



HOW TO GUIDE  
BROWNIE GIRL SCOUTS  
THROUGH THE FIRST THREE MEETINGS

# **BROWNIE BEGINNINGS**

**Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts**

## Welcome to Brownie Girl Scouts

...where you are about to embark on an exciting and enjoyable adventure with kindergarten and first grade girls. Like all Girl Scout experiences it all begins by focusing on the Girl Scout leadership philosophy of girls **discovering** (themselves and their values), **connecting** (by caring and teaming with others), and **taking action** (to improve themselves, their families, their communities and the world). As you and the girls start to shape your Girl Scout experience both adults and girls will begin to gain a deeper knowledge of themselves, develop healthy relationships with adults and girls, connect with living by the Girl Scout Law and have tons of FUN. This guide is full of easy ideas, tips and suggestions that will assist troop volunteer teams to successfully begin a positive troop experience.

### Creating a Quality Experience

It is not just what girls do, but how you engage them that creates a quality Girl Scout experience. All Girl Scout activities are built on three processes –**Girl Led, Cooperative Learning, and Learning by Doing**. These processes ensure the quality and promote the fun and friendship so important in Girl Scouting. Take some time to understand these processes and how to use them with Girl Scout Daisies.

#### GIRL-LED

Girl-led simply means that girls are playing an active part in figuring out the “what, where, when, how and why” of their activities. This means girls are more engaged in playing a critical role as decision-makers in the planning and implementation of their activities. As part of a girl-adult partnership, volunteers can use this process to strengthen girls’ empowerment and decision-making roles in activities. Adults provide age-appropriate facilitation, ensuring that planning, organization, set-up and evaluation of all activities are done jointly with girls. The girl-led approach to ideas and activities ensures that girls are engaged in their learning and experience leadership and decision-making opportunities as they prepare to become active participants in their local and global communities.

#### **With Brownie Girls this means:**

- ➔ Brainstorming lists of possibilities to allow girls to express what activities they want to do, how they would like to do them and act on them.
- ➔ Providing options for girls to choose from only if they cannot think of options on their own.
- ➔ Selecting “add-ons” to badge work like, field trips, craft project, game, get outdoors, etc
- ➔ Allowing the girls to learn from plans that don’t go quite right. They can talk about what they would do differently next time.

## LEARNING BY DOING

Learning by Doing is a “hands-on” learning process that engages girls in continuous cycles of action and reflection resulting in deeper understanding of concepts and mastery of practical skills. As they actively participate in meaningful activities (e.g., trying new skills, solving real-life problems or role-playing) and reflect on them to evaluate what they have learned (e.g., by keeping a journal), girls get to explore their own questions, discover answers, gain new skills, and share ideas and observations with others. Throughout the Learning by Doing process, it is important for girls to be able to connect these experiences to their lives and apply what they have learned to their future experiences.

### ***With Brownie Girls this means:***

- ➔ Ask yourself “Am I doing something the girls could be doing”: If so, take a deep breath, step back and let them “D0”
- ➔ Giving girls quiet time to think, talk and reflect.
- ➔ Hands on activities should be girl directed as much as possible
- ➔ Allow girls to be creative and express individuality
- ➔ Practice progression by ensuring that each girl is ready for an activity and she can gradually build skills and confidence.

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Cooperative Learning takes place when all members of a group are working together towards a common goal. Cooperative Learning is designed to promote sharing of knowledge, skills and learning in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation as girls work together on goals that can only be accomplished with the help of others. Additionally, working together in all-girl environments encourages girls to feel powerful, emotionally and physically safe, and to experience a sense of belonging even in the most diverse groups.

### ***With Brownie Girls this means:***

- ➔ Providing plenty of opportunities for teaming up in smaller groups
- ➔ Making decisions together as a Team (Even the small things)
- ➔ Giving girls a minute or two to work out conflicts before you jump in (as long as physical safety is not an issue)
- ➔ Teach girls to be active listeners
- ➔ Encourage girls to share ideas and thoughts, but respect their privacy when they are not ready to share yet.

