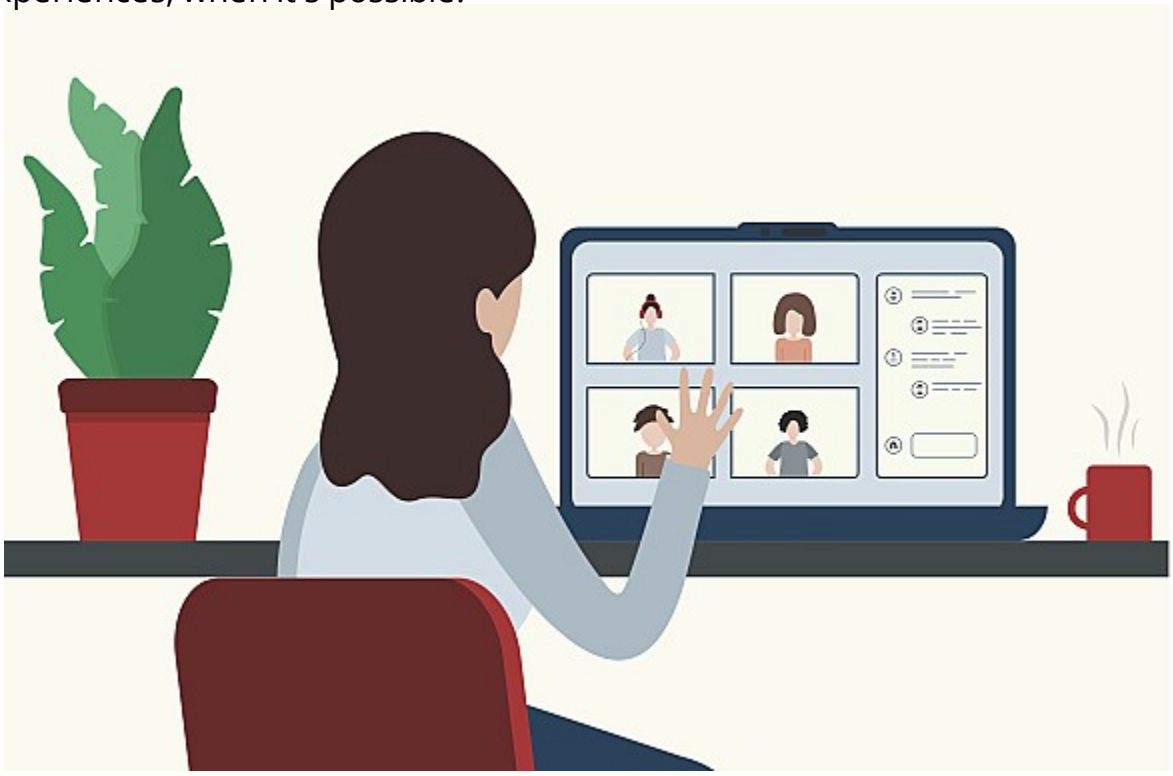
"The Virtual Meetings Playbook"



YOUR GUIDE TO ENGAGING & FUN TROOP MEETINGS ONLINE

Virtual Meetings are the new frontier to encourage, support, and engage girls in being leaders in their own lives.

We predict that virtual meetings will soon become a regular feature in a hybrid troop experience. We can see leaders and girls leveraging online meetings for talking and planning, followed by in person get-togethers for fun and learning experiences, when it's possible.



Virtual Troop Meetings Can Allow Girls to Learn so Much More!

Although troop meetings are traditionally an in-person format, we are quickly learning the power of having virtual learning and engagement opportunities at our fingertips. Imagine having your Girl Scout's troop do a Zoom chat with a Zoo Keeper in Australia or a Girl Guiding Troop in the United Kingdom. Even if we don't travel, we can still meet new people learn new things.



When in person meetings are not possible virtual meetings facilitate a **sense of belonging**, which is the foundation of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

Girls are asking for virtual meetings to **maintain social connections, complete badge activities, and plan other Girl Scout activities** - like service projects

Girls who don't have access to troop or group meetings, either virtually or in person, generally don't remain engaged with Girl Scouts. That means they miss out on the leadership opportunities every girl deserves.

Creating an **all-girl safe space with supportive adult mentors** sets the stage for mutual encouragement, sisterhood, and continued girl leadership during a time when girls need support, belonging, and a way to make their world a better place. This **matters regardless of societal circumstances**.

