

GOLD AWARD



Adult Guide

Helping Your Girl Scout Succeed

Dear Parents, Guardians and Troop Leaders,

The Gold Award is the highest achievement in Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts of the USA establishes guidelines for the award, and councils implement the process locally. Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors are eligible to earn the Gold Award. If your Girl Scout is interested in earning the Gold Award, your role as a parent/guardian/troop leader is to encourage her to think critically, be open to multiple perspectives, investigate thoroughly, work cooperatively and identify resources within and beyond their local communities.

Adults play a significant role in supporting a girl's path toward the Gold Award. Remember that it is a girl's decision to earn her Gold Award because it will be her project and must be girl-led. Girls have to want to earn Gold, or they will likely run out of steam and wind up with a project they aren't proud of.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is designed to be completed by an individual girl. To earn the award, each girl must complete two Senior or Ambassador Journeys **or** complete one Senior or Ambassador Journey and have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award. After completing either of these requirements, the Gold Award takes a minimum of 80 hours and completion of all the steps outlined in our training and Gold Award Guidelines.

If your Girl Scout has any physical, emotional, or mental health needs; diagnosis (including dyslexia, ADHD, etc.); and/or requires accommodations in her participation or evaluation of a Gold Award project, please contact highestawards@gsoh.org.

Thank you for supporting your Girl Scout as she pursues her Gold Award. Your support is invaluable!

What can you do to help?



We encourage you to assist your girl by:



- Reading through the materials provided to her by Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland and GSUSA regarding the Gold Award so that you feel comfortable offering support.



- Discussing the possible topics and project ideas, and if she asks, helping her choose a topic that will become the basis for her project. Make sure that her project is more than a service project and goes beyond the Girl Scout community. Let your Girl Scout explore her passions! The topic of her Gold Award project should be based on an issue she truly cares about.



- Encouraging and supporting her, but not pressuring her. "Going for the Gold" is something **a girl must want to do herself**; it shouldn't be done to please her friends or family.



- Recognizing that she is capable, competent and worthy of respect as she assumes greater citizenship, responsibility and leadership. Her way may not be your way and that's OK. We want to see her creativity!



- Aiding her in developing a network of adults and girls who can lend insight, act as resources and be team members. You may work with or know someone who has the skill set your girl needs as an advisor. Working in a group will help her make a bigger impact and cover more ground than she would on her own. The Gold Award is an individual project, but it is also a leadership project. It must demonstrate interaction with others in a leadership capacity.





- Ensuring she is not over-stressed, and is supported by her family and friends in her endeavors.



- Helping and supporting with safety and money guidelines. These ensure the safety of your daughter and others, as well as the integrity of the Girl Scout program.



- Allowing her to stumble and learn the lessons that come with a Gold Award project. She will work with a project advisor, an adult who has skills specific to her project, and possibly a Gold Award mentor who has been trained to assist her.



- Helping with her project when asked or cheerleading from the side if appropriate.

- Joining in the celebration as she is honored for her accomplishments.



REMEMBER:

Parents and guardians play a significant role in supporting a girl during the Gold Award process. This role may include being a coach, mentor, cheerleader, sounding board, chauffeur or even a team member. However, a parent should never be a taskmaster, as this must be the **girl's project**. Parents, guardians and other family members cannot be a girl's project advisor.

Please refrain from the following behavior:

- Instructing your girl to carry out specific project plans.
- Insisting that she focuses on a specific issue of your choosing.
- Doing the Gold Award project for her.
- Making any phone calls or sending emails on her behalf.*
- Contacting Highest Award Review Committee Members to discuss her specific project.



We understand that questions/concerns may arise that may be better suited for a parent or guardian to handle. As such, we encourage parents/guardians/troop leaders to contact the program manager overseeing Highest Awards at **highestawards@gsoh.*

It is the girl's responsibility to initiate and maintain communication with her project advisor, team members, etc.

What comes next?



Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland has multiple opportunities to recognize and celebrate Gold Award Girl Scouts. Examples include the following:

Scholarships



Gold Award Girl Scouts are eligible for the Kathleen L. Elich Memorial Scholarship and the Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland Scholarship. Applications for both scholarships are due March 15 of your senior year of high school. More information, including the applications, can be found on our council website: **<http://bit.ly/GSOHScholarships>**.



Gold Award Ceremony



Every year our council recognizes Girl Scouts who earned their Gold and Silver awards at the Gold Award Ceremony. To be invited to that same year's ceremony, the Gold Award Final Report is due by Feb. 15 via GoGold. Our council's award year runs from March to March, so if you submit after Feb. 15, you will be included in the next year's ceremony.

