



Girl Scout Gold Award Toolkit

Standards of Excellence Tracking Sheet

Girl Scout Gold Award Steps	Notes Regarding Your Progress and Significant Dates	Standards of Excellence
1. Choose an issue.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Live the Girl Scout Promise and Law. ▪ Demonstrate civic responsibility.
2. Investigate.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use a variety of sources: interview people, read books and articles, find professional organizations online. Remember to evaluate each source's reliability and accuracy. ▪ Demonstrate courage as you investigate your issue, knowing that what you learn may challenge your own and others' beliefs. ▪ Identify national and/or global links to your community issue.
3. Get help.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek out and recognize the value of the skills and strengths of others. ▪ Respect different points of view and ways of working. ▪ Build a team and recruit a project advisor who will bring special skills to your Take Action project.
4. Create a plan.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead the planning of your Take Action project. ▪ Work collaboratively to develop a plan for your project that creates lasting change.
5. Present your plan and get feedback.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit a Project Proposal to your council that is concise, comprehensive, and clear. ▪ Describe your plan including the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes you want to achieve and the impact you plan to make on yourself and the community.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Articulate your issue clearly and explain why it matters to you. ▪ Accept constructive suggestions that will help refine your project.
6. Take action.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take action to address the root cause of an issue, so that your solution has measurable and sustainable impact. ▪ Actively seek partnerships to achieve greater community participation and impact for your Take Action project. ▪ Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems. ▪ Use resources wisely. ▪ Speak out and act on behalf of yourself and others.
7. Educate and inspire.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect on what you have learned when you present your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report to your council. ▪ Summarize the effectiveness of your project and the impact it has had on you and your community. ▪ Share the project beyond your local community and inspire others to take action in their own communities.

Decision-Making Tips

You are about to make a big decision that will have a significant impact on your life and may even change it forever. Take some time to reflect and get inspired. Start with yourself.

- What inspires you? Is it something in your school, community, country, or the world?
- What motivates you into action? Is it people, events, activities, places?
- What skills, talents, and strengths do you have to offer?
- How do you want to make a difference? As an advocate for justice? A promoter of environmental awareness? As a trainer, mentor, or coach? As an artist, actor, or musician? As an organizer of petitions or campaigns? As an entrepreneur? Can you think of another role?
- What motivates, inspires, and interests others? Can you build a team to support your idea?
- What would benefit the community both immediately and long-term?
- Check back through your Girl Scout leadership journey(s). What interested you that you might be able to translate into an award project?

Need some inspiration? Search through these sites to see what others are doing to address issues in their community.

- **The Corporation for National and Community Service:** www.serve.gov
- **Global Citizens Corps:** www.globalcitizencorps.org
- **Global Youth Action Network:** www.youthlink.org
- **Global Youth Service Day:** <http://gysd.org/share>
- **Learn and Serve America:** www.learnandserve.gov
- **Prudential:** www.spirit.prudential.com
- **Taking IT Global:** www.tigweb.org
- **United Nations Millennium Development Goals:** www.un.org/millenniumgoals
- **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts:** www.wagggg.org
- **Youth Venture:** www.genv.net

Interview Tips

Find out what you need to prepare and conduct an interview.

1. **Making arrangements:** Deciding who you would like to interview, contacting the person, and setting up a date and time.
2. **Preparation:** Gathering research and background information to help you formulate questions to ask the interview subject(s). Use these sample interview questions to get you started, and then add some of your own. If you need help choosing an issue, you'll want to ask the following types of questions:
 - What are the biggest challenges/problems that you have faced or are facing?

- What do you think is the root cause of these issues?
- What will it take to address these issues?
- Are there any resources available to do that?
- What do you consider to be the strengths of the community?

If, on the other hand, you've already chosen an issue, move ahead to the interview.

3. Conducting the interview: Bring a notebook to take notes. Here are some tips:

- Find a quiet place where you'll have each others' full attention, and agree to turn off your cell phones.
- Start by thanking the interviewee for her/his time, and then briefly describe your project.
- Keep questions simple and related to the issue at hand. Do your research. Preparation is key!
- Ask the person you interview if she or he would like to hear more about your project as it develops.
- Send a thank-you note to everyone you interview within a week of the interview. Mention the possibility of a follow-up interview.