What is YOUR personal why?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT'S INSIDE THE PLAYBOOK?

PLAY #1 - GATHER INFORMATION & FACE YOUR FEAR



Beginning on Pg 5 --- Adapting badge requirements to make them work when you can't do them in person. Also, taking activities offline and making them "unplugged".

PLAY #2 - ADJUST YOUR EXPECTATIONS



Beginning on Pg 9 --- Girls' attention spans by PGL, how long the meeting should last, and how often to switch topics. Also, girls' natural characteristics by PGL and how to adapt them into your meetings.

PLAY #3 - ONLINE TOOLS & HOW TO USE THEM SAFELY



Beginning on Pg 15 --- Deciding what you want to do and then mapping that against a platform feature matrix. Also, virtual meeting safety activity checkpoints and safety talking points for your family meeting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAY #4 - HOLD AN ONLINE FAMILY MEETING WITH ADULTS & GIRLS



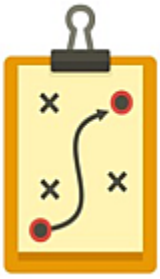
Beginning on Pg 18 --- Girls need family support for online meetings, so hold a family Meeting & invite them in. Plus, 5 Strategies for Leaders & Families to Support Girls' Online Success

PLAY #5 - USE AN ONLINE MEETING FORMAT THAT WORKS



Beginning on Pg 25 --- Modify your meeting segments to C-F-A-C, which stands for CONNECT - FOCUS - ACTIVITIES - AND CLOSING. It works!

PLAY # 6 - GET THE VIRTUAL TROOP MEETINGS PLAYBOOK STARTER PACK!



On Pg 30--- Bonus resources for connecting, focusing, energizing, and closing virtual meetings.

80% of In Person Experiences Easily Translate to the Virtual Space.



Play # 1

Some things are obvious - you can open the meeting with the Girl Scout Promise and Law *in person*, and you can open with the Girl Scout Promise and Law *online*. Other things *APPEAR* not to translate to the online environment, but don't count them out so quickly! With creativity and some modification you can virtualize much more than you expect.

At In Person Meetings Girls Like To:	Creative Ways To Virtualize It:
Have snacks	**VIRTUALIZE IT!** - Girls can come to the meeting with their favorite healthy snack and share why they like this healthy snack the best. Everyone has snack time together.
Play active games and move around.	**VIRTUALIZE IT!** - Leaders can use movements to direct girls to signify their vote or agreement with a statement. "If you like pizza with pineapple on it wave your hands in the air like you just don't care. If you like pepperoni, move your hands like you are climbing up a rope!"
Have one on one or small group conversations with their friends.	**VIRTUALIZE IT!** - If your web meeting platform has break out room capability, like Zoom, you can push girls into small break out rooms in groups of 3 or 4 to discuss a conversation prompt on any topic. You can set a timer on the breakout session and automatically bring them back to the main room when time is up.
Pass the Friendship Squeeze at the Closing Circle.	**VIRTUALIZE IT!** - Instead of holding hands to pass the squeeze, girls can hold up their hand and make a squeeze gesture, or wink, or blow a kiss and call out another girl's name to pass the friendship energy forward.

You CAN Do This! You already know how.

When it comes to adapting badge requirements to work in the virtual space, think of it like a recipe for chocolate chip cookies. You can substitute soy milk for regular milk, applesauce for eggs, and add dark chocolate instead of milk chocolate chips. It will still be a chocolate chip cookie, but now it's dairy free. Same principle.

Let's use the Brownie Painting badge as an example:



Brownie Painting Badge

	No Tech	Hybrid	All Tech
Step 1 – Get Inspired	Go to an art museum as a troop.	Have the girls find a piece of art that they like and then start your meeting by having the girls share what they like about it.	Take the girls on a virtual tour of an art museum.
Step 2 - Paint the Real World	Girls paint landscapes during an in-person meeting.	Girls paint landscapes before the meeting and then share their work in a virtual art show.	Leader describes a picture of a landscape and the girls try to reproduce it at home just following directions.
Step 3 – Paint a Mood	Girls paint a picture representing a mood during an in-person meeting.	Girls paint a picture representing a mood before the meeting and then share in a virtual art show.	Leader shows pictures of different artwork and the girls try to guess the mood.
Step 4 - Paint without Brushes	Leader provides girls with various items to use instead of paintbrushes during an in-person meeting.	Girls are assigned to paint something using an item found indoors before the meeting. They share during a virtual meeting and troop tries to guess what object was used.	Girls share the object they chose with a troop during a virtual meeting. The troop will watch as the girl paints with the object to see how it works as an art tool.
Step 5 – Paint a Mural	Girls paint a mural together during an in-person troop meeting.	Girls are tasked with coming up with an idea for a mural before the meeting. They will share their design and the troop will decide on an element from each to make into a group mural that the leader or a volunteer will draw.	Girls work together during the virtual meeting to dictate a team mural design to a designated "artist" who will make the design come to life on their screen.

