

Updates for Girl Scouts of the USA Safety Resources -- February

Date: 20 Dec 2004

Audience: All

Safety-Wise provides Girl Scout councils with the most current information on health and safety to ensure that the Girl Scout program is delivered in a reasonably safe manner. Girl Scout councils provide volunteers and staff with the interpretation of standards, activity checkpoints and safety guidelines.

Safety-Wise Clarifications and Updates

The following items are updates and/or clarification to the Safety-Wise © 2000 First Impression 6th printing.

First Aid

1. Application of Lotion

Several councils asked how a lotion form may be applied without the perception of inappropriate or misunderstood behavior. It would be recommended to keep to the "safe zones" of the upper back and shoulders. Girls should be able to apply the lotion to any other area. Leaders should put the lotion on the girls' hands and make sure they apply it to themselves properly. We are reminded to check the labels of these products as some need reapplication every 20 to 30 minutes. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends a minimal SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 and reminds us that every person's skin has a different sun sensitivity level.

2. CPR (Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation) Certification for First-Aider

The person acting as First-Aider must hold a current certification in CPR for the age group for whom they are acting as the primary First-Aider. The certification for CPR should be current.

3. Dentists as First Aiders

Dentists may serve as first-aiders for Girl Scout groups at level 1 or level 2 as other health care providers mentioned in Safety-Wise under Courses for First-Aid Training.

4. Event First Aiders

Councils conducting traveling or station events where there is a considerable distance between stations should consider having first aiders with each group. An example of this type of event would be if a council is using the public train system of their town to transport the girls from the public pool, the museum and ice rink for "A Day Out and About in Anywhere, USA". The groups would all have a first aider traveling with them during the 20 minute train rides so as to insure first aid is available during the entire experience.

5. Latex Gloves Substitutes

Due to a potential for extreme allergic reactions to latex, Girl Scouts of the USA recommends the use of vinyl or nitrile gloves for first aid, arts and crafts or whenever such barriers are used.

Program

1. Canoeing & Kayaking National Organization

American Whitewater has changed their Web address to <http://www.americanwhitewater.org>

2. Program Age Level Determination

Program Age Level is determined by the current membership year. If a girl is registered for the current membership year as a Daisy and is registering for the upcoming year as a Brownie, her program age level for the current membership year remains Daisy until the new year begins on October 1st.

3. Orienteering

Competitive Orienteering Courses often require participants to operate independently. While solo competition is not recommended for inexperienced or other program age levels, girls 11 to 17 years of age whose skills match or exceed the demands of the course may participate in such competitions. As with all orienteering sites, there should be a clear area of safety (Safety Lane), a specific finish time and location and a Search and Rescue procedure designed by the competitions host and the Girl Scout advisor/leader.

4. Rafting

Under Rafting, Site, the line should read "No trip is taken on whitewater more difficult than Class IV, as defined. Previously noted under; Water Activities, Rafting, Site.

5. Program Delivery Site Evacuation Plans

Evacuation plans should include transportation in situations where girls were dropped off. This is especially important if there are not enough vehicles on site during the event/activity to evacuate all participants.

6. Driver Qualifications

Registered girl members of the current year are not recommended to act as drivers for Girl Scout activities. It may be assumed that Girl Scout activities begin when custody of the participant takes place. To be specific, if travel is part of the activity, travel should be regulated by the Safety-Wise recommendations. Girl Scouts of the USA recommends consulting the state government for the legal definition of "adult" when considering any experienced driver for Girl Scout activities.

7. Permission Slips

Registered girl members of the current year, regardless of age, are required to have parental/guardian permission slips when required by the council.

8. Name Tag Safety

When girl members are traveling alone, in public places, it is not recommended that they wear name badges/tags that are visible to a casual passerby.

Property Considerations

Pool Diving Boards and Slides

Pool diving boards and slide installation should meet local and state guidelines with regard to bounce, water entry angle, maintenance and water depths. A reputable pool contractor or inspector could be of help in assessing existing diving/sliding areas. The area should be properly marked and separate from other swimming areas. Please see Safety-Wise under Swimming, Diving Areas for specific recommendations.

Product Consideration

1. Old Propane Products in Tents and enclosed areas

United States Consumer Product Safety Commission advises that all old propane portable heaters, lanterns, and stoves not be used inside enclosed areas due to the high risk of oxygen depletion. A new generation of heaters is currently being manufactured with an oxygen depletion system (ODS). Products with ODS are recommended for use in enclosed areas. For further information, please contact the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission Office of Information and Public Affairs through their website <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PREREL/prhtml02/02179.html>

2. 15 Passenger Vans

If your council uses 15 passenger vans, Girl Scouts of the USA recommends consulting your insurance carrier and reviewing state and local laws as some states and counties have issued warnings on these vehicles.

Travel

Travel Alerts

Updates and National and International travel alerts may be found on www.girlscouts.org among other suggestions Girl Scouts of the USA recommends:

1. Monitoring the United States State Department Web site for travel advisories at <http://www.state.gov/travel/> for all international travel.
2. Avoiding the wearing of clothing, pins, logos, buttons, etc. that identify the group as Americans while traveling abroad. (Uniforms can be taken to wear at special Girl Scout/Girl Guide gatherings and ceremonies.)

Safety and Risk Management in Girl Scouting and Safety Management at Girl Scout Sites and Facilities are currently under review.

Please note that the activity check points on pages 75 to 90 of Safety and Risk Management in Girl Scouts are covered by Safety-Wise ©.

Concerns or comments regarding this update or Safety-Wise issues may be directed to Kathleen Cullinan at kcullinan@girlscouts.org.