

The Checklist

Please note this is a sample timeline and checklist. Depending on the size and scope of the event the timeline and tasks might need to be adjusted.

Two to three months prior to the event

Form a committee to plan the event and decide the responsibilities of each person in the group. Possible members might include: a chairperson, accountant, registration coordinator, event promoter, volunteer recruiter, teen Girl Scouts

Determine the purpose and focus of the event and who will be invited. Below are a few possible questions for you to ask about your event.

- Does your event support the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) with its three keys to leadership – Discover, Connect and Take Action – and the 4 pillars of Girl Scouts (STEAM, Outdoors, entrepreneurship/Civic engagement or Life skills)?
- Does your event support the Journeys or Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting?
- Will the program be suitable to the age, group and experience level of those invited?

Get girl input on your event ideas. Consider their thoughts and choose a purpose/theme for the event. Depending on their grade level, decide how to appropriately include them in providing input, planning or leading activities.

Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for related standards and guidelines. Ensure that the event falls within all safety and council guidelines.

If the event is outside council boundaries or involves an overnight that is not on GSKSMO's property, council approval is required. See the Activity and Trip Application for more information.

Research your event. Historical data may be available.

- What has been done before?
- If this is a repeat, review evaluations from previous years. What needs to be improved?

Select a possible date.

- Consider other activities that may impact participation such as religious or national holidays, community events and council-wide Girl Scout events.
- Consider if a rain/snow date is needed.

Create a budget for the event.

- Include the cost of food, facility rental, materials, patches, etc. (see sample report on page 14)
- Determine cost of event for each participant and if necessary, set a minimum number of participants needed to hold the event.

Decide on a start time and end time, keeping in mind the age/grade when choosing how long the event should last.

Reserve a facility.

- Is a deposit needed? By what date? Is it refundable? Who will pay it?
- Consider if an alternate place is needed for rain/snow.
- Keep in mind the potential number of girls and adults, specific needs for activities, bathrooms, accommodations for those with special needs, etc.
- If a signed contract is required, submit it for approval using the Activity and Trip Application.

Plan specific activities for event.

Whenever possible provide hands-on activities and consider alternating between stationary activities and active ones. Will people with specific experience/skills or specialized training be needed?

Determine pre-event details.

Who is eligible to attend? Will additional adults be needed? How will troops and individual girls register? What is the registration deadline, who is the contact person for questions? Will girls from nearby service units be invited? Will non-registered girls be invited? What is the maximum number of participants?

Plan a menu for event.

- Will you serve a meal or just a snack? Will there need to be arrangements for girls with dietary restrictions?
- If food will be sold at the event, check with the county board/Department of Health for local food handler regulations.
- Be SURE to double check allergies and special dietary needs when purchasing food. If you are unsure of an accommodation to make, speak with the girls' parents or contact your membership manager.

Plan a publicity strategy.

How will this event be advertised? Will a flier be needed? If so, who will design, print, and distribute the flier? Flier templates are available in the Brand Center on the website.

Complete the SU Program and Event Planning Form and turn it in with a draft of your flier, a plan for the day's activities and project SU Event Financial Report to your SU Events Coordinator.

One and a half to two months prior to the event

Develop a crisis management plan.

- Plan for an emergency (such as a tornado, snowstorm, fire, etc.). How will participants be notified if the event is postponed? Who is responsible for bringing a first aid kit to the event? Will additional first aid supplies need to be purchased? What type of first aid certification is needed?
- Review Safety Activity Checkpoints for guidelines.
- Who will be responsible for keeping track of emergency contact and health info for participants?

Promote your event and collect registrations.

- Speak or have girls speak at your SU meeting to promote the event.
- Pass out fliers.
- Post on your SU web page and Facebook Page.
- Work with your SUSM for other options.

Determine the awards or patches, based on the planned activities.

If ordering Girl Scout branded patches, orders must be placed through the council shop. Patches should be ordered at least a month before your event. If it is a custom design, it might take longer.

One month prior to the event

Make a list of the supplies/materials needed for the event.

