



2019 – 2020 Patches of the Month

Patches in this series include: [Girl Scout Pillars](#), [Character](#), [Leadership](#), [Take Action](#), [STEM & Coding](#), [Financial Literacy](#), [Sisterhood](#), [Overcoming Challenges](#), [S'more Fun](#), [Outdoors](#)

Before you get started, check the patch order form or email shop@girlscoutsalaska.org to be sure patches are available.

To order your patches visit: <http://bit.ly/gsakpatchorder>

Theme: Girl Scout Pillars

What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience is a collection of engaging, challenging and fun activities like earning badges, selling cookies, exploring science, getting outdoors and doing community service projects. The idea is to learn by doing. Along the way, girls gain important life skills in four areas that form the foundation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:



STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)



Outdoors



Life Skills



Entrepreneurship

Make the Connection:

Often girls don't realize that while they are doing a fun activity they are also learning about themselves and the world around them. Our role as Girl Scout adults is to help girls (and parents) understand what they have gained through fun so that they can apply those skills to future experiences.

Before and after girls participate in activities make sure to have a conversation to help them connect what they are going to do and how it helps them gain Girl Scout skills.

Open-ended questions to ask girls so they can make the Girl Scout connection:

1. What do you think it means to be a Girl Scout?
2. What did you learn that didn't know before?
3. How can you take what you learned and use it at home, school, your community?
4. What challenges do you think you'll have during the activity?
5. What was challenging and how did you work through those challenges?
6. What do you want to do next?

How to Participate:

Do at least 2 of the below activities to earn the patch

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1. Complete a STEM Patch of the Month: <https://www.girlscoutsalaska.org/patchprogram>
2. Girl Scouts of Alaska events: Attend any of the council events offered during the month: <http://www.girlscoutsalaska.org/events>
3. Participate in a GSUSA virtual program: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/girl-scouts-at-home.html>
4. Every Girl Outdoors and Adventure Club. Get outdoors and have adventures with either of our new patch programs: <https://www.girlscoutsalaska.org/getoutdoors>
5. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Complete the Character Patch of the Month. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Learn all about character with this patch: <http://bit.ly/gsakcharacterpatch>
 - Ask girls what they want to do this year and make a plan. Girl Scouts is girl led. Girls get to have input and choice in what they'll do, together.
 - Help girls gain entrepreneurship skills. Set girl troop dues (even if it's only a penny or a quarter a meeting). Girls can be in charge of bringing their dues, collecting the money and deciding how to spend it!
 - Go outside with your family or troop. This could be on a nature trail, park... anywhere! While outside make a wonder statement. I wonder _____ (why the trees' leaves turn colors). Come up with some ideas to answer your question. Then use a phone, computer, or library to research other answers.
 - Ask girls what they want to learn to be independent citizens. Do they want to learn to change a tire? How about building a budget for a troop trip? Or maybe they look up to the people who are spreading kindness in the world and want to do something to make a difference. Try something new or build on a skill that will help them the rest of their lives.
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Character

What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and **character** who make the world a better place.



Character strengths include gratitude, self-control, curiosity, grit, social intelligence, kindness and a growth mindset. Character is the intentions and actions that benefit girls themselves and others. They are different from a girl's unique skills, talents and interests. They reflect who a girl is at her core and impact how she thinks, feels and behaves. Overwhelming evidence shows that character strengths are important to social and emotional well-being, physical health and achievements.

Here are a few examples of Girl Scouts expressing their character growth after completing a Girl Scout program:

“Never juje [judge] somwon [someone].” A 4th grader expressing self-control, kindness and social intelligence

“I set challenging goals and accomplished them even though it didn't work the first three time I tried.” A 5th grader expressing growth mindset, self-control and grit

I learned that building a fire is so much harder than I thought. It felt amazing when I did it!” A 7th grader expressing curiosity and grit.

The great thing is that character can be cultivated! With the help of caring adults (like Girl Scout leaders) girls can practice and develop their character strengths.

Make the Connection:

Every Girl Scout activity is a chance to develop character. For example, practicing gratitude can be as easy as saying thank you and gaining self-control can be as simple as waiting your turn to voice an opinion.

Before and after girls participate in activities make sure to help girls connect what they are going to do and how they can practice character.

