

Girl Scout Voices Count FAQ

What are the 2018 Girl Scout Voices Count Surveys?

Girl Scout Voices Count is a national survey of girls, parents and troop volunteers that is conducted each year by the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI), a group of researchers who work at GSUSA. At Girl Scouts, we care about your experience, good or bad, and we want to hear from you! The survey results help GSUSA and local councils understand how to use resources wisely and serve our members the most efficient and effective way possible.

When is the survey being sent?

The first survey email invitations will be sent out on Wednesday, April 4. The survey will close on April 30. GSRI will send reminder emails on April 10, 18 and 28.

Who will invitations come from? Is it the same for girls and adults? Should I check my spam folder?

Survey invitations will come from Qualtrics, the online software GSRI uses for surveys. Invitations for girls will be sent to their parent's email address. Check your spam folder if you can't find the email. Your invitation may end up there.

The sender name on the email will read, "Girl Scouts of the USA," with noreply@qemailserver.com as the reply-to address. The subject line will differ for each customer group and for each reminder; however, every subject line will begin with either "Girl Survey," "Parent Survey," or "Volunteer Survey."

Will I receive an invitation to take a survey?

If you are a registered girl, leader or parent who has NOT opted out of receiving emails from GSUSA – Yes! Parents will receive a unique invitation for each child who is a Girl Scout. The headers for the surveys will indicate which survey it is (e.g., "Girl Survey: Girl Scouts wants to hear from your girl!" or "Parent Survey: Girl Scouts wants your opinions! Share your voice and be entered to win!"). Within the body of the email, the girl participant's name will be listed, to help you identify who should be taking each survey.

My sister/mom/caregiver/daughter received a survey invitation, but I didn't – what's up with that?

Check the spam folder to see if it landed there. If not, contact GSRI at GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org. Only they can survey invitations. GSRI will send survey invitations to:

- Adults who are current troop leaders, as of April
- Parents of girls whose registration is current in April
- Girls (via a parent) whose registration is current in April

In May, service unit volunteers will be surveyed about that role. For April's survey, keep your answers relevant to the troop experience...then get ready to speak about team volunteer experiences in May.

In the past, younger girls had to sign up in advance, before they could take a survey. Is that happening again this year?

No! Which makes everything much easier! Parents of girls 13 and younger will receive an email with these options:

- (a) Yes, and my girl is available to take the survey now—this link will directly open the girl survey;
- (b) No – this link will opt them out of this survey. Younger girls, especially Daisies and Brownies, will most likely need some adult help to fill out a survey.

Girls over 13 years old will receive an invitation directly.

How much time does it take to complete a survey?

It will take about 15 minutes to complete a survey, depending on how much you choose to write in answering open ended questions.

What kinds of questions are in the survey?

Each survey group – girls, parents, troop leaders – will receive slightly different questions. Everyone will be asked about how satisfied they are with their Girl Scout experience and how likely they are to stay in Girl Scouts in the coming year. Other questions include things like: what is unique and special about Girl Scouts, reasons for staying in or leaving Girl Scouts, the kinds of activities girls do in Girl Scouts, relationships with other girls and with adults in Girl Scouts, the support parents and troop leaders receive from GSUSA and the council, the benefits of being a troop leader and why it is important to participate in Girl Scouts.

Who will be able to see my answers?

Your survey answers are used for research purposes only, and they are private (a girl's troop leaders won't see them). You will never be personally identified in any publication, written or spoken. The results of this survey are only for the use of your council and Girl Scouts of the USA. You will not receive any sales or marketing contact as a result of your participation.

Are there any special rewards being offered for taking the survey?

There sure are! Thank-you incentives being offered this year include:

- **National incentives:** GSRI is offering incentives. Among each customer group (girls, parents, troop volunteers), survey respondents will get a chance to win **one of twenty \$50 gift cards**.
- **Council incentives:**
 - New this year: participants will be entered to **win one of fifteen \$100 travel gift cards**, thanks to our generous partner, Southwest Airlines! Winners will be announced in June.
 - Back by popular demand, Girl Scouts San Diego is offering a participation patch as a thank-you! **The patch is free for girls and \$1 for adults**. Patches may be picked up at any of our three store locations. Survey participants will show a survey completion email (sent in May) as proof of incentive eligibility.



I'm trying to take the survey and having technical problems – what should I do?

Email GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org. Because this is a national survey, GSSD is not able to fix technical problems directly. GSRI should reply within 24-48 hours.

What if I have questions or want more information about the survey?

For more information about the survey, email GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org. Because this is a national survey, GSSD is not able to send out survey invitations or fix technical problems.

Is it hard for my younger girl to complete the survey since she is still learning to read and type.

Why are younger girls given such hard surveys?

This is a tricky issue! Researchers know consistent questions lead to measurable results, but that means some questions may be hard for young readers. They may need some adult help to complete surveys, so that their voices are heard, too. We really appreciate the time and energy younger girls and their caregivers put into completing these surveys.

So this is a national survey, not a council survey. Does the council also send out surveys?

All the time! GSSD also conducts surveys, often after in-person events or programs for girls and adults. We also send out specialized online surveys for specific things, like the cookie sale, annual events, feedback from Service Unit volunteers and more. This varies from year to year. Please support a culture of evaluation by participating when you are sent a survey request! Your voices are heard, every time.

Why is it important for me to take the survey? How will survey results be used?

It is very important for the council and GSUSA to hear directly from girls and adults about what is happening (or not!) for them in Girl Scouts. The survey is a great way to collect the same kinds of information and feedback from a large group across councils. This allows us to see and try to understand big trends and differences between groups, regions, councils, etc. Councils and GSUSA use survey results to improve our programs and customer service. We really want to know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about your Girl Scout experience – good and bad. If you had a difficult time this year in Girl Scouts and receive a survey invitation, please let us know so that we can make changes and do better. Read the table below for some examples of how we've used the information collected. If you had a great experience, tell us what worked, so successes can be expanded.

What other kinds of research projects does Girl Scouts do? Can I read about any of them?

The Girl Scout Research Institute does all kinds of cool research about girls, Girl Scouts and other topics, including: the benefits of Girl Scouts for girls and alumnae, Girl Scout outdoor experiences, girls/Girl Scouts and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), the Gold Awards, the cookie sale and entrepreneurship, trends in girls' well-being, Girl Scouts and academic success and more! You can read more about GSRI and read some of their reports here: <http://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/research.html>

How has the Girl Scout Voices Count survey made a difference? Here are just a few examples...

GSVC Data Finding	Action
Troop leaders want a reduction in rules, paperwork, and training	GSSD's Girl Health History and Annual Permission form were driven by this data. Online training was developed to minimize the amount of in-person training needed.
New troop leaders want recommendations on how to manage troops	Volunteer Essentials was modified to provide more relevant, handy information. Training materials and leader-daughter classes were developed to give hands-on confidence.
Troop leaders and parents expressed gaps in communication and expectations	The 4Her Program and Family Guide were developed locally, to help open lines of communication and set expectations for troop engagement.
Girls, leaders and parents wanted more cutting-edge program activities, and more outdoor badges and Journeys	GSUSA developed many new STEM and Outdoor badges and Journeys for all levels.
Leaders needed more help with multi-grade troop management	New multi-grade meeting plans have been developed for the Volunteer Toolkit, and GSUSA has more on the way.

Bottom Line: those who spoke up were heard. Share your frustrations and solutions so we can all learn...and make the Girl Scout world a better place!