## ***The Brownie Girl Scout Meeting Outline***

Second and third grade girls are comfortable when they know what to expect. Establishing a consistent troop meeting structure girls will help focus the girls enthusiasm and energy.. Offering a variety of activities and including girls in making decisions within the structured meeting format is essential to keeping girls interested and having fun. They will look forward to coming if they are included in troop planning and responsibilities. It is best to schedule Brownie meetings weekly, it allows the girls to develop a stronger relationship as a team. The meeting should be scheduled to run for one hour to one hour and a half, unless a field trip or special event is planned. Remember to Focus on one action at a time, and keep directions , expectations , and activities focused with clear direction.

### ***Suggested parts of a Brownie Girl Scout Troop Meeting***

- ➔ Pre-meeting Activity
- ➔ Opening
- ➔ Brownie Circle
- ➔ Activity
- ➔ Clean-Up
- ➔ Closing
- ➔ Snack (is optional)

### ***Welcoming Girls***

Many of the girls are new to Brownies as you are, and others are experienced with Brownies but new to you. It is important that as girls arrives at the meeting, a caring volunteer greets them individually by name, and welcomes the girls. Individually.

### ***Pre-Meeting Activity (10-15 minutes)***

Have something for the girls to do when they arrive that does not require much volunteer direction. Girls seldom arrive all at the same time to meetings. This activity gives them something to do with their energy (rather than run around!). Some troops like to have a snack as a pre-meeting activity, especially troops that meet right after school. Other examples are, jump rope, puzzles, word games, coloring or making scrapbook pages.

### ***On-going Pre-Meeting Activity Ideas:***

- ➔ Work on creating individual scrapbooks based on troop meetings and activities. Girls can decorate individual pages each week.
- ➔ Do an on going service project. Make Greeting cards each week, for nursing homes , thank you cards after a field trip, get well cards for a chil-

## Opening(5-10 minutes)

The opening to the Brownie Girl Scout meeting should gather the girls from loose pre-meeting activities into a group. Give the girls a basic format to start with such as standing in a circle. The opening can be a flag ceremony or Girl Scout song that makes them feel they are now focusing on their group and starting something structured. One or two girls could carry a small, hand-held flag into the circle and the Girl Scout Promise could be recited by the troop. As the girls grow and learn they may want to add their own special touches, such as a patriotic song, a GS song, saying hello in other languages, or other special expressions.

### ***Brownie Circle fosters Cooperative Learning***

- ➔ It helps develop good relationships within the troop and the girls learn to communicate better.
- ➔ Decisions can be made by consensus or by voting
- ➔ As a learning process, it is important to allow

### **Brownie Circle (10-15 Minutes)**

The Brownie Circle is a forum to allow girls to have sharing time and be part of making troop decisions. It gives the girls a chance to feel comfortable and confident to talk about their interests, feelings, recent experiences, and get to know each other. Sitting in a circle also allows everyone to feel equally involved. Volunteers should introduce the idea of a talking object (It can be a stone, stick, or even a stuffed animal.) After you try the method out, you can let the girls choose what they want the troop talking object to be. Only the person who has the talking object may talk, everyone else is silent. After 30 seconds or so, the object is passed to the next person.

## Activity( 20-25 minutes)

During this section of the Girl Scout meeting, girls get a chance to build skills, try new things, explore their interests, and work cooperatively with others. As the girls progress, you will begin to get insight into their interests. Make sure that you are always asking for their ideas and input.

### ***Meeting activities should be Learning –By Doing***

- ➔ Simple enough to accomplish, but also offer add-ons or extended opportunities to create a challenge for girls who are ready
- ➔ As child directed as possible - the least amount of adult interaction the better
- ➔ Supervised by sufficient adult help, but only when needed
- ➔ Make activities relevant by asking girls to talk about what happened during the activity and predict what could happen next

### Clean-up(5 minutes)

Girl Scouts leave a place better than they found it and it is the responsibility of the girls not the troop volunteer team, to clean up after themselves. This helps girls take pride in their meeting place and helps instill a sense of self-discipline, respect and responsibility. The Kaper for clean-up is to oversee that everything is done, not to do it by themselves.