Here are some open-ended questions to ask girls so they can make the character connection:

1. What challenges do you think you'll have and what can you do when things don't go as planned?
2. Who helped us with this project and how can we show them we're grateful for the help?
3. How are we going to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak/participate?
4. How are we going to make a group decision that everyone is ok with?
5. What are we curious to learn about? What did we learn that we didn't know before?

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3. Participate in a GSUSA virtual program: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/girl-scouts-at-home.html>
4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Complete a Character Patch of the Month. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Learn all about character strengths with these patches: <http://bit.ly/gsakcharacterpatch>
 - Start planning a Take Action Project. Start by identifying a problem you/your troop wants to do something about, brainstorm ways to solve it, then make a plan and put it into action. Take Action projects take [purpose](#), [grit](#), and [self-control](#) to complete – set goals and stick to them even when it’s tough!
 - Research online or visit a local library to learn more about a topic you are [curious](#) about. Share what you learned with a friend
 - Think about a person (or people) you are [grateful](#) for and write them a [letter](#). It could be a parent, teacher, coach, friend, or someone else! Share with them why you are grateful for them, how your life might be different if you hadn’t met, and what makes them special.
 - Try a new STEAM activity. Try out an activity from a [STEM badge](#), watch a SciGirls [video](#) or test out a SciGirls [experiment](#), or try something else! What are you curious about?
 - Go for a walk, take a hike, play a game, get [outside](#)!
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Leadership

What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Girl Scouts offers the best leadership development experience for girls in the world!



Everything a girl does in Girl Scout is a chance to gain leadership skills.

Girl Scouts allows girls to be leaders in their own lives and in the world. As girls practice skills, explore their potential, work as a team and even fail in a safe environment they develop leadership skills. Girl Scout research has proven that the program helps girls thrive in five key ways as they:



Identify and solve problems in the community



Form and maintain healthy relationships



Display positive values



Seek challenges and learn from setbacks



Develop a strong sense of self

Make the Connection:

Everything a girl does in Girl Scouts is a chance to develop leadership. Start by using the three Girl Scout Processes to bring the Girl Scout Leadership Experience to life:



Discover – find out who she is, what she cares about, and what her talents are



Connect – collaborate with other people, both locally and globally, to learn from others and expand her horizons



Take Action – do something to make the world a better place

Let girls try things for themselves, give them opportunities to come up with their own ideas, build teams and lead activities.

As always, make sure to help girls make the connection between what they are doing and the skills they are gaining by using open-ended questions.

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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Take Action projects allow girls to take the lead on addressing issues they care about. Start (or continue) a [Take Action Project](#) or [Highest Award](#) this month!
 - A good leader needs good communication skills. Test your ability to give directions with this activity. Grab some friends and give them enough blindfolds for everyone except one person to put on. Line up everyone who is blindfolded an open space (make sure obstacles are cleared away). The person who is not blindfolded must direct all of their teammates to the other side. Want to make it more challenging? Eliminate some words the leader can say (think: right, left, forward, etc.), have more than one leader, or try to do it the smallest number of instructions. Give everyone a chance to be the leader and then talk about what was challenging/easy, how they could change it, what was most important in the instructions, etc.
 - Girl Scouts are [digital leaders](#)! They are using their digital experiences to improve their lives, their communities, and the world. Learn new digital skills by participating in [Hour of Code](#), trying out one of the Coding for Good or Cybersecurity Badges, using an app like [Code Spark](#) or watching [Code SciGirls](#)
 - A leader needs to think creatively to solve problems. Grab some common household materials (think: paper towel tubes, coat hangers, plastic containers, tape, foil, bags, yarn, straws, clothes pins, etc.) and use it to solve a problem. Make a device to move an object from one room to another without touching the ground, create an object that can roll at least 3 feet, make something to help you reach an object, or something else!
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Take Action

What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Taking action is part of the Girl Scout mission - Girl Scouts take action to make the world a better place.

Children want to make meaningful contributions to their community. As girls look for these opportunities, they also sharpen their problem-solving skills and expand their view of what it means to be a good citizen and help others.

Community service and Take Action projects are different.

Community Service is direct and immediate service that helps make the world a better place “right now”. Community service projects include doing a food drive, collecting toys for children in need or doing a beach clean-up.

Take Action projects take community service to the next level. Take action projects address the root causes of issues and come up with sustainable, longer-lasting solutions. An example of a take action project is building a composting bin and creating brochures about composting to share with the community.

Both community service and take action projects can have a huge impact on a girl’s community. Every day, Girl Scouts are changing their communities and the world in meaningful ways. Check out this interactive map of Take Action projects across the country and add your own!

