Gold Award Parent Guide

The Gold Award is the highest achievement within Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts of the USA establishes guidelines for the award, and Councils implement the process locally. Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors are eligible to earn the Gold Award. If your daughter is interested in earning the Gold Award, your role as a parent/guardian is to encourage her to think critically, be open to multiple perspectives, investigate thoroughly, work cooperatively, and identify resources within and beyond their local communities. Parents and guardians play a significant role in supporting a girl’s path toward the Gold Award. However, it should be the girl’s decision whether to complete the process, as it MUST be the girl’s project. It is something she has to want to do herself.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is designed to be completed by an individual girl. To earn the award, each girl must complete two Senior or Ambassador Journeys or complete one Senior or Ambassador Journey and have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award. After completing either of these requirements, a minimum of 80 hours is suggested to complete the steps to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

If your daughter has any physical, emotional, or mental health need or diagnosis (including dyslexia, ADHD, etc.), and/or requires accommodations to assist in her participation or evaluation of a Gold Award project, please make sure to include this information in the Girl Scout Nation’s Capital Gold Award Supplemental Form.

As mentioned, the role of parents and guardians in supporting a girl as she pursues her Gold Award is invaluable!

Parents and guardians are encouraged to assist a girl by:

- Reading through the materials provided to your Girl Scout by Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital and Girl Scouts USA regarding the Gold Award so that you feel comfortable offering support.
- Discussing possible topics and project ideas, and if she asks, helping her to choose a topic that will become the basis for her project. Make sure that her project is more than a collection project and goes beyond the Girl Scout community. Please remember that the topic of her Gold Award project must be based on her passion, not yours.
- Encouraging and supporting her, but not pressuring her. “Going for the Gold” is something that a girl must want to do herself; it shouldn’t be done to please her parents or family.
- Recognizing that she is capable, competent, and worthy of respect as she assumes greater citizenship, responsibility, and leadership. Her way may not be your way.
- Aiding her in developing a network of adults and girls who can lend insight, act as resources, and be team members. You may work with or know someone who has the skill set your daughter needs as an advisor. Working in a group will help her make a bigger impact and cover more ground than she would on her own. The Gold Award is an individual project, but it is also a leadership project. It must demonstrate interaction with others in a leadership capacity.
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- Ensuring she is not over-stressed, and is supported by her family and friends in her endeavors
- Helping and supporting with safety and money guidelines. These help ensure the safety of your daughter and others, as well as the integrity of the Girl Scout program.
- Allowing her to stumble and learn the lessons that come with a Gold Award project. She will be working with a Project Advisor, and adult who has skills specific to her project, and a Gold Award Mentor who has been trained to assist her.
- Helping with her project when asked or cheerleading from the side if appropriate.
- Joining in the celebration as she is honored for her accomplishments.

Remember:
Parents and guardians play a significant role in supporting a girl during the Gold Award process. This role may include being a coach, mentor, cheerleader, sounding board, and chauffeur or even a team member. However, a parent should never be a taskmaster, as this must be the GIRL’S project. Parents, guardians, and other family members cannot be a girl's Project Advisor.

Parents should generally refrain from:

- Instructing girls to carry out specific project plans
- Insisting that a girl focuses on a specific issue of your choosing
- Doing the Gold Award project for a girl
- Making any phone calls or sending emails on behalf of girl*
- Contacting the Panel Mentor to discuss the girls specific project

*We understand that questions/concerns may arise that may be better suited for a parent or guardian to handle. As such, we encourage parents/guardians to contact our Teen Program Specialist as needed at: goldaward@gscnc.org or 202-274-3336.

It is the girl's responsibility to initiate and maintain communication with her:
Panel Mentor, Project Advisor, and team members, etc.

What comes next?
Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital has multiple opportunities to recognize and celebrate Gold Award Girl Scouts. Examples include the following:

Gold Award Scholarship: High school seniors who have earned their Girl Scout Gold Award are eligible for educational scholarships awarded by Girl Scouts Nation’s Capital. Applications are due by 5pm on March 15th.

In Your Honor ceremony: Every year our Council recognizes Girl Scouts who earned their Gold Award and Silver Trefoil Award at the In Your Honor ceremony. In order to be invited to that same year’s ceremony, Final Reports will need to be submitted by 5pm on March 15th. Our Council’s Award year runs from March to March, so if you submit after March 15th you will be included in the next year’s In Your Honor ceremony.

More information about these opportunities can be found on our Council website: www.gscnc.org/scholarships.