Daisy Kaper Chart		
<b>Opening</b>	<b>Song</b>	<b>Snack</b>
Ami	Jane	Abby
Patty		
<b>Supplies</b>	<b>Clean-up</b>	<b>Closing</b>
Katie	Mai	Kelsey
Jessica	Emily	

### What is a Kaper?

A kaper is a job or a responsibility that girls can do at a meeting. Using a kaper chart ensures that all girls will have an equal distribution of job responsibilities and limits disagreements about who gets to do each job. Kaper charts can be created in a wide variety of styles, from the very simple, to the very creative.

### Closing(10 minutes)

A closing is part of every Girl Scout meeting from Daisies through teens. For Daisies it brings closure and begins to instill greater Girl Scout traditions. A closing can be a song or a Friendship Circle. It is also a great time to check-in with the girls and evaluate how they are feeling about their Girl Scout experience. You can ask them questions like "What did you like best about the meeting?" "What would you like to do again?". After they answer thank the girls for sharing and then explain that the Friendship Circle. After the friendship circle is done have the girls sit in a circle and have the girls ask the adult picking them up to stand behind their girl. This gives the troop volunteer team a chance to distribute any papers or make announcements, so both the girls and adults receive info. Thank the girls for coming and let them know you can not wait to see them again next meeting.

### Friendship Circle

Form a circle (volunteers too) and crisscross arms, right over left, then hold hands. One person starts the friendship squeeze with the hand of the person to her left. (Could be the girl who has the closing kaper that starts the squeeze) The squeeze then goes around the circle ending up where it started. When it is your turn to squeeze you can make a silent wish.

## ***Tried and True Methods to.....***

### ***Communicating with Brownie Girl Scouts***

- Use simple words and terms (but not baby talk) to make sure the girls can understand you
- Use role play to convey conceptual ideas
- Keep in mind that at this age girls think in concrete terms, and need concepts presented in ways they can visualize.
- **Use a quiet, pleasant tone when speaking to Brownie Girl Scouts.**
- When you are making a transition from one activity to another, tell the girls. Give a five-minute warning in advance of stopping or changing, but be flexible.

### ***Developing a Trusting Brownie/Volunteer Partnership***

- Ask yourself "I'm I doing something the girls could be doing": If so, take a deep breath, step back and let the girls "DO"
- Offer choices only when there really are choices: Asking "Do you want to color or play with puppets is a choice." Asking "Do you want to wash your hands." Implies a choice, instead make a statement "It is time to wash our hands."
- . Praise desirable behavior and ignore undesirable behavior, if possible .
- Creating a noncompetitive atmosphere
- Don't stress perfection. Mistakes are a natural part of learning. Help the girls to have a positive approach and learn to problem solve and improve from mistakes, sometimes the process is more important than the end result.
- Listen to what the girls have to say and encourage the girls to listen to each other and accept each other
- Be sensitive to the differences in girls' ethnic and cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, family traditions, social customs, and varying abilities.
- Be a positive role model

## ***The First Meeting***

### ***Materials***

- ➔ Glue sticks
- ➔ Crayons or markers
- ➔ Name card for each girl
- ➔ *The Brownie Story*
- ➔ Construction paper cut into strips

### **Pre-meeting activity**

Greet the girls individually as they arrive, giving each a nametag necklace (name card attached with yarn). Have girls decorate their name tag. Give each girl a 4x2 strip of construction paper (about 3 inches long). (Volunteers should make a link and name tag as well.) Have her write her name on it and decorate it. When it time to start, raise your hand in the Quiet Sign. Explain when your hand goes up, everyone's hand goes up, and everyone is quiet. Let the girls know the quiet sign will be used throughout the meeting. You can make it fun and see how fast everyone can be quiet. Gather into a circle to start the meeting.

### **Opening**

Have the Girls gather in a circle and explain you are going to do an Opening Ceremony and the troop will do this every week to show that we are officially starting our meeting. Teach the girls the Girl Scout Sign and the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Post the Promise on a Poster Board or Large Paper so all girls can see. Teach them by recall. Read a line and have them repeat it. Practice it a few times.

### **Brownie Circle**

Welcome them all to Girl Scouts. Talk about why you are together. Explain that the Brownie Circle is a special time when they will share thoughts, ideas, stories and make troop decisions. Introduce each girl by playing a name game to become familiar with one another's name. Be conscientious as to the name girls prefer to be called, Elizabeth may prefer Liz. Respecting yours and every other girl's preference of name is an important part of their socialization.

