Girl Scouts of Connecticut
Creating Your Own Girl Scout Web Page
For Troop Leaders

➢ Content

Creating a Troop web page is a fun, educational and creative project for Girl Scouts of all ages. The content of your Troop's web page should, of course, be left to the imagination of the girls. Let them make suggestions, and use their ideas.

Suggestions for Website Content:

- Have girls start by writing the content for their page. Remind them to check for spelling and grammatical errors. Perhaps each girl could take a turn proofreading the content.
- Include a calendar of upcoming trips/events. **Please do not specify place or address!** Instead, give an email address and/or phone number of a Leader that parents/girls can call to get the details.
- Troop activities board
- Blog synopsis of Troop meetings to keep parents informed on what their girls are doing
- Information on Badges the girls have or are working on
- SWAPS ideas, include instructions for making favorite "Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere"
- **Reminder on upcoming product sales deadlines**
- Camp stories or community service projects.
- Bridging poems and songs (as long as they're not protected by copyright laws)
- Recipes and healthy eating tips
- **Photo album** – No last names in captions, please!
- Scrap booking examples, ideas for page art
- Crossword puzzles, trivia, and riddles
- Gold, Silver, and Bronze award project ideas and requirements
- **Forms** – Council-produced forms are updated often, so it is best to include a link to the GSOFCT Resource and Form Library: http://gsofct.org/membership/form-library.php. If you host council forms on your own site, or link to a specific form on GSOFCT's site, you run the risk of using an out-of-date form or ending up with a broken link when the form is updated.

➢ Internet Safety

- Be sure to talk to your girls about being safe in cyberspace. Remind them never to give out their personal information, including last name, address, school, or telephone number. Also remind them never to get together with anyone they "meet" online without first checking with a parent.

- Sign the Internet Safety Pledge found online at:
  http://gsofct.org/pages/InternetSafetyPledge.php

- If you will be including photos of girls on your web page make sure each girl's parent or guardian agrees that photos can be used and signs a permission slip (Annual Consent Form) located in the Resource and Forms Library at http://www.gsofct.org.

- Protect the identity of Troop members — never use personal information (address, last name, phone number, school, or meeting location) about any girl or adult.

- Although it might be tempting to share lots of information about upcoming Girl Scout events on your web page, in the interest of keeping girls safe, remember to never post the location of Girl Scout events, programs, Troop meetings or camps. You never know who else might be visiting your site or blog. Instead, recap and review events after they have happened.

- Advise girls to consult a Troop Leader or parent immediately if they are uncomfortable with any material they receive via email or view online.

➢ Guidelines

Remind your Troop to stick to the following guidelines when creating their site:

- The design and content of your Troop's website should reflect of the Girl Scout program and principles. This means they should think carefully about how they want to present themselves, and Girl Scouting, as they design their web page. Have girls keep in mind that they are representing Girl Scouts. The Girl Scout Mission, Promise, and Law apply in an internet environment as well as in a Troop meeting or at an event.

- Remind your girls that pages on the internet can be read by people all over the world. A good way to test if information is appropriate for your website is to ask yourself "Would you feel comfortable having this information on a highway billboard?" If the answer is no, don't post it!

- Be wary of inappropriate language or topics on your web page. You are creating a Girl Scout Troop website, not a personal website. References to race, color, religion, age (except when referring to girl program age levels), sex, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, learning disability, physical or mental disability, ancestry, genetic information, and any other protected class, as well as political and personal opinions, have no place on a Girl Scout web page.

- Troop websites may not be used to conduct sales of any products sold in "council-sponsored product sales," such as Girl Scout cookies and QSP. And for safety and security reasons, sales on non-Girl Scout approved sites for any Girl Scout Troop/Group money earning activities may not be conducted by individual girls or adults (this includes sites such as Ebay and craigslist.) However, troop websites may be used to market products. For more information on these guidelines, please refer to *the Safety Activity Checkpoints.*

- It's always a good idea to have your Service Unit Manager, or another adult volunteer, proofread your Troop's website often and regularly to be sure there are no questionable photos or inappropriate material. A fresh set of eyes may even catch errors that were originally overlooked.

- Girls can locate and download graphics off the internet or scan and use their own sketch art. Be sure they understand the rules listed below on the proper use of Girl Scout graphics

and logos. Remind them graphics take up a lot of computer memory, so consider limiting the number of graphics and photos you use so that your audience will not have to wait long to see your web page.

- Girls may add links to their web page. Just be sure the links are safe and appropriate for Girl Scouts. Additionally, for anyone interested in learning more about Girl Scouts, consider linking your page to Girl Scouts of Connecticut, www.gsofct.org, or GSUSA's website, www.girlscouts.org.

- Keep in mind that the Troop website should not request names, addresses, phone numbers or any other identifying information from visitors. Also, be sure all messages are screened carefully before posting them.

➢ Girl Scout Artwork and Trademarks

- The following symbols are trademarked by GSUSA:
    o Girl Scout logo,
    o all Brownie Girl Scout Try-It's,
    o all Girl Scout badges,
    o all Girl Scout project patches, official pins and awards.

    In order to protect the image and integrity of Girl Scouts these symbols are not for public use. For permission to use any of these symbols on your web page, visit http://www.girlscouts.org/terms_conditions.asp of the GSUSA website.

- The Girl Scout service mark is composed of two parts, the symbol (trefoil with three profiles) and the logotype ("Girl Scouts"). Both parts of the service mark must be used together. The service mark must never be redrawn, reproportioned, or modified in any way. The logotype must always be in the same proportion to the symbol. A computer-generated service mark or an artist's rendering of the service mark is not acceptable.

- The logotype accompanying the symbol may never be used as part of your message.

- If the service mark is rendered in two colors, the symbol must be green and the logotype must be black. If it is rendered in one color, the preferred color treatment for both parts is Girl Scout green. However, reproduction of both parts in black is acceptable.

- Minimum airspace around the service mark should be equal to the size of the "g" in the logotype. The service mark must stand alone as an element and not crowded in or lost among copy, design, graphic device, or any other message.

- The service mark cannot be used as a background design with type running over it. The service mark must never be used as part of a design or subject of wallpaper pattern. When using the service mark on a website, it must not move, blink, or change colors in any way. Whenever possible, the service mark should be on the left third of the web page.

➢ Links

- Girls have the option of setting up links to other Girl Scout affiliated websites such as the ones below. Again, please be sure that the website is appropriate and does not contain any unsuitable material, language, or inappropriate advertising.

- o The following are some suggestions:

    - http://forgirls.girlscouts.org/

    - http://www.gsofct.org/

    - http://www.kotb.com/ (Kids on the Block website)

Questions? Contact Megan Clark at mclark@gsofct.org or Sharon Bellinger at sbellinger@gsofct.org.

Thank you for all you do and for keeping our girls' safety your number one priority.