4. Reviewing information and setting up a possible follow up interview: Your interview is over. Now what? You have to sift through to find the information that's relevant to what you are working on. If there are some gaps that you need to fill, contact your interview subject(s) to get more information and to find out whether or not you have your facts correct. Remember to check and recheck your facts!

Making Your Pitch

You've seen the advertisements and most times you even remember the slogans. What makes them memorable? It could be because they're clever or catchy or funny. Now that you've chosen your issue, think of a way that you can let people know about it. You should be able to describe the issue you've chosen in about 15 seconds. Here are some tips to help you do that.

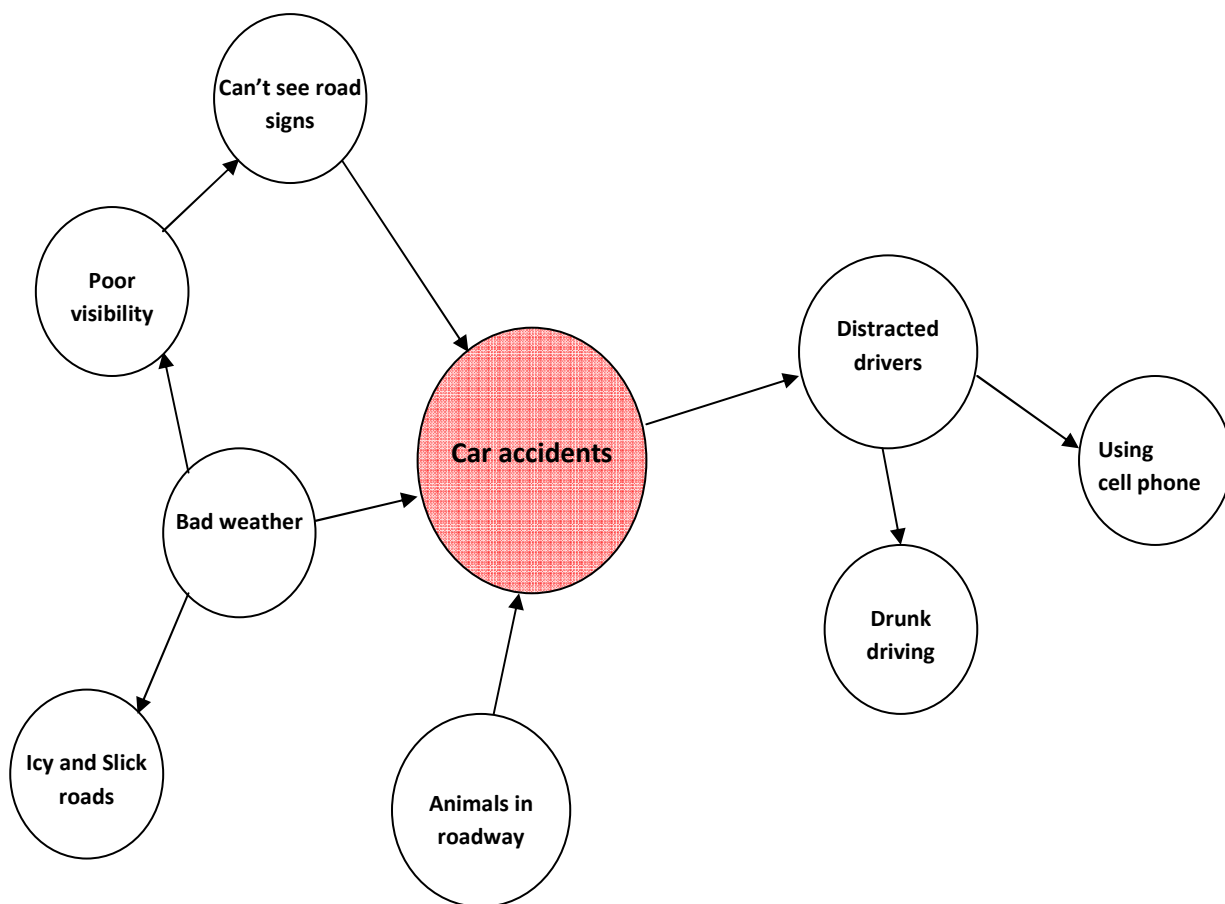
- **Make it memorable:** Develop a slogan. What makes you remember the slogan in those commercials on TV? How can you incorporate that into your pitch?
- **Target your audience:** Who are you trying to reach? If you are aiming for kids, think of a story or riddle that would relate this to them. Young kids love to rhyme. If you're reaching out to adults, no cute stories! Think about your audience and try to tailor your pitch so that it connects with them.
- **How you will help:** You've gotten their attention with your story. Now tell them what your project will do to make their lives better.
- **Personalize it:** Why this project? Why this target audience? How will doing this make you a better person?
- **Do it:** Put it all together. Explain your idea in a short and motivating way that clarifies for you, your potential team, target audience, and supporters. Remember, 15 seconds. Go!

