

Short & Snappy

Partnering with Families

What's a Short & Snappy?

- A short training/information segment provided at a Service Unit meeting or for leaders to use at troop meetings.
- Any interested volunteer may lead a Short and Snappy.
- Short & Snappies are usually 10-45 minutes in length.

Things to Remember

- Stay within the allotted time (you're taking up a piece of their agenda time).
- If you don't know the answer, seek the correct answer from the appropriate person.
- Bring the necessary supplies for your short & snappy.

What you'll need

- Short & Snappy Guide
- A bag or container.
- Items to represent troop needs throughout the Girl Scout year.

Introduction

5 minutes

Partnering with families is key for setting up a successful year of Girl Scouting! Ideally, you want each family member to have some level of responsibility and participation within the troop. This can start with families attending events or helping work on awards at home, and progress up to volunteering with the Troop. When families help with the troop, they're modeling leadership for their Girl Scout. Let families know that no matter how they contribute to their girl's troop, seeing them play an active role in her experience will give her a sense of pride—Plus, getting involved gives them something special that they're part of together, which in our busy lives, is worth its weight in gold.

When family members actively help the troop by volunteering, they can:

- Form friendships.
- Spend time with their Girl Scout.
- Be involved with their community.
- Make a difference.
- Build their resume.
- Be a positive role model.
- Learn great skills.

As a leader, it can be difficult to find ways to communicate effectively with families and ask for their help when it is needed. Involve families at the very beginning of the year by having a family meeting, sometimes called a parent/caregiver meeting. It's a time to get families excited about what the girls can do in Girl Scouts, fill out the necessary paperwork, and give everyone a chance to ask questions. And most importantly, it's a great opportunity to ask parents and family members for their support throughout the year.

A sample family meeting would involve:

- Interaction—Allow time for parents to meet those who are involved with their kids.
- Information—Provide troop details, Girl Scout program information, and the benefits to their Girl Scout. Promote upcoming events, hand out calendars and circulate a sign-up sheet that lists specific volunteer opportunities.
- Input—Plan for a question-and-answer time. Begin by bringing up a question yourself and then answering it.



Activity

15 minutes

The following activity is part role play, part teaching moment. This activity can be done as an example during a Service Unit meeting, or at a Family Meeting to ask for volunteer support.

Have items from the list below (or create your own list) in a bag or container. Select a volunteer ahead of time to help you. Take the items out and hand them all to the volunteer one at a time, explaining what each represents. Then say: "As you can see, this is quite a load for one person to handle. To make this troop a good experience for our Girl Scouts, I need help."

At a SU Meeting: Take an item from the volunteer and say: "I need help with _____ because of _____." Role model how a volunteer would specifically ask for help for a given role and explain why they need the help. Explain that this will yield better results than just saying "I need help." Wait for someone to "agree to help" then ask them to provide an example of how a leader could ask for help with the next item. Provide feedback along the way as leader give examples of how they can ask for adult help. Keep going until all items have been given out. Debrief with a conversation on how leaders are successfully getting adult help within their troops.

At a Family Meeting: Take an item from the volunteer and say: "I need help with _____ because of _____." Remember to specifically ask for help for a given role and explain why you need the help. This will yield better results than just saying "I need help." Wait to see if someone will agree to help. If no takers, move on to the next item until you have asked for help with all your needed roles and items. Follow up with new volunteers after your meeting and recap any roles that you still help with.

Item:

- A doll
- A Badge Pamphlet
- Juice box or Snack
- Checkbook or Debit Card
- First aid kit
- Cookie Box
- Toy car
- Phone
- Scissors & pens
- Sleeping bag
- _____

Represents:

- The Girl Scouts
- The Girl Scout Program
- Refreshments
- Money and financial paperwork
- A Certified first aider for trips/activities
- The Product Program
- Transportation
- Communication
- Crafts
- Camping
- _____

Additional Resources for Partnering with Families:

- [gsLearn Course](#) GSUSA New Leader Onboarding: Family Engagement - The Key to Success. This course illuminates the value of family engagement and provides practical strategies for how to enlist family support. View course through gsLearn.
- [Troop Volunteer Survey](#)
Use this survey to ask for volunteer support for the roles you need at a family meeting.
- [Be a Part of her Girl Scout Adventure](#)
Use this handout to help parents/caregivers understand how important their support of the troop is to their Girl Scout.

