪ Use new GS Brownie Journeys ▪ Supplement with existing GSUSA Brownie Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Brownie ▪ Ample new GS Brownie materials exists to choose from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow new GS grade groupings and use new leadership resources through 12th grades ►

Recommended Girl Scout Cadette Membership During Transition

Entering Sixth Grade 2007-2008	Entering Sixth Grade 2008-2009	Seventh Grade 2009-2010	Eighth Grade 2010-2011	Ninth Grade 2011-2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use existing standards: option to be a GS Cadette or Junior ▪ Option to do GS Bronze Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Cadette ▪ Use new Cadette Journey ▪ Supplement with existing materials ▪ Option to complete GS Bronze Award before starting any work on GS Silver Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Cadette ▪ Use new Cadette Journeys ▪ Supplement with existing materials ▪ Option to begin GS Silver Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Cadette ▪ Ample new leadership materials exist ▪ Option to do GS Silver Award ▪ Bridging into GS Senior at end of eighth grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register as GS Senior ▪ Option to do GS Silver Award