Simple substitutions to activities and the meeting format will allow you to achieve the goal of the badge or journey in a virtual space.

You can adapt or substitute any activity to fit within your desired level of technology.

A word about "Plugged In" versus "Unplugged" Activities...

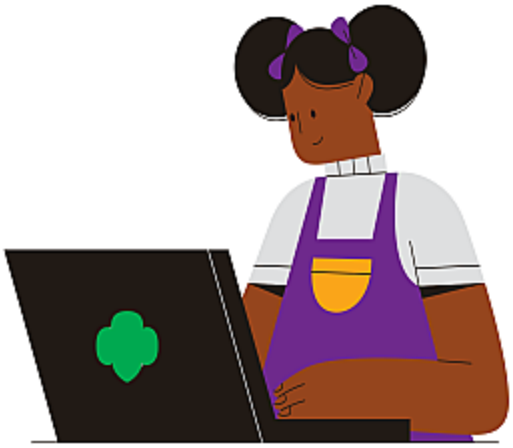


Now more than ever, people are experiencing **"screen fatigue."** We want to make sure that Girl Scouts is a place for our members to have fun, safe, and healthy interactions. Keeping that in mind, it is important to note that **meeting virtually does not always have to mean sitting in front of your screen for long chunks of time.**

--- For the purposes of this Playbook we are going to define Plugged In activities as something that you do on camera in front of a screen.

--- Unplugged Activities are done off camera, away from the screen. The same meeting can include both "plugged in" and "unplugged" activities.

MOVEMENT HELPS KEEP GIRLS ENGAGED!



A) Movement helps UP the engagement factor.

B) Getting girls out of their chairs and moving around doing something other than sit gives the ears and eyes a break, plus hands something to do.

C) Furthermore, it helps foster a sense of ownership and responsibility to mind the time and complete a task, building a sense of independence.

Try to incorporate a variety of both "plugged in" and "unplugged" activities to keep your virtual troop meetings active and engaging.

COMPARE & CONTRAST - DO YOU SEE HOW MAKE AN ACTIVITY UNPLUGGED?



"Plugged" activities are things that everyone does in front of their computers with their eyes on the screen.



Unplugged activities are things the girls may do offline – either on their own, or with their families – that you can reflect on and debrief together on camera afterwards.

Outdoor Art Badge: Fully Plugged In Meeting Agenda:

1. Connect & focus the meeting with an opening ceremony on virtual meeting platform *(plugged in)*
2. Troop business *(plugged in)*
3. Virtual field trip to national parks for inspiration *(plugged in)*
4. Leader-led art project everyone does in front of their computer at the same time *(plugged in)*
5. Show and tell individual girl creations *(plugged in)*
6. Reflection & debriefing *(plugged in)*
7. Closing ceremony *(plugged in)*

Outdoor Art Badge: Partially Unplugged Meeting Agenda

1. Connect & focus the meeting with an opening ceremony on virtual meeting platform *(plugged in)*
2. Troop business *(plugged in)*
3. **Girls individually go outdoors for inspiration for a nature scene *(5 min / unplugged)***
4. Touch base on virtual meeting platform to review art project instructions *(plugged in)*
5. **Girls individually go off on their own to create their art project at the kitchen table *(15 min / unplugged)***
6. Return to virtual meeting platform for show and tell individual girl creations *(plugged in)*
7. Reflection & debriefing *(plugged in)*
8. Closing ceremony *(plugged in)*


Play # 2

Work With Girls at Their Level -

It's likely that you will not work through badge steps as quickly and efficiently as you do in person - and that's OKAY! The more important factor is engagement & fun.

