



Parent Handbook 2018 - 2019

Council: USAGSO (USA Girl Scouts Overseas)

Community: USAGSO – Spangdahlem, Community 560

Overseas Community Management Team (OCMT) Members

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www.spangdahlemgirlscouts.org

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Welcome to Girl Scouts!

GSUSA Mission

“Girl Scouts builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.”

About Girl Scouting

Juliette Gordon Low founded Girl Scouting in the United States in 1912. We now have 2.6 million members worldwide. Our programming is designed to help girls:

- Develop to their full potential.
- Relate to others with increasing understanding, skill and respect.
- Develop a meaningful set of values to guide their actions and to provide the foundation for sound decision.
- Contribute to the improvement of society through the use of their abilities and leadership skills, working in cooperation with others.

How does my daughter fit into the world of Girl Scouting?

- **WAGGS** – All Girl Scouts are part of a worldwide movement that has members in more than 100 nations, all belonging to the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS).
- **GSUSA** – Girl Scouts USA is a National organization.
- **USAGSO** – USA Girl Scouts Overseas is an operating unit of GSUSA.
- **Community** – We are the USAGSO – Spangdahlem Community, guided by the OCMT.
- **Troop** – The group of girls and leaders with whom your Scout will be meeting regularly, so she can earn badges, participate in activities, and have fun.

Girl Scout Age Levels

The Girl Scout age levels are defined by grades. It is important to know your Girl Scout’s grade level so that you can be directed to the appropriate materials and information.

- **Girl Scout Daisy** - Kindergarten & First Grade
- **Girl Scout Brownie** - Second Grade & Third Grade
- **Girl Scout Junior** - Fourth Grade & Fifth Grade
- **Girl Scout Cadette** - Sixth Grade - Eighth Grade
- **Girl Scout Senior** - Ninth Grade & Tenth Grade
- **Girl Scout Ambassador** - Eleventh Grade & Twelfth Grade

Girl Scout Promise and Law

Every member of Girl Scouting shares the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The Girl Scout Promise is the way Girl Scouts agree to act every day toward one another and other people, and the Law outlines a way to act towards one another and the world.

Becoming familiar with the Promise and Law is the first activity of every new Girl Scout.

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,
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 Responsibilities

Each of our Girl Scouts is expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly and as many outings, field trips, and events as possible.
- Wear appropriate uniform to **EVERY** Girl Scout activity.
- Complete missed activities on her own or with a parent's help.
- Pass along important information to parents and leaders.
- Respect and treat each member of the troop as a sister.
- Respect Troop Leaders and Troop Parents.
- Participate in the meetings.
- Conduct herself in a safe manner.
- Listen to others and show respect for what each girl is saying.

Basic Policies & Information

Membership

The membership year runs October 1 to September 30. Registration for Girl Scouts is 100% online; this includes both Girl and Adult members. If, for any reason, you are having trouble registering yourself or your Girl Scout online, please contact overseascustomer@girlscouts.org IMMEDIATELY for assistance.

All girls and any adults who regularly attend meetings, events and troop trips *must* be registered members of USAGSO - Spangdahlem. PLEASE NOTE: Financial aid is available for both Girl AND Adult Membership fees. Simply check the box at the payment screen to submit a request for financial aid.

Sign-In/Out Procedures

Following child supervision rules set forth in Spangdahlem ABI 31-103, all girls under the age of 10 must be signed in and out from meetings and activities by a parent or guardian. Girls age 10 and older may sign themselves in and out, if parental permission has been given to the supervising leader.

Tag-A-Longs

Tag-a-longs are not just a type of cookie; they are what Girl Scouts call non-member siblings or friends. We ask that you do not bring tag-a-longs to meetings or events unless it is a designated family event. Due to USAGSO regulations, accident insurance must be purchased for each tag-a-long and supervising adult. The troop is required to pay for the insurance needed, which takes away from the troop's funds.

Leave No Trace

Cleaning up our area is the responsibility of **EVERY TROOP MEMBER**. We are very fortunate to have our meeting rooms on base (a.k.a. "The Hut"), and we need to give this privilege the respect it deserves. Whether we are in the Hut or out in the community, we expect every scout to "leave it better than you found it."

The Hut has a cleaning checklist for every troop to follow. Girl Scouts are expected to stay at their meeting place until the checklist is complete and their Troop Leader gives the go-ahead. We appreciate parents' help in reinforcing this expectation.

No-Shoe Policy

In order to assist with keeping the hut clean, we ask that everyone who enters the Hut remove his/her shoes. Adults who choose not to remove their shoes (i.e. ABU boots) are asked to utilize the blue shoe covers provided. You are not required to remove your shoes if you are just signing in or out, only if you are fully entering the hut and staying.