### ***Recycle***

#### ***Reuse!***

Ask families for activity supplies that are found around the house, like magazines, pencils, yarn, wrapping paper and cardboard. .

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### ***Volunteer***

#### ***Introductions***

Before meetings begin think about how you would like the girls to address you. "Miss Sue" or "Mrs. Smith. Make yourself a name tag.

*The Name Game* - A fun way for girls to learn each other's name...and yours too! Have each girl say her name as you go around the circle. Each girl says her name and the something she likes that begins with the same letter. (A, my name is Annie and I like apples.) A volunteer should go first to demonstrate. Using the decorated strip of construction paper from the pre-meeting activity, tape the two ends together to form the first link to the Brownie chain. The next girl says her name and what she likes and then threads her link through the volunteers link and tapes it together and so on and so on.

After the activity has gone around the whole circle. Explain to Brownie Girl Scouts that they are all connected know as a Brownie Team and will work together and have fun together all year long.

### **Activity**

Have girls stand up in the circle. Explain to them you will be reading the Brownie Story, but you are going to need their help to make the story interesting. Tell them to listen very closely and see if they can act out the story as you read along. At the end of the story ask: "what was their favorite part of the story?" (Story is in the back of the packet)

### **Clean up**

Have all girls participate in clean up.

### **Closing**

Have girls come back into a circle. Ask each girl to share one thing she would like to do as a Brownie Girl Scout. You may want to have a troop volunteer write down what the girls say. Let the girls know that their interests will help decide what the Brownie troop will do through out the year.

Teach the girls the friendship circle and the song, Make New Friends

*Make new friends, but keep the old  
One is silver and the other gold  
I have a hand and you have another  
Put them together and we have each other.*

Thank the girls for coming and let her now you can't wait to see them again at the next meeting.

### ***Imaginative Play***

Brownie girls love listening to and telling stories. They are interested in make-believe and fantasy stories where they can foster their vivid imagination and express creativity by acting out the stories.

### ***Your Perspective***

Think of things you liked to do when you were little and things you like to do now. Share your interests with the girls. You may find out girls like the same things you do or they would like for you to teach them something you are interested in.

## Second Meeting

### **Materials**

- ➔ Large paper or poster board strips
- ➔ White Cloth (banner size)
- ➔ Fabric Makers
- ➔ 3 to 4 ft dowel

### **M**

- ➔ String to hang banner
- ➔ Crayons or mar
- ➔ Name card for each girl
- ➔ *The Brownie Story*

### **Pre-meeting Activity**

Personally greet each girl and let her know it is great to see her again. Lay the name tags out on a table for each girl to find her own. Write parts of the Girl Scout Law on large strips of paper. Lay the randomly on a table or floor. Have the girls work together to put the law back in order. If time permits have them practice the Promise and Law.

### **Opening**

Recite the Girl Scout Promise and Practice the Law. Post the Promise and Law on a Poster Board or Large Paper so all girls can see.

### **Brownie Circle**

Bring out the Friendship link you made the week before to show the girls we are all still linked together. Let them know that together as a Brownie team they are going to create a “troop agreement”, this will help us all respect each other and our meeting space. Use a poster or large piece of paper to write down more group agreements, like bathroom rules, staying in the meeting space and using the talking object. ( Eventually you can have the girls vote on what they want the talking object to be and they can personalize it. Refer back to meeting outline for more info on talking object.) Introduce what the talking object is and how the troop will use it. Practice using it by asking the girls if they can think of anything else they can add to the troop agreement. Use the talking object when girls are speaking. Let them know they did a great job creating the troop agreement and that the troop will add more agreements through out the year when needed.

### **Group Agreement**

When girls participate in creating troop guidelines and rules and agree to them, they are more likely to follow rules and less behavior problems will occur.

### **Adapt activities when needed**

It is great to give the girls a challenge, but brownie girls can get frustrated easily and loose attention if an activity becomes to challenging. If the girls are having a hard time piecing the law together, give them hints or post the Law. Be flexible to meet the needs of the girls.

## Activity:

Get the girls standing up to play a game called 'Brownie to Brownie' Have them find a partner. Then a volunteer calls out a body part like knee to knee or back to back. The girls then touch knee to knee. Tell them each time you call out another body part they have to switch partners. Do this a few times so they have worked with a few different partners. This will also help transition them from one sitting activity to the next.