<https://www.girlscouts.org/en/for-girls/girls-changing-the-world.html>.

Make the Connection:

Your girls’ community service or Take Action projects should be girl-led. Let your girls decide on the project and what they need to do to accomplish their goals. As adults, our role is to help girls hone their visions, to provide guidance and access to resources.

Often girls will be inspired to action as they work on Girl Scout program. For example, when completing a Journey girls may begin to wonder how they might put into action what they have learned. These are great opportunities to help girls craft a community service or Take Action project.

Here are some open-ended questions to ask girls to help them connect what they learn/care about with action:

1. Ask girls to look around their school, local park, etc. Where can you make a difference?
2. What issue or problem do you see that you could have a positive impact on?
3. How can we use the things (badges, Journeys, etc) we have been learning about to help others?



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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Take Action projects allow you to take the lead on addressing issues you care about. Start (or continue) a [Take Action Project](#) or [Highest Award](#) this month!
 - This is a great time of year to set some big goals! Set yourself up for success by trying the WOOP strategy (Wish Outcome Obstacle Plan). What goals could you set to help you make the world a better place? Learn more about WOOP here: <https://characterlab.org/activities/woop-for-classrooms/> (Pssst Adults, this is a great one for you too!)
 - Feeling artistic? Create & donate drawings, paintings, photos, collages, or something else to a senior living center.
 - Be a citizen scientist - participate in authentic scientific research, share that research with others, and encourage the people in your community to take action to help take better care of the world we live in! Start (or continue) your *Think Like a Citizen Scientist* Journey or work on citizen science project on your own. Learn more about citizen science here: <https://scistarter.com/girlscouts/info>
 - Did you know the more time you spend outside, the more likely you are take actions to protect the environment? It may be cold or snowy where you live, but don't let that stop you from getting outside. Bundle up and go for a walk or a hike, build a snowman, try skiing or snowboarding, or something else!
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: STEM & Coding



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programming is a foundation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Research shows that girls are extremely interested in STEM and excel at it. Unfortunately, both girls and women are underrepresented in all levels of STEM.

Girl Scouts gives girls the chance to jump into STEM and explore their interests with fun, challenging activities in a girl only environment. When girls participate in Girl Scout STEM programs, they benefit in four specific ways:

STEM Interest: Girls are excited about STEM subjects and want to learn more about them.

STEM Confidence: Girls have confidence in their STEM skills and abilities.

STEM Competence: Girls think scientifically to solve problems.

STEM Value: Girls learn the importance and relevance of STEM to people and society.

The [Girl Scout Research Institute](#) has also found that girls who participate in Girl Scout STEM programs are more confident in their math and science skills and are more interested in pursuing STEM careers.

Make the Connection:

There are countless ways that Girl Scouts can take part in STEM activities. While there are many STEM badges, Journeys and events your girl can participate in, *any* activity can include a STEM component(s). Here are few ideas to get you started:

- Challenge girls to problem solve when they hit a stumbling block in an activity or project. Problem solving is a key STEM skill.
- Practice math skills by asking girls to calculate how much money they need to go on a trip, how much their cookie credits are worth or how much the troop collected in troops dues.
- Feed girls' curiosity by answering questions with questions. If a girl how something works or why something happens, respond by asking "What do you think?" or "What ideas do you have" or "How could you figure that out?"
- Use technology to enhance Girl Scout program, by participating in digital cookie, making a video to raise awareness, or learn storytelling through podcast creation.
- Experiment and test your hypothesis! When girls have an idea, let them try it out (even if you know that it won't work). Ask girls how their ideas changed after experimenting. For example if your troop is working on a cooking badge, and a girl thinks that adding more flour will make for fluffier cookies, let her give it a go and see what happens.

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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Try one of the new [STEM Journeys or Badges!](#) Learn all about engineering, computer science, citizen science, cybersecurity, or space science!
 - Interesting in coding? Try Scratch or Code.org! Learn more here: <https://scratch.mit.edu/> or <https://code.org/>
 - Talk to a woman who works in a STEM field. Don't know any? Search for female STEM role models on <https://www.fabfems.org/> (many are available to meet virtually, so they don't need to be in your area!)
 - What's better than story time? Story time from space! Watch and listen to astronauts on the International Space Station read STEM stories at <https://storytimefromspace.com/>
 - Try an engineering challenge. Can you build a tower as tall as you? Can you create something to help move heavy cookie cases? Check out other ideas here <https://www.jedc.org/stemak/engineering> (This were developed by GSAK Board Member & Gold Award Girl Scout, Jordan Cooper!)
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Financial Literacy



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Financial literacy programming is a foundation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Research shows that girls are actively interested in becoming entrepreneurs, developing financially stable futures, and using their skills to make a big impact on the world!

