

GIRL SCOUT MYTHBUSTERS

Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts are, and always have been, two very different organizations. Since Boy Scouts of America started recruiting girls to their program, there has been confusion and misinformation. Here are common myths and the facts.

MYTHS	 FACTS ABOUT GIRL SCOUTS
<p>✗ All “scouting” programs are basically the same</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>✓ Not even close. At Girl Scouts, everything we do is designed with and for girls. Most of a girl’s life is co-ed, so there are plenty of opportunities to interact in that environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The all-girl, girl-led, single-gender space is where girls safely thrive. Our programs are tailored to maximize impact by teaching girls in ways they learn best. • The single-gender environment offered by Girl Scouts creates an inclusive, safe space in which girls are free to explore their potential and take the lead without the distractions or pressures that can be found in a co-ed environment. • In single-gender spaces, girls are more apt to take healthy risks, try new things, and take on leadership roles. </div> </div>
<p>✗ Girl Scouts isn’t about getting outdoors</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>✓ Girl Scouts build outdoor skills, go camping, and appreciate nature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girl Scouts earn badges in outdoor adventure and high adventure. • Girl Scout troop camping starts in kindergarten. • For many girls, Girl Scouts is their introduction to the outdoors. 80% of girls said camping was their most memorable experience*. • We have four camp properties – Camp Coleman in Trussville, Camp Cottaquilla in Anniston, Camp Trico in Guntersville, and Kanawahala Program Center in Chelsea. </div> </div>
<p>✗ Girl Scouts doesn’t have programs for adventure</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>✓ No way! Girl Scouts have all kinds of opportunities for adventure!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls choose from age-appropriate activities including: archery, paddle-boarding, rock climbing, hiking, kayaking, zip lining, horse-back riding, skiing, and so much more. • Not only do girls go on adventures, they raise the money and plan the trip, leading the experience and ensuring they are girl-centered. </div> </div>
<p>✗ Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts offer the same science program</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p>✓ Have you seen our science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The STEM interest—and confidence—gaps between girls and boys starts at age 6 and can be closed with programs that are designed for girls. Girls can earn badges in engineering, robotics, environmental science, cyber security, and space science. • Our STEM content is timeless, helping girls develop a lifelong interest in how things work and teaching girls how to think like scientists, programmers, and engineers. Even as those fields develop, Girl Scouts will understand the fundamentals of thinking like an innovator. • Girl Scout STEM curriculum and badge work is hands-on, problem-focused, and girl-led learning, not memorization. </div> </div>

* 2014 Girl Scout Research Institute study

<p>✗ Crafts are the only hands-on activity</p>	<p>✓ Girl Scouts are makers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If girls want to use a sewing machine, weld, make jewelry, change a tire, or re-build a marine diesel engine, they can! • This year, girls in our council constructed a bus stop shelter in Birmingham, an outdoor hammock circle in Winfield, a dog agility course in Scottsboro, and countless bat boxes and little free libraries.
<p>✗ The cookie sale is just about making money</p>	<p>✓ Girl Scouts do a great job at creating revenue, but the cookie sale is so much more!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the world's largest girl-run business, the Cookie Program gives girls an opportunity to develop expertise and confidence in goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business • During Girl Scouts of North-Central Alabama's 2018 Cookie Program, troops earned more than \$884,000 to fuel adventures, awards, and service projects.
<p>✗ Earning the Girl Scout Gold Award is less impressive than the Eagle Scout Award</p>	<p>✓ The Gold Award requires completion of a rigorous project that prepares girls for a lifetime of possibility thinking and doing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Award Girl Scouts identify an issue in their community, develop a plan, lead teams to develop a sustainable solution to the issue, and practice skills in advanced planning, organization, and team building. • The Gold Award is impressive to colleges and universities, and to the military, which advances Gold Award Girl Scouts a full rank, the same as for Eagle Scouts.
<p>✗ Troops are all the same</p>	<p>✓ Girls help choose and plan troop activities which makes every troop unique.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities vary depending on the interests of girls and troop leaders. Most troops explore STEM, outdoors, life skills, and community service, and attend staff-led programs where they can explore their interest in sports, arts, STEM, entrepreneurship, outdoor adventure, camp, and more!
<p>✗ It's hard for families (especially dads) to get involved with Girl Scouts</p>	<p>✓ Family participation is encouraged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encourage the entire family to get involved, and lots of dads volunteer in different ways, supporting as co-leaders of troops, cookie sale coordinators, and camp volunteers. • Parents and other adults play a critical role to delivering the Girl Scout Leadership Experience both as volunteers and as supporters. Parents who are also troop leaders get the opportunity to bond with their daughters as they move through the Girl Scout program.
<p>✗ The rest of the world embraces "co-ed scouting"</p>	<p>✓ Girl-only scouting organizations are going strong. The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS.org) represents 10 million girls in 150 countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two largest scouting organizations are the World Organization of the Scout Movement, and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. It is not true that co-ed scouting has replaced Girl Guides (or Girl Scouts)—it has not. They are merely different programs. • Some co-ed scout programs are sectarian or require that members recognize an obligation to a specific faith. Girl Scouts is a non-partisan, non-sectarian group, with a strong policy of inclusion for all girls.
<p>✗ Girl Scouts is "harder" for volunteers</p>	<p>✓ Girl Scouts embrace challenge! (But it all depends on what you mean by harder.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girl Scouts is flexible, girl-led, and has a wide variety of activities—and we sure wouldn't change that! • There are many planning resources and support available such as the Volunteer Toolkit, activity plans, and troop mentors.