Have them go to tables. Explain to the girls that next week you will be having a special ceremony called an Investiture ceremony. This is where they will become official Brownie Girl Scouts. We want to display something that represents us as a team so we will make a troop banner. Explain the troop will also be inviting their family and friends to come, so we are going to make invitations.

**Activity Procedure** :Conduct the activity in stations

### 1) Banner Making Station

Create a troop banner on a white piece of cloth. Have the girls trace their hands and write their names with fabric crayons or use the small colored squares for them to decorate as hands or like a quilt. Try it with fabric paint and glitter! Add the troop number, and hang with a dowel and string.

### 2) Invitation Station

Have the girls make an invitation for their friends and family to attend the Investiture Ceremony. Make sure the invitation includes the date and time, location, and directions, if necessary. Have a sample invitation written in large print on display as a guide. Girls can decorate the invitation as they please.

### 3) Learn and teach the Brownie Smile Song

Teach all the girls *Make New Friends* or the *Brownie Smile Song*. Most likely some of the girls will already know both. This is a great opportunity to let the older, more experienced girls in the troop take the lead.

Make New Friends

*Make new friends but keep the old;  
one is silver and the other, gold.*

### ***There's Always Room***

Leave enough space on the banner for a few more hands. Often new girls are placed in troops as the year goes on, and being able to add her hand to the banner would make a new girl feel welcome and connected.

### .Brownie Smile Song

*I've something in my pocket. It belongs across my face,  
And I keep it very close at hand, in a most convenient place.  
I'm sure you couldn't guess it if you guessed a long, long while.  
So I'll take it out and put it on — it's a great big Brownie smile!*

After every girl has completed each station gather girls around the banner. Ask each girl to put her hand on any hand except her own. Ask “ Is the hand the same or different then yours?”“Is it traced in the same color or different color?” They should notice that the hand print they have their hand on may be similar to their hand or may be very different . Tell the girls even though we are all Brownie Girl Scouts we are all different in some way. That is what makes us so unique and special .

### **Clean-UP**

Everyone helps clean up

### ***Diversity***

It is important that the troop setting is inclusive and celebrates, respects and recognizes each girls uniqueness. The Girl Scout programming and resources will help you incorporate meaningful ways to discuss and experience diversity .

### **Closing**

Sing the Brownie Smile Song or Make New Friend song. Let the girls decide. Ask them which song they would like to sing next week at the investiture and rededication. If they choose both, ask when they will sing each song, at the beginning , middle or end. Teach the girls the Friendship Circle

## ***The Third Meeting***

### **What is an Investiture and Rededication Ceremony**

Girls who have registered as new members become Girl Scouts formally at an Investiture Ceremony. The most meaningful part of investiture for new girls is making the Girl Scout Promise for the first time. A new Brownie Girl Scout usually wears her uniform for the first time at the Investiture Ceremony. The troop volunteer team gives her the Brownie Girl Scout pin and pins it to the left side of her uniform. Second year girls are given a Rededication patch. Avoid the temptation to make the ceremony into a big production. Giving the girls simple directions as the ceremony proceeds is sufficient. Rehearsal is neither necessary nor recommended. It's a special day for the girls but keep it simple.

### **Pre Meeting**

Have girls make creative decorations from construction paper, stencils, stamps, stickers, streamers, anything that will let them be creative. Have the girls display them around the room with masking tape. Practice the Ceremony one time.

### ***Suggested ceremony outline***

#### *Brownie Investiture Ceremony*

New Brownies (first graders and all newcomers in second and third) knock on a hard surface.

Others answer: "Who's there?"

New Brownies: "We are young girls."

Others: "What do you want?"

New Brownies: "We want to be Brownies."

Others: "Then come in."

New Brownies enter and form a semicircle on the opposite side from where the others sit.

Leader: "Do you want to be a Brownie Girl Scout?"

Brownies: "Yes"

Leader: "Do you promise to serve God and your country?"

Brownies: "Yes"

Leader: "Do you promise to help people at all times?"

Brownies: "Yes"

Leader: "And will you live by the Girl Scout law?"

Brownies: "Yes"

Leader: "Please make the Girl Scout Promise."