Girl Scout activities give girls the opportunity to think like entrepreneurs as they participate in activities that spark curiosity, confidence, and innovation.

Even if a girl doesn't dream of opening her own business or becoming an accountant, financial literacy skills are critical in today's world. Just think of all aspects of financial literacy that girls will need in the future – purchasing groceries, getting a loan, renting a first apartment, opening a bank account...

Make the Connection:

While the Cookie Program is foundational for Girl Scouts, it's not the only way girls can explore entrepreneurship! In every Girl Scout program girls can develop their abilities to:

- **Work as a team to accomplish common goals**
- **Solve problems**
- **Recover from failure**
- **Bring big ideas to life**

Skills like these may not seem like financial literacy skills but they are important components of entrepreneurship success!

Help girls connect the life skills they learn through Girl Scout activities to entrepreneurship.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Start with badges with specific entrepreneurship content like *Money Counts*, *Money Manager*, *Business Owner*, *Financing My Dreams*, *My Portfolio*, or *On My Own*
- Set up troop dues that each girl is responsible for bringing – even if it is 5 cents a meeting. Work with girls to make a budget based on those dues.
- Plan a community service or Take Action project with your troop (girls will need to use their financial literacy life skills!)
- Help girls connect what they learn today (ex: recovering from failure) to how they will need to use that skill in the future (ex: not getting into your first choice college)

How to Participate:

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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Get creative and save money by creating your own bank. Build your own out of recycled materials or blocks, sculpt one out of clay, paint a pre-made bank from a craft store (don't forget, Girl Scouts get 15% off at [Joann Fabrics](#)), or something else! Make a plan for how much you'd like to save and what you'd like to spend it on.
 - Earn your [Wells Fargo Financial Literacy](#) patch. GSAK has teamed with Wells Fargo to provide real-life money-management experience for girls of all ages. Girl Scouts can also set up a tour of a Wells Fargo branch or have a Wells Fargo representative co-teach an activity!
 - Make a list of topics or careers you are interested then do some research online or at the library to find out more about it. If possible, reach out to someone in that career to find out how they got started.
 - Next time you need snacks for a troop meeting or something for dinner, take a field trip to the grocery store! Work with your troop or family to find something everyone likes, set a budget, make a list, and see what you can find. At the store you can compare costs, estimate prices, make change, **and more!**
 - Being money-wise takes imagination & creativity. Grab a group of friends and play a round of Ten New Ways, where each person in your group is challenged to think of ten different uses for an everyday household item, like a rubber band or a yogurt cup. Play regularly to strengthen your imagination, resourcefulness, and innovation abilities. Maybe you'll come up with a million dollar idea!
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Sisterhood



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Since Girl Scouts began in 1912 there have been millions of Girl Scouts in the world. Over 10 million girls and adults participate in Girl Scouts each year (over 6000 a year). Girl Scouts is a sisterhood of girls and adults who embody the courage, confidence and character.

Girl Scouts is a global movement which includes girls from 92 countries and over 50 million alums, all of whom have a desire to make the world a better place.

Make the Connection:

Along with Juliette Low, the first Girl Scout, blazed trails and redefined what was possible for themselves and for girls everywhere. That tradition continues today. Every girl who participates has a chance to develop the skills and confidence to be a leader today and in the future as she:

- **Develops a strong sense of self**
- **Displays positive values**
- **Seeks challenges and learns from setbacks**
- **Forms and maintains healthy relationships**
- **Learns to identify and solve problems in her community**

Girl Scouts is more than an organization you join. You BECOME a Girl Scout!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Ask girls what they are passionate about and what kind of change they want to make in the world.
- Help girls find women and girl role models. Girls can find inspiration anywhere! Books, movies, family members, historic figures, girls acting with bravery today – the options are endless.
- Welcome a new girl into your troop and make a new friend
- Brainstorm ways to be a sister to others and put them into practice
- Help girls learn something new and confidently teach it to others
- Have ongoing conversations with girls on how they can use their courage, confidence, and character in everyday life:
 - Ask girls to share a time when they were brave
 - After activities, have girls share how they demonstrated courage, confidence, or character
 - Let girls pick out a part of the Girl Scout Law and design an activity around it
 - Ask girls how they can carry the Girl Scout Promise and Law into their everyday life