Mind-Mapping Tool

Create your own mind-mapping diagram like the one shown here, using one of the issues facing your community. Follow these instructions.

- Write the community issue in the middle of the paper or any where that works for you.
- Think about what some of the causes of this issue could be. In this example, one of the main causes of car accidents is bad weather. Notice how many different causes connect from bad weather.
- Now, try connecting the different causes you come up with to each other and to the main issue. How do the causes connect to each other?
- Do you see a pattern?

This activity will help you come up with different ways to approach a problem, as well as different ways you might go about addressing it.



Teaming Tips

Think about the people who might be able to help you put your project into action. Choose people who will stick it out until the project is complete. You don't have to limit your team to people your age or just Girl Scouts.

Working in a group will help you make a bigger impact and cover more ground than you would on your own. It might be challenging at times, but remember to always be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, and responsible for what you say and do. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you build your team:

- Promote a sense of trust and belonging
- Share ownership
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Communicate regularly and openly
- Respect diversity
- Have fun and be creative
- Be open to new ideas and different ways of working
- Keep learning and growing

Project Advisor Tips

Here you'll find tips for selecting and working with your project advisor.

- **Reach out:** You've figured out the issue you're going to address with your project. Now it's time to find an expert to help along the way and give you advice and suggestions. Ask your troop/group volunteer or your council for suggestions. Then, select a few people who are related to your issue area with whom you'd like to work.
- **Safety first:** Before you meet with new people, talk to your troop/group volunteer for some safety tips and do's and don'ts. Make sure your family knows who you're talking to and meeting with.
- **Ask:** Start with your first choice, and if she or he can't help, go to your next choice. (**Hint:** There may be many others who are willing to help!) Approach the people you selected one at a time. Introduce yourself by sending a brief letter or e-mail, explaining what you're working on and the advice you would like. Give some background. Give an estimate, asking about time commitments and which way would be best to communicate.
- **Say thanks:** When an individual accepts, send her or him a thank-you note, along with a brief description of your project and a list of areas where you think you'll need the most help.
- **Think ahead when asking for help:** Before you compose an e-mail or call your project advisor, think about how you can simplify a problem you're having, so that she or he can offer quick suggestions.
- **Share your progress:** Make sure to tell your project advisor (in a quick e-mail or phone call) about your progress and how her or his help is making your project better, easier, and so on.
- **Celebrate together:** After your project is completed, invite her or him to your Gold Award ceremony and/or your own celebration. Don't forget to send a thank-you note!

Project Planner

A Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action project addresses the root cause of an issue, produces impact that is measurable and sustainable, and is a local project that links to a national and/or global issue. Here are a few tips to help you lay out your project plan:

- **Set project goals:**

What is your project? _____

Why does it matter? _____

Who will it help? _____

The difference I intend to make in the world is _____

- **Steps to meet the goals:** List step-by-step what it will take to reach your goal. Be as specific as possible so that you can put together a timeline and draw on your team to help you reach your goals.
- **Develop a timeline:** This will help you determine how much time should be allotted to each part of your project.
- **Think about money-earning:** Brainstorm ways to finance your project, if needed, speak with your Girl Scout troop/group volunteer to make sure that your ideas are in line with the Girl Scout policies. Check with your council. Remember, you can make an impact without spending money by influencing policy and so on.
- **Establish a global link:** Consider how to connect your project to an issue that affects people in other parts of the country or the world.

Use the following questions to help you determine what you need and what you need to do.

- What is the goal that you would you like to achieve with your project?
- How do you plan to achieve this project goal?
- What are the foreseeable obstacles?
- Aside from your team, troop/group volunteer, and project advisor, do you need any one else to help with your project?
- What supplies will you need?
- If necessary, how will you earn money or fundraise?
- How will you measure your success as you go?
- How will your project create lasting change?