Consider if it may be more cost effective to order in bulk. Can any of your materials be borrowed other volunteers, etc.? Don't forget dollar stores as potential places to buy supplies.

Decide on how the facility will be set up and draw a diagram. Consider chairs, tables, decorations, food, first aid station, and parking. Brainstorm possible problems and implement changes.

Delegate tasks that can be completed by volunteers. Recruit Program Aides, leaders, and parents to volunteer during the event. Confirm event details (time, date, location, expectations) with all volunteers.

Secure specialized volunteers and/or speakers. Confirm event details (time, date, location, expectations) with all volunteers.

Confirm the location reservation. Decide on details.

Who will open and close the facility? Is special equipment available on-site or will it need to be rented?

Check the event budget as supplies are being purchased and make any needed changes.

Continue to promote your event and collect registrations (until your registration deadline).

- As registration forms and checks or bank transfers are received, create a participant roster by troop and maintain an accurate count.
- Ensure all girls that are participating are a currently registered member.
- Have a process in place to prioritize registration if you are expecting more participants than can be accommodated.

If non-Girl Scout members will be participating, be sure to purchase additional insurance. The Insurance Purchase Form can be found on the website (gsksmo.org/forms). It should be returned with payment to the council as soon as possible or at least 2 weeks prior to your event.

Two to three weeks prior to the event

Confirm that all committee members have begun to finalize their responsibilities.

Continue to promote your event and collect registrations (until your registration deadline). Are you close to minimum or maximum number of participants? Are there so few that you aren't going to cover your costs? If so, work with your SU Event Consultant to find a solution.

Confirm the total number of people expected to attend (after registration deadline).

Make final plans for event activities and assign volunteers.

Purchase any materials needed for event, if not already ordered.

Order or purchase food, if needed.

Develop an organized check-in procedure.

- Make sure you have a record of how many people and names of those who are at your event. In case of emergencies you need to know how many people need to be accounted for.
- Attendance lists are also great for your records and can help you plan for next year.

- Security: Make sure you have an appropriate plan. You should know if doors lock automatically in your building. If so, leave only one door open for attendees to enter through. For larger events or where increased security is needed, make sure you have a volunteer monitoring each exit.
- Send out confirmations to participants, if necessary. Confirm start and end times, directions, and any special items they may need to bring.
- Design an evaluation form for participants. A sample is included in your manual.
- Purchase insurance for non-member participants.
- If checks are needed to pay bills or vendors on event day, request the checks via the online form.

One week prior to the event

- Secure a cash advance if needed for the day of the event.
- Confirm that any materials needed for the event have been purchased.
- Confirm specialized volunteers and/or speakers.
- Confirm the total number of people expected to attend with the caterer or food supplier, if applicable.
- Check the event budget and make any needed changes.

Day of event

- Buy any perishable supplies.
- Make sure to have at least one copy of the Incident Form (gsksmo.org/forms), and emergency numbers for reference during the event.
- Arrive early to set up. It can be helpful to begin set up about 90 min. before the event is scheduled to start. This way you'll be ready at least 30 min. before event starts, or before participants begin arriving to check-in.
- Have a plan in place for late arrivals or early departures.
- Review the general expectations and the crisis management plan with all event volunteers.

- As participants arrive, hand-out any check-in materials (such as schedules or nametags). Printed schedules or large posters that display the schedule can be helpful for adults and other participants.
- Have fun! Take photos of the girls participating in the activities. Have participants evaluate the program at the end of the event. You may want to create an evaluation form for all participants to fill out. A sample one is included in this guide.
- Thank the volunteers, participants, specialized volunteers and/or speakers.

1 to 2 weeks after the event

- Meet with the committee members to review the participants' evaluations, evaluate the event, and make recommendations for improving future events.
- Complete the SU Event Financial Report and Event Evaluation form. Turn in to SU Event Consultant.
- Send thank you notes to all donors, speakers, volunteers and facility staff.
- Create a final budget report and an event summary to file for future reference.
- Turn in all receipts for reimbursement.
- Make sure all bills have been paid.