HOW TO APPROACH DAISY MEETINGS -

Girl Scout Daisy
Grades K-1

- **Recommended length for online meetings: 30 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 12 – 18 minutes, so change activities every 10 minutes**
- **Parent involvement in offline activities and attendance during the meeting is required**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Egocentric, centers ideas around themselves	Let the girls talk about themselves, relate topics to their individual lives/ make comparisons to themselves
Playful, learns by using senses: touch, smell, taste, hear and see	Plan activities for the girls to do, make it a game as much as possible, use reflection questions about their observations to help reinforce learning concepts
Strong language skills, but reading, writing and typing skills are not well developed yet	Be sure to explain everything clearly to the girls – if directions are typed or written, read them aloud to the group. If you are asking them to journal their thoughts, encourage use of drawings (less emphasis on words). Do not expect girls to use chat functions of your virtual meeting space for communication.
Capable of making simple choices between 2-3 options for girl-led input and voting	As much as possible, try to have 2-3 choices for girls to choose from (options of games to play, songs to sing, colors to use, etc.)

HOW TO APPROACH BROWNIE MEETINGS -



- **Recommended length for online meetings: 45 - 60 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 16 – 24 minutes, so change activities every 10 to 15 minutes**
- **Parent involvement in offline activities and attendance during the meeting is strongly recommended / required as needed**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Able to express feelings with words, and more able to see another's viewpoint	In reflection, ask girls to share their feelings, and consider how others might feel in a similar situation
Logical – able to think about pros & cons, suggest options, concrete thinkers	When making decisions and in reflections, have open conversations about how conclusions have been made, and explore other alternatives
Able to work longer, detailed small motor, eye-hand coordination skills developed	Easier to do more complex crafts, or engineering activities where assembly is required
Reading, and writing skills are developing, typing skills may not be developed yet	If instructions are typed or written, read aloud to the group, but feel free to leave on screen for girls to refer back to.

HOW TO APPROACH JUNIOR MEETINGS -



- **Recommended length for online meetings: 45 - 60 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 20 – 30 minutes, so change activities every 15 to 20 minutes**
- **Parent involvement in offline activities is recommended, with assistance to get set up and started during meetings if needed.**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Have opinions about their likes and dislikes	As much as possible, try to let the girls make choices about what they want to do (options of games to play, songs to sing, colors to use, which badge to earn, etc.)
Able to choose best solutions to a problem and analyze decisions to see if they are working	When making decisions and in reflections, have open conversations about how conclusions have been made, and explore other alternatives. Revisit decisions that have been made in the past to determine if that was the best decision, or if it's time for change
Developed reading, writing, and typing skills	If instructions are typed or written, you may summarize the instructions verbally and put complete directions on screen for girls to refer back to. Girls may also use chat function of your virtual meeting space for communication
Capable of coordinating with each other to plan and produce short meeting segments	Delegate portions of meetings for girls to lead. This may include having girls take turns each week to lead the opening or closing ceremony or leading a step from the badge that the troop is earning.

HOW TO APPROACH CADETTE MEETINGS -



- **Recommended length for online meetings: 60 – 90 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 24 – 36 minutes, so change activities every 15 to 20 minutes**
- **Parent involvement in offline activities and assistance logging in to meetings is optional & when needed**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Exploring personal values & morals, defining themselves through culture, music, & friends	Allow space for girls to share their interests. Affirm and be supportive of their differences, and their interests.
Able to take responsibility for themselves & ask for help when they need it	Provide a channel for girls to reach out directly and ask for clarification or support as needed
Developed reading, writing, and typing skills	If instructions are typed or written, you may summarize the instructions verbally and put complete directions on screen for girls to refer to. You may also consider giving girls short passages to read on their own time, that you can come back as a group to discuss. Girls will likely use chat function of your virtual meeting space for communication
Capable of coordinating with each other to plan and co-lead meeting segments	Delegate portions of meetings for girls to lead. This may include having girls take turns each week to lead the opening or closing ceremony, or leading activities related to the badge that the troop is earning.

HOW TO APPROACH SENIOR MEETINGS -



- **Recommended length for online meetings: 60 – 90 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 28 – 42 minutes, so change activities every 15 to 25 minutes**
- **Senior Girl Scouts can manage their online troop experiences, asking for assistance when needed**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Becoming more self-sufficient with better organizational skills	Give girls more responsibility for their role in meetings, assigning them things to research or prepare to present to the troop
Can give hypothetical solutions to problems	Design opening questions to activities as "what if" scenarios, and give girls space to imagine, hypothesize and share their perspectives.
Developed typing and technological skills	Girls will likely use chat function of your virtual meeting space.
Capable of coordinating with each other to plan and lead meeting segments	Delegate meetings for girls to lead. For example, girls may lead badge activities, or service projects.