Uniforms & Patches

Uniforms are required for participation in Council Events, Parades, Community Events, and any time a girl is representing Girl Scouts in public. The official Girl Scout uniform consists of a Girl Scout vest/sash with an American Flag, Council ID patches, Troop Number, Membership Tab & Pin, and a Troop Crest, as needed. Formal uniform also includes a white blouse or polo shirt and khaki bottoms. Badges and patches should be affixed to the vests according to the following examples. **PLEASE NOTE: All fun patches earned should always be placed on the BACK of the vest.**

Leader, Parent and Girl Communication

Troop leaders will determine how they will disseminate information to their members. Most of your Girl Scout information will come from your Troop leaders, with occasional updates from the Community.

The best way to keep up-to-date with the Community is through Facebook and email. Our public FB page is USA Girl Scouts Overseas – Spangdahlem, and our Closed Group for currently-registered families is USAGSO – Spangdahlem Parents Page of Registered Girl Scouts. We will email newsletters/flyers/information as needed, so please make sure your contact information is kept up-to-date with **both** your Troop Leader and the OCMT Secretary/Registrar.

Community Events

We have planned several fun events for the entire Community this year. We encourage your girl to participate in as many events as possible, so she can benefit from all the experiences we have planned.

RSVPs and Event Fees

Most events require a fee that is **not refundable** after the due date. Our event fees are planned at cost; no profit is gained from events, with the exception of designated fundraisers.

All community events require pre-registration, even if no payment is involved. Event registration forms are available at the hut or online at spangdahlemgirlscouts.com. Forms must be returned **with full payment** to the mailbox at the Hut by the due date. Payment may take up to 7 days to process. Most community-sponsored events are eligible for Financial Aid! Contact the OCC for more information. **NOTE: Troop leaders are NOT responsible for turning in your registration forms.**

No Show Policy

If your Girl Scout registers for an event that her troop pays for but does not attend, you will be required to reimburse the troop. If you have prepaid for an event or activity and your girl does not attend, you will **not** be refunded the cost, as the troop uses those funds to budget for the event. It is extremely important to check your schedule before committing to any activity or event.

Troop Funding

The money you paid for your Girl Scouts registration online covers administrative costs and accident insurance, and helps support USAGSO programs. **Registration fees do not go to individual troops.**

Troop Funds consist of all monies paid to the troop, including dues (detailed below), monies raised during cookie sales and other fundraising efforts, and outside donations.

Each troop decides what to do with their funds. The Leaders will guide the girls to create a budget at an age-appropriate level, following the Girl Scout program level guidelines. Troop funds are budgeted to cover costs of meetings, supplies, badges and partial expenses for girls and required chaperones for troop activities. Special programs and community events are not budgeted and will often require an additional fee. All parents and Girl Scouts are invited to bring ideas for outings, events, and other troop happenings to discuss at troop meetings.

Troop Dues

Troops may decide to collect dues from each family to help cover the cost of purchasing badges and patches, program supplies, awards, gifts, and leader tools. Each troop's leaders will determine the cost of dues, but the total will not exceed \$50 per year per girl.

Parent/Guardian Support

A troop could not survive without the patience and support of the parents. The outcome of the troop is just as much the responsibility of the parent actions as it is the Leader actions.

Parent Promise

On my honor, I will try:
To encourage and support my Girl Scout
To help her troop at all times;
And to obey the Girl Scout Parent's Law

Parent Law

A Girl Scout Parent:
Understands the true program of Girl Scouting
Gets her daughter to and from meetings and events on time
Knows a troop is a team effort
Sees the job through to the end
Sets a good example at all times
Is enthusiastic and cheerful
Does not consider the leader a babysitter
Brings troop problems to the leader first
Always does his or her part willingly and is
aware that Girl Scouting is for all girls

Family Participation

We know that our Girl Scouts families are busy, but parent support and participation is essential to the success of our Community. We have many opportunities for volunteers and will be happy to find a good fit for anyone who wants to help out.

4Her Program

This year, we are asking that each family dedicate at least 4 hours of service toward their Girl Scout's activities. This can be anything from helping your girl complete activities that she missed at a meeting to chaperoning a trip or even cleaning the hut after an event. All families who turn in their participation cards will be recognized by the OCMT.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

We ask that all parents/guardians:

- Make an effort to be punctual in both drop off and pick up times on meeting days.
- Aid your daughter in all fundraising activities and turn in all monies and forms in a timely manner.
- Check with your Troop Leader at each meeting for important news or permission slips that may need to be signed.
- Keep parent socializing at meetings to a quiet level and supervise any tag-a-longs.
- Respect your Leaders' time by honoring deadlines and making payments promptly.
- Assist the troop and troop leaders during meetings, activities, or outings.
- Consider being an active member of a Troop or Community Committee (see Volunteer Interest Form).
- Contact leaders in advance if you are unable to help out as scheduled, and help find a replacement.
- Communicate problems or concerns to the Troop Leaders immediately. Problems or concerns regarding Troop Leaders or other issues outside of the troop should be directed to the OCC/Co-OCC.

**Thank you! We are so honored to have you and your Girl Scout as a part of our Community this year.
Together, we can make this the best year yet!**