Planning and Budgeting Tips

It's budget time! Start by figuring out what you need and where you can get it for little or no cost, if possible. If it's not possible, think about how much it is going to cost and how you can cover those expenses. Many projects are possible when you concentrate on the issue at hand. Use your influence and leadership skills to come up with ways that you can make a difference that might not include earning money.

- Work with school officials to find biodegradable plates and cups to use in the cafeteria.
- Work with town/state food waste officials to ensure the system is in place.
- Implement a plan in your school to separate their cafeteria waste into composting, recycling, and trash bins. (Farmers can use the compost to fertilize crops, improve the quality of the soil, decrease soil runoff, and so on.)
- Get a commitment from school administrators to carry on when your project is complete.

Making your project bigger (national and/or global link): Recruit students at schools in the area to develop the program for their schools and/or contact local and state officials about adopting the program.

Global link: Find out how people in other parts of the world deal with food waste in schools. What kinds of programs do they have in place? How can you learn from this?

Example #2

Community issue: Teen suicide.

Root cause: Lack of awareness and prevention.

Take action: Establish an awareness and prevention program.

Making the solution sustainable:

- Produce a short video that can be used in other communities with an online brochure outlining the steps to an awareness and prevention program.
- Share the video and online brochure with schools and community organizations.

Making your project bigger (national and/or global link): Share the program with local youth groups, health/human services agencies, community centers, church/synagogue/mosque community centers, or school district.

Project Planning Checklist

The answers to all of the questions below must be yes before you submit your plan for council approval.

- Will your project demonstrate your leadership skills?
- Have you set your project goal and identified what you would like to learn?
- Have you chosen your Take Action team? Have you discussed the project with them?
- Have you created a budget for the project?
- Have you created a plan to raise funds, if necessary?
- Have you made a timeline for your project?
- Does your project address a need in the local community and have you found national and/or global links?
- Can your project be sustainable?
- Does your project challenge your abilities and your interests?

Once you answer yes to all the items on this checklist, you're ready to submit your Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal.

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal for

[Your Council Name]

Submit this form to your council [] weeks prior to starting your project.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Troop/Group Number: _____ Troop/Group Volunteer: _____

Troop/Group Volunteer's Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor: _____

Project Advisor's Organization: _____

Project Advisor's Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Prerequisites: Two Senior or Ambassador journeys or one journey and the Girl Scout Silver Award. List two journeys that you have completed along with your troop/group volunteer's signature.

Senior/Ambassador Journey Books	Date Completed	Troop/Group Volunteer's Signature
1.		
2.		

Girl Scout Silver Award Completion Date	
Council Where You Earned the Award	

Your Team

List the names of individuals and organizations that you plan to work with on your Take Action project. This is a preliminary list that may grow through the course of your project.

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal, continued

E. Enter the names of people or organizations you plan to inform and involve.

F. Estimate overall project expenses and how you plan to meet these costs.

G. What methods or tools will you use to evaluate the impact of your project?

H. How will your project be sustained beyond your involvement?

I. Describe how you plan to tell others about your project, the project's impact, and what you have learned (Web site, blog, presentations, posters, videos, articles, and so on).

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

Project Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Council Representative Approved: _____ Date: _____

Impact Planning

Using the Impact Planning Chart, describe the impact you hope your project will have on your community, your target audience, and you.

Impact On . . .	Goals	Potential Impact
Community	What community issue do you plan to address?	What examples of the project impact might you see in future?
Target Audience (workshop participants, other youth, community members, and so on)	What skills, knowledge, or attitudes will your target audience gain?	How will you know that the target audience gained skills or knowledge?

Impact Planning, continued

The following is a list of the 15 Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes.* Which do think you will develop through this project?

Discover:

- I will develop a stronger sense of self.
- I will develop positive values.
- I will gain practical life skills.
- I will seek challenges in the world.
- I will develop critical thinking.

Connect:

- I will develop healthy relationships.
- I will promote cooperation and team building.
- I will resolve conflicts.
- I will advance diversity in a multicultural world.
- I will feel more connected to my community, locally and globally.

Take Action:

- I will identify community issues.
- I will be a resourceful problem solver.
- I will advocate for myself and others, locally and globally.
- I will educate and inspire others to act.
- I will feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

*Want more information on the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes? Visit www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/outcomes/transforming_leadership.asp.