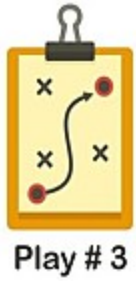
HOW TO APPROACH AMBASSADOR MEETINGS -



- **Recommended length for online meetings: 60 – 90 minutes**
- **Average Attention Span is 32 – 48 minutes, so change activities every 20 to 30 minutes**
- **Ambassador Girl Scouts can manage their online troop experiences, however, may be juggling competing priorities**

Characteristic:	How to plan accordingly:
Showing increased independence with a desire to seek out new experiences	At this time, bi-weekly or monthly troop meetings may no longer be appropriate. Allow girls to pursue their individual interests in Girl Scouts and consider meeting quarterly to socialize and share experiences.
Able to use deductive reasoning to make educated guesses	Design opening questions to activities as "what if" scenarios, and give girls space to imagine, hypothesize and share their perspectives.
Typing skills and technology skills are strongly developed	Girls will likely use chat function of your virtual meeting space.
Capable of coordinating with each other to plan and lead meeting segments	Delegate meetings for girls to lead. For example, girls may lead badge activities, or service projects.

Let's Talk About Choosing Your Online Meeting Tools and Using Them Safely...



Many adults are using online collaboration tools in their work right now, so the number of people becoming familiar with web meetings and file sharing is quickly increasing.



This is good news in case you are not one of the proficient ones; a troop parent or caregiver may be able to give pointers and coach you as you learn to use the features. Ask these people to be part of your technology team and share their knowledge with the wider group. It feels good to be needed, so don't hesitate to open the role if you find someone appropriate to ask.

The most important thing - - - to start - - - is to think about what you want to be able to do, and then map your needs to a Feature Comparison Matrix to see which platforms offers what.

Do you want:

Video Calling - Everyone on the meeting can see and hear each other.

Desktop Sharing - Presenter is able to share their screen to show documents, PowerPoint slides, or images.

File Sharing - Upload handouts so that families can download them to read or print at home.

Text Reminders - Send everyone a text blast at the same time to remind them about upcoming meetings or provide a materials list.

A Private Group - A private space that only members can access which usually offers members the ability to create posts, upload pictures, and engage in conversation.

Click on the chart to DOWNLOAD this Feature Comparison Matrix and Launch the Individual Platforms for Research on Pricing and Terms -

Technology Platform Feature Comparison Matrix

Explore this chart to find the platform(s) that meets your online meeting needs.
Click each platform icon to learn more.

Platforms:	Do I need an account?	Can I host a video call or meeting?	Can I dial in to a video meeting by phone?	Can I share files?	Can I create a calendar or event?	Can I share my screen?	Can we chat during meetings?	Can I send group text messages?	Can I send direct text messages?	Can I use this to send an email?	Can I use this on the web?	Is there a phone app for this?	Do I have to pay for more features?
zoom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
ClassDojo	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Google Classroom	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
remind	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
BAND	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	
groupme	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Google Hangouts	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓

GSNETX does not endorse any of these platforms. This information is current as of 7/8/20.

This list is not exhaustive of all of the collaboration tools on the market; new platforms are being developed all of the time. These platforms are the most frequently given responses when asked *"What technology are you using to hold virtual meetings with your troop?"*

A FEW MORE KEY POINTS -

--- It is entirely appropriate to utilize troop funds or collect dues to pay for the online platform that makes troop meetings possible.

--- Some troops may opt to make arrangements to split the fees with a sister troop and agree to different meeting dates and times.

--- A troop family may already have a personal account that they are willing to share and set up the meetings for you. If that happens, make them part of the technology team.

--- Ultimately, as the troop leader, the final decision on what best serves your needs and which virtual meeting tools you will use is up to you.