How to Participate:

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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Write a letter to a woman who is important to you. It could be a family member, friend, teacher, member of the community, or someone else! Let her know why she is important to you and effect she has had on your life.
 - Did you know Juliette Gordon Low was a poet? Celebrate National Poetry Month by writing your own poem.
 - Elizabeth Peratrovich is an important person in Alaska (and United States) history. Do some research to find out what she did and why it was so important.
 - Read a book about an inspiring woman. Can't get to the library? Visit <https://adl.overdrive.com/> to check out an eBook. (Need some ideas? Check out this list: <https://www.amightygirl.com/books/mighty-girls-women>)
 - Plant something in honor of [Wangari Maathai](#). Wangari started the Green Belt Movement in Africa to empower communities, particularly women, to conserve the environment. She was the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize!
 - Did you know aquariums, paper bags, windshield wipers, the COBOL computer language, and modern home security systems were all invented by women? Think about a problem you'd like to solve then create something to solve it! Build a model of your invention, write about it, draw a picture, or something else!
 - Throw a sisterhood dance party! Pick some songs that inspire you and dance with your friends or family. (Stuck at home? Have a virtual dance party! Try using Facetime/Duo, [Zoom](#), Facebook Live, [Adobe Connect](#), or Google Hangouts)
 - One way Girl Scouts make the world a better place is through [Take Action](#) or [Highest Award](#) projects. Start planning one now by brainstorming issues you'd like to address in your community and ways you can solve them.
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Overcoming Challenges



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience benefits girls in five important ways:

- Strong Sense of Self
- **Challenge Seeking**
- Community Problem Solving
- Positive Values
- Healthy Relationships

In Girl Scouts, girls are encouraged to take appropriate risks, try things even if they might fail, and learn from their mistakes.

When girls take on challenges they are putting into action their grit and growth mindset.

Grit – Passion and perseverance for long-term goals

Growth mindset – Believing you can improve your abilities

There are tons of resources about grit and growth mindset. Here is a short Ted Talk to get started:
https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance

Research has shown that when girls seek challenges, have grit and use a growth mindset they are happier, healthier, feel more engaged and achieve more! And, in the long run, they become successful, well-adjusted adults.

Make the Connection:

Encourage girls to try, fail and try again. Resist the temptation to step in when you see girls doing something that won't work (unless of course it's a safety issue). Let girls fail in the safe environment of your troop and then help them recover and try again!

Here are some ways to help girls seek challenges and recover from failure:

- Create a poster with different growth mindset phrases girls can use. Encourage girls to rephrase their "I can't" statements into "I'll try" statements.
- Help girls set "stretch goals" – a goal that's just a little bit further than what they can currently do.
- When a girl "fails" ask her what she gained through that experience or what small piece(s) she figured out during the attempt.
- Check out the Character Lab playbooks on grit and growth mindset for lots of activities you can do with girls: www.characterlab.org

How to Participate:

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4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Is there something you've always wanted to do but haven't tried yet? Give it a try! Remember, when you are trying something new, you don't have to be "good" at it. The important thing is to try your best and work to improve. And have fun!
 - Think about something you'd like to accomplish - maybe you'd like to read 500 pages or hike 10 miles or make your bed every day. Set a goal & make a plan to reach it. What small steps do you need to take to reach your big goal?
 - Now is a great time to plan a Take Action or Highest Award project! Make a list of things you are interested in or care about then brainstorm some challenges associated with those things. What can you do to solve it? Ready to learn more? Check out the [Highest Award](#) or [Take Action](#) pages
 - Sometimes, even when you try really hard, you fail. And that's great! Failure can *feel* bad, but failing is a learning experience and it can be really good for us. Listen to [this episode](#) of Girl Talk from Girl Scouts River Valleys to learn all about failure. (Best for older girls & adults)
 - It takes grit (passion and perseverance) to overcome challenges, but being gritty doesn't mean trying the same thing over and over or stubbornly pursuing a goal until you frustrated! It's normal to take breaks (even for a long time), make new plans, and rework your goals. What are some ways you can take a break and reset when you are feeling frustrated or stuck? Try going for a walk, doing a mindfulness activity, dancing your frustration out, coloring, drawing, playing game, or something else! What works best for you?
 - Start Try-It Tuesdays with your family or friends where everyone is challenged to try something new each week. You'll have a chance to have fun, learn a lot, and discover new things about yourselves as you compare notes. Plus, any "failures" could spark new ideas for innovation and improvements to the way we do things. Let the day's imperfections serve as inspiration!
 - Try a Design and Build STEM Challenge- Can you build a boat that will hold 50 pennies? How about a paper tower as tall as you? Try solving a real-world problem like [cleaning up an oil](#)