Sharing Tips

It's time to tell others about what you did, what you have learned, and the impact you hope your project will have on its intended audience. Your story may inspire others to take action to do something to make their community better!

Here are a few suggestions for how you can demonstrate your project achievements and share what you learned:

- Create a Web site or blog or join a social networking site (Facebook, MySpace, and so on) to post updates and details about your project and its impact on the national and/or global community.
- Log on to some Web sites where you can share your story:
 - **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts:** www.waggs.org/en/projects
 - **Taking IT Global:** www.tigweb.org
 - **Global Youth Service Day:** www.globalyouthserviceday.org
- Create a campaign that showcases your cause. Make buttons, posters, and flyers to let people know about your cause.
- Present what you have learned and what your project will do for the community at a workshop for community members.
- Make a video about the effects of your project. Post it online. Invite friends, community leaders, and people from organizations who are tackling the same or a similar issue to take a look at it.
- Write an article for your local newspaper or create a newsletter about your project.

Reflection Tool

Reflection is more than talking about your feelings; it's about thinking critically, solving problems, and interpreting and analyzing the results of your experiences so you can gain a better understanding of who you are. After you complete your project, take some time to assess yourself.

1. Which values from the Girl Scout Promise and Law did you employ?
2. Which new leadership skills have you developed?
3. How are you better able to advocate for yourself and others?
4. How has your access to community resources and relationships with adults changed as a result of this experience?
5. How important has cooperation and team building been in developing your leadership skills?

Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report for

[Your Council Name]

Submit the original completed form to your council. Make copies for your Girl Scout Gold Award project advisor and you to keep.

Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ School: _____

Troop/Group Number: _____ Troop/Group Volunteer: _____

Troop/Group Volunteer's Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor: _____

Project Advisor's Organization: _____

Project Advisor's Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Your Team: List the names of individuals and organizations that worked with you on your Take Action Project.

Team members	Affiliation	Role

Take Action Project

Project Title: _____ Start Date: _____ Completion Date: _____ Hours: _____

A. Describe the issue your project addressed, what impact you had hoped to make, and who benefitted.

Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, continued

B. What was the root cause of the issue? How did you address it?

C. How will your project be sustained beyond your involvement?

D. Explain the national and/or global link to your project.

E. Describe any obstacles you encountered and what you did to overcome them.

F. Describe what steps you took to inspire others through sharing your project. (Web site, blog, presentations, posters, videos, articles, and so on).

G. Describe what you learned from this project including leadership skills you developed. What did you learn about yourself as a result of this project?

H. What was the most successful aspect of your project?

I. What aspects of your project would you change or do differently if you could start over?

Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, continued

Impact

Using the Impact Chart, describe the impact signs your project has had and will have on your community and your target audience.

Impact On . . .	Goals	Examples of Immediate Impact	Possible Future Impact
Community	What community issue was addressed?	What are concrete examples that you made a difference?	What examples of the project impact might you see in future?
Target Audience (workshop participants, other youth, community members, and so on)	What skills, knowledge, or attitudes did your target audience gain?	What examples demonstrate that the target audience gained skills or knowledge?	What would be examples of a long-term impact on your target audience?

Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, continued

Impact, continued

Impact On . . .	Goals	Examples of Immediate Impact
<p>You</p>	<p>Which of the 15 Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes* listed do you think you were able to develop through this project?</p> <p>Discover:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I developed a stronger sense of self.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I developed positive values.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I gained practical life skills.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I sought challenges in the world.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I developed critical thinking.</p> <p>Connect:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I developed healthy relationships.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I promoted cooperation and team building.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I resolved conflicts.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I advanced diversity in a multicultural world.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I felt more connected to my community, locally and globally.</p> <p>Take Action:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will identify community issues.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will be a resourceful problem solver.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will advocate for myself and others, locally and globally.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will educate and inspire others to act.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I will feel empowered to make a difference in the world.</p> <p>*Want more information on the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes? Visit www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/outcomes/transforming_leadership.asp.</p>	<p>Within each leadership key (Discover, Connect and Take Action) list one or two examples of your growth as a leader.</p>

Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, continued

Possible Future Impact

How do you think your leadership skills will grow in the future because of this project?

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

Project Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Actions	Date
Received by Council	
Final Approval Given	

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Council Representative