Click the image to read GSUSA's Safety Activity Checkpoint for virtual troop meetings ⬇

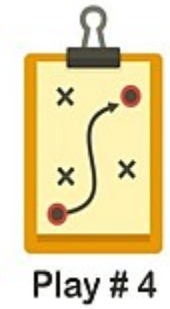


Feel free to share the link to the Virtual Meeting Safety Activity Checkpoint with troop adults by linking to it in the troop Facebook group, or by sending the link via email. If the girls' adults read this on their own, they will be more up to speed with conversations about how to make a troop meeting schedule work, safety, and what is expected of everyone.



⬅ Click the image to download this info graphic with bulleted talking points to use as an agenda during your talk with adults at your online family meeting.

You Need the Family Adults to Help Their Child Succeed So Bring Them In!



Online learning and virtual group meetups are no longer a vision of the future. Although many children feel comfortable with the digital world, *many adults may feel the opposite.*



The reasons adults might feel uncomfortable will vary, but for most, it is the many unknown aspects of the virtual learning environment and how quickly it moves. Sometimes it is because they are overwhelmed with working from home and supporting home schooling.

Regardless of the reason for hesitation, you need them - – because SHE needs them.

YOU ARE NOT NEXT TO THE GIRLS TO HELP AND COACH THEM -

No matter the Girl Scout's age, a support system is integral in learning. Some skills and behaviors that normally would be taught and managed by the troop leader will need extra support from adults so that their Girl Scout can feel confident in her new virtual setting.

This includes:

- Time management
- Having patience
- How to's about communication
- How to's about prioritizing and using new skills learned virtually in real life

PLAY #4 - HOLD AN ONLINE FAMILY MEETING WITH ADULTS & GIRLS

GOAL: GET ADULTS AND GIRLS TO WORK TOGETHER AS PARTNERS



Ultimately, we want to create conditions in which the adult caregivers and the girls have positive experiences together. And we want them to sit down together and map out a schedule of what meeting days look like in their household so that everyone knows what to expect.

Meeting days should be exciting and fun so don't forget to include the adults. Consider opening a conversation with adult supporters to suggest or brainstorm ideas to make Girl Scout meeting days slightly more special than any other day!

Although it's completely up to the adults when it comes to what level of support they give, DO let them know that their co-participation is appreciated! By partnering with you, adult supporters can help make virtual meetings more fun for everyone!

Some ideas for making meeting days special can include eating breakfast outside camping style, eating lunch with your Girl Scout's mess kit, or even having an evening campfire with the whole family. Think of simple but doable things that mark the day as special for each girl. You might even suggest they make it girl-led by having her plan something! See where they take it!

PRO-TIP: We can be as creative as we want to be when it comes to making the virtual experience interesting and fun for girls, ourselves, and their families.

We *also* have the ability to frame our current social distancing circumstances in a way that says "We're learning this together and we'll figure it out, and we also want to have a little fun because our relationship matters!" The adults and the girls will take their cues from you. Exploring the digital Girl Scout Experience together can positive effects for the whole family!

5 Strategies for Leaders & Families to Support Girls' Online Success

1 - Hold an All Troop Family Meeting and Start with a Level Playing Field

One of the BEST ways to ease the hesitance with online troop meetings is to hold a digital family meeting (which includes girls) and provides strategies for adults to support online success for their Girl Scout.

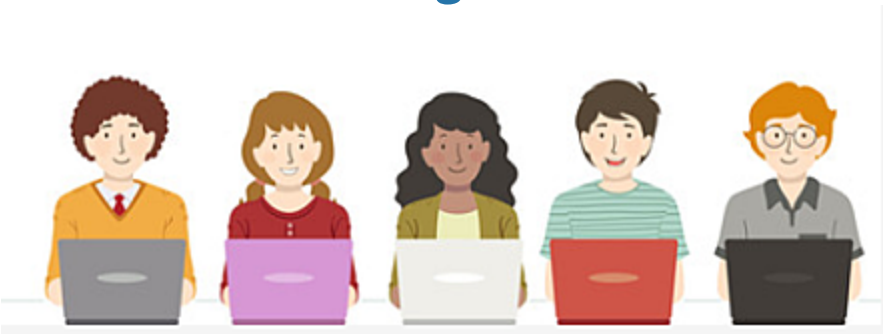
This meeting is about getting some adult to adult discussion time about dates, times, and schedules, and it also includes activity time for adult / child duos to practice using features like putting yourself on and off of mute or raising your hand.



If a family meeting has not previously been offered, don't feel intimidated to ask for one in the move to digital meetings. When families and leaders start by sitting down with their Girl Scout and intentionally discussing how meetings