Brownies: "On my honor ...."

Leader: "Then this is the Brownie aim:  
To lend a hand and play the game.  
Now before a Brownie you may be  
Listen to the wise owl in the tree."

Owl: "The magic word you must know,  
So to the magic pool now go.  
And say these words so very slow,  
*Twist me and turn me and show me the elf,*  
*I look in the water and saw \_\_\_\_\_.*

Twist and turn yourself around,  
Then kneel down on the ground,  
And if a true Brownie you should be,  
The magic word in the pool you'll see."

[New Brownies go to the pool (mirror) one at a time, twist and turn around saying:]

Brownies: "Twist me and turn me  
And show me the elf  
I look in the water  
And saw myself."

Leader: "You've found the magic word, I see  
Now a real Brownie you shall be,  
And receive your pin if you'll come to me  
As I call you each by name." \_\_\_\_\_

A leader pins the girls:

Leader: "Whenever you wear your pin,  
Make it well worthwhile,  
Keep it bright and shiny,  
Like your happy Brownie smile.

Brownies who are rededicating themselves to Girl Scouts should stand together and recite the Girl Scout Promise or leaders can ask each line of the Promise as a question to which the girls would answer yes. The leader can then give them their rededication patches.

Then they all sing a song together. It should have been chosen by vote and practiced.

**Refreshments, social time and clean-up**

## The Brownie Story

*This story was adapted from a tale told at the beginning of Brownie Girl Scouting in 1926.*

Mary and Tommy lived with their father and grandmother in a cabin near the woods.

Their father worked very hard all day. Their grandmother was too old to do the

housework. Their father tried his best to keep the house clean. Mary and Tommy didn't

help him much. They just played all day long. "What this house needs is a brownie or

two," said their grandmother, looking around the messy house. "What is a brownie,

Granny?" asked Mary. "A very helpful little person," answered their grandmother. "She'd

come in before the family was up and did all sorts of chores. The brownie always ran off

before anyone could see her, but they could hear her laughing and playing about the house

sometimes. Brownies always helped for love." "Oh, Granny, where are the brownies now?"

asked Tommy "Only the Wise Old Owl knows, my dear." That night, Mary could hardly sleep.

She kept thinking about the brownie. "There's an owl living in the old shed by the pond,"

she thought. "If it is the Wise Old Owl, she can tell me where to find a brownie." Mary got

out of bed and hurried to the pond in the woods. "Hoo! Hoo!" said a voice behind her.

"It's an owl! Maybe it's the one I am looking for," said Mary. "Please," asked Mary of

the owl, "where can I find a brownie to come and live with us?" "Well, Mary," said the owl, "I

can tell you how to find one of the brownies. Go to the pond when the moon is shining and

turn yourself around three times while you say this charm" "Twist me and turn me and

show me the elf. I looked in the water and saw ." Then look into the pond to see the brownie.

When you see the brownie, you will think of a word that ends the magic rhyme."

Mary turned and ran to the pond. She slowly turned herself around three times while

she said the rhyme" "Twist me and turn me and show me the elf. I looked in the water and

saw ."

She stopped, looked into the pond, and saw only her own face. "Belf! Helf! Jelf" Melf!"

All those words rhymed with elf but they didn't mean anything. Suddenly, she gasped.

"Myself! I see nothing but myself. I'm a Brownie!" said Mary. Mary went home and back to

bed. In the early morning, she told Tommy what had happened. Together they crept

downstairs and did every bit of work they could find to do before their father woke up. Then

they hid in the kitchen so he wouldn't see them. When father came downstairs, he looked

around and rubbed his eyes. The table was set, the floor was clean, and the room was as

bright and shiny as a new penny. At first, Father could not say a word. Then he ran to the

foot of the stairs, shouting, "Mother! Our brownie has come back!"

“Thank Goodness!” said Grandmother. “Where is she?” Father heard laughter coming from the kitchen. “It must be the brownie,” he said. He opened the kitchen door, and saw Mary and Tommy dancing around the room. “What’s this?” he asked, his eyes twinkling. “Where are the real brownies?” “Here we are!” yelled Mary and Tommy as they ran into their father’s arms.

Brownie Girl Scout Handbook, 2000.