



Girl Scouts of Alaska Social Media Guidelines for Service Units and Troops

[Note: It is not the goal of this document to provide step-by-step instructions for creating and using social media for your Service Unit, troop, or geographic region served by Girl Scouts of Alaska (GSAK). Rather, GSAK has developed this document so you can familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of effective online communication, avoid common mistakes, and create a secure online environment for girls. Social media changes regularly, so this document reflects Girl Scouts of Alaska’s current guidelines and is subject to modifications and amendments from time to time as required.]

INTRODUCTION

The use of social media to connect with others interested in Girl Scouts can be a very positive experience, but it requires forethought, care, and responsibility. For that reason, GSAK has developed the following guidelines to help you navigate the use of social media. As always, if you have any questions, please contact GSAK Communications Manager Becca Pilipchuk.

DISCLAIMER

In your social media communications, please communicate that it is not an official Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) or GSAK social media channel, but your own personal channel. You may use the following template as an example:

“This site is the personal [reference your specific social media channel – Facebook Group or Facebook Page, Twitter account, etc.] of [your name or organization] and is reflective only of my personal views, thoughts, and opinions. This site does not have the endorsement of Girl Scouts of the USA or Girl Scouts of Alaska, and it is not an official communication channel of either of these organizations.”

SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH PROTECTION

- Youth safety should be your first priority. Be especially conscientious when posting details about upcoming events (date, time, location), as Girl Scouts places the greatest importance on creating the safest environment possible for our girls.
- Communication between adults and youth should take place in a public forum (i.e., the Facebook wall), or electronic communication between adults and youth should follow the “two-deep” rule (include one or more authorized adults openly “copied” (included) on the message or message thread).
- Please have a parent/guardian’s permission before using pictures of girls on a website. Do not post girls’ contact information (addresses, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses).
- Any girl using a social networking site for communication should have parental permission and meet age limits set by the provider, which is 13 and older in most cases as per the U.S. Child Online Privacy and Protection Act (COPPA) and the Child Online Protection Act (COPA).

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- Ensure groups you join or “Like” have standards consistent with Girl Scouts.
- Ensure the messages you post reflect Girl Scouts positions.
- Use good judgment and common sense; just as you would in real life, treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Respond to comments and questions in a timely manner.

- Comments should be deleted if they break any of the procedures listed above; contain profanity, obscenity, vulgarity, or nudity in profile picture; are defamatory to a person, people, or organization; contain name-calling, personal attacks and/or personal issues that are more appropriately addressed offline; or infringe on copyright laws.
- If you receive antagonistic messages, use the print screen function or print out a hard copy of the Web page so you have a record of the message.

USE OF GIRL SCOUT SYMBOLS

GSUSA symbols cannot be used without authorization from GSUSA:

- Trademarks owned by GSUSA include:
 - The Girl Scout Servicemark (the trefoil with three profiles and the words “Girl Scouts” with the Registration mark)
 - The words Girl Scout Daisy, Girl Scout Brownie, Girl Scout Junior, Girl Scout Cadette, Girl Scout Senior, Girl Scout Ambassador, Girl Scouts, Girl Scouting, Girl Scout Cookies, Girl Scout Journeys, and the Girl Scout Leadership Experience
- You may not use illustrations, photographs or other graphics taken from Leader Magazine, the Girl Scout Journey Books, or other Girl Scout handbooks/publications. This includes official Girl Scout insignia such as images of Girl Scout Brownie Try-Its, Girl Scout Junior Badges, Girl Scout Interest Project Awards, the Girl Scout Gold Award, etc. All of these images are the copyrighted property of GSUSA and/or the artist.
- You may not download images or graphics from the Girl Scouts of Alaska website (www.girlscoutsalaska.org), the GSUSA website (www.girlscouts.org), or any other Girl Scout council website for use on your own website.
- You may not post Girl Scout songs, stories, poetry, or articles on your website unless you have first determined that they are not copyrighted by another party or by GSUSA. If the materials are copyrighted, you can request permission for their use from the owner, author or publisher of the materials.

FACEBOOK – CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE

There are two primary means of communicating with the public and/or your members via Facebook: Facebook Pages and Facebook Groups.

Facebook Pages: Facebook Pages enable public figures, businesses, organizations, and other entities to create an authentic and public presence on Facebook. Facebook Pages can be thought of in much the same way as normal profiles on the site – you have “friends,” you can add pictures, and fans can post on your wall. Pages communicate by “updates” that show on the update tab, or on a person’s wall if they are a fan and have allowed the page to show updates.

Unlike your profile, **Facebook Pages are visible to everyone by default.** New posts are included in your Facebook Page newsfeed. If you set up a Facebook Page, in order to keep girls and their privacy safe, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- If you wish to post girls’ names on the website, please use first names only (no last names). Do not post girls’ school names, addresses, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses.
- You may wish to create a generic email address (such as *Troop1234@yahoo.com*) to which communications may be sent that will effectively hide any individual identity within the Girl Scout troop or Service Unit.

- As always, youth safety should be your first priority. Be especially conscientious when posting details about upcoming events (date, time, location), as Girl Scouts places the greatest importance on creating the safest environment possible for our girls.
- If you set up a Facebook Page, as a first step, you are required to invite GSAK (<https://www.facebook.com/Girlscoutsalaska/>) to join your Facebook Page.

Facebook Groups (Recommended): Facebook Groups are the place for small group communication and for people to share their common interests and express their opinion. **When you create a Facebook Group, you can decide whether to make it publicly available for anyone to join, require administrator approval for members to join, or keep it private and by invitation only.** As with Facebook Pages, new posts by a Facebook Group are included in the newsfeeds of its members, and members can interact and share with one another from the group.

- If you set up a Facebook Group, as a first step, you are required to invite GSAK (<https://www.facebook.com/Girlscoutsalaska/>) to join your Facebook Group.

QUESTIONS?

Should you have questions regarding any of the guidelines and/or recommendations or concerning the use of a specific social media channel not covered here, contact GSAK Communications Manager Becca Pilipchuk by email, rpilipchuk@girlscoutsalaska.org, or at 907-273-0315.