[spill](#) or [filtering water](#). Whatever challenge you take on, brainstorm your solutions, then plan, build, and test it. Solution didn't work? Redesign and try again. Looking for more activities? Try one of these from PBS' [SciGirls](#).

- Challenge yourself with an art activity! Think about an art activity you already like doing and try doing it in a new way. Love to paint? Try making your own paint out of berries, leaves, onion skins, or spices. Love photography? Try making a pinhole camera. Love dance or music? Try a new style
- Get outside and hike a little farther, camp a little longer, or paddle a little harder! Ready for more outdoor challenge? Try the [Every Girl Outdoors or Adventure Club Badges!](#) (Just make sure you are [staying safe](#) and not pushing yourself too hard)
- When things are challenging, it's easy to ignore good things that are going on. At least once a week think of 3 to 5 people or things you are grateful for. Write it down in a gratitude journal or share with a friend or family member (it's also a great way to stay connected with people!) Check out [these tips](#) from Greater Good Magazine for more ideas.
- Plan your own activity!

Theme: S'More Fun



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Things may look different now, but the Girl Scouts is still there for you! As you gear up for s'more Girl Scout fun, it's a great time to explore the types of Girl Scout activities your girls want to have in the upcoming year.

As you decide what types of activities your girls want to pursue remember that a cornerstone of the Girl Scout program is that it is girl-led.

Girl-led activities and decisions are the magic of Girl Scouts. When girls step up and take ownership of their decisions, they grow into confident leaders who can make informed and empowered decisions.

Fun factoid - Did you know that National S'More's Day is August 10, 2020? The first published recipe for "some mores" was in a 1927 Girl Scout guidebook and is credited to troop leader Loretta Scott Crew!

Make the Connection:

There are lots of ways that adults can help girls be decision makers.

Sometimes, girls will come up with activities that you don't know how to or aren't comfortable leading. *That's ok!* This is your chance to model creativity, critical thinking, and a sense of adventure. Maybe it's a skill you can learn alongside your girls. Maybe it's an opportunity to help girls expand their community connections and bring in an "expert" to teach them.

Here are some ways to incorporate girl-led decision making:

- Being girl-led means taking a step back and involving girls in the decision-making process as early as possible. It's ok to start small – make suggestions and let girls pick. As girls develop their skills they will be able to make bigger, larger impact decisions.
- Allow girls to brainstorm all their ideas no matter how impossible they might seem to you. You'll have a chance to help them hone their ideas down before final decisions are made.
- Give girls the chance to make their own decisions and mistakes. It can be hard to step back and let this happen but it's only through practice that girls will gain confidence in their ability to make decisions and lead.
- There is no one right way to make a decision! Practice different types of decision making. Girls should learn how to compromise, how to let others "win", how to make decisions by voting and more.
- With so many unknowns right now, encourage girls to select several options, encourage flexibility, and remind girls that things might not always go according to plan and that's okay!
- Celebrate National S'More's Day". Give girls different ingredients and challenge them to pick their own components and come up with their own, unique creation.

How to Participate:

Do at least 2 of the below activities to earn the patch

To order your patch visit: <http://bit.ly/gsakpatchorder>

1. Complete a STEM Patch of the Month: <https://www.girlscoutsalaska.org/patchprogram>
2. Girl Scouts of Alaska events: Attend any of the council events offered during the month: <http://www.girlscoutsalaska.org/events>
3. Participate in a GSUSA virtual program: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/girl-scouts-at-home.html>
4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Make a s'more! No campfire? No problem! Try a s'more in the oven or microwave (with adult help), use marshmallow fluff and chocolate syrup, try a [frozen s'more](#), or invent your own s'more inspired dessert. (Did you make something delicious? Share your recipe by emailing program@girlscoutsalaska.org)
 - Meet up with your troop (virtually or socially distant) to think about what you'd like to do this year. We know Girl Scouts may look a little different right now, but there are still plenty of things you can do. Think about badges you'd like to earn, a Journey you'd like to complete, start planning a Take Action or Highest Awards project, or something else! Set goals and make a plan to reach them.
 - Get outside! Spend some time in your yard, go to the park, take a walk, or head out for a hike. Fall will be here before we know it so enjoy the summer while you can!
 - Brighten someone's day with a piece of art. Draw a picture, create a collage, take a photo, make a bouquet or something else and share it with someone you care about.
 - Are you a Zoom expert? Share your skills someone who needs help!
 - Make a solar oven - A solar oven is a box that traps some of the Sun's energy to make the air inside the box hotter than the air outside the box. In other words, the solar oven is like a super greenhouse. Use it to make a s'more or try something else! Check out these instructions from NASA: <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/smores/>
 - Plan your own activity!

Theme: Outdoors



What is the Girl Scout Connection?:

Girl Scouts have a long history of getting girls outdoors!

Studies show that girls today aren't spending nearly enough time outdoors. The increased use of technology and busy lives leave less time for girls to get outdoors and explore their own natural world. Research has also shown that when girls do get quality time outdoors and increase their exposure to nature they thrive physically, emotionally and intellectually.

There are lots of ways girls can get outdoors. Girl Scouts makes it easy to start with nature based Journeys, new outdoor badges and Girl Scouts of Alaska's very own [Every Girl Outdoors](#) and [Adventure Club](#) programs!

Make the Connection:

Start small... Getting outdoors doesn't have to mean a multi-day wilderness backpacking trip. It can mean going outside during a troop meeting and playing a game or having a picnic. As girls become more comfortable in their own natural backyard you can start to explore bigger adventures. Who knows, maybe your troop *WILL* hike the Resurrection Trail or canoe Swan Lakes!

Remember, you don't have to be an outdoor expert to get girls outdoors. If you aren't comfortable ask the parents in your troop to lead an activity or find someone in your community to meet with girls. If you need a little background on getting girls outdoors? Check out the gsLearn "Girl Scouts in the Outdoors" training. If you need help accessing gsLearn email us at customercare@girlscoutsalaska.org.

Here are few ways to get girls outdoors:

- Play in nature! Let girls immerse themselves in their natural surroundings. Playing games, having a conversation under a tree or drawing outdoors may not seem like much but simple activities like these allow girls to become comfortable in their natural surroundings.
- Allow girls opportunities to get outside, get dirty and explore.
- Ask girls how *they* want to be in nature. Maybe they want to learn to ski, maybe they want to learn to paint a landscape or maybe they want to go hiking. Engage girls in looking up the Girl Scout Safety Checkpoints for the activity, plan their adventure and then do it!
- Choose a plant or animal that lives in your area and learn about it. Then, go outside and look for it. What can you learn by seeing it in its natural habitat that you couldn't by reading a book?
- Play some environmental education games. Check out [Sharing Nature with Children](#) by Joseph Cornell for some great ideas to get started.

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3. Participate in a GSUSA virtual program: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/girl-scouts-at-home.html>
4. On Your Own Activities: Do an activity with your troop or independently. Here are some ideas:
 - Get outside! Go for a walk around your neighborhood, take a hike, spend some time in your yard, or something else.
 - Try one of these Outdoor badge activities from GSUSA on Girl Scouts at Home: <https://www.girlscouts.org/en/girl-scouts-at-home/activities-for-girls.html>
 - Make some outdoor art - use natural materials to spell out your name, create a picture, or build a sculpture
 - Go on a camping trip - Pitch a tent in the backyard, visit a state park, stay in one of [Alaska's Public Use Cabins](#), or something else! Not sure where to start? Check out [GSUSA's Outdoor Resources](#)
 - Contribute to real scientific research by participating in a citizen science project! Many can be done at home and few or no supplies. Learn more at <https://scistarter.org/finder?phrase=Girl+Scouts>
 - Sometimes a change of scenery can be great. Pick something you usually do inside (Think: dinner, your homework, board games, art, exercise, etc.) and take it outside. What do you notice? What things are the same? What things are different? Would you do it again?
 - Go on a square foot safari – find spot on the ground that looks interesting and measure out one square foot (it helps to use string, tape, or sticks to mark it). Make observations about what you see. Count the number of objects in your square, draw a picture or take photos of plants or insects, note the different colors you see. Move to another area and try again. What is the same? What is different?
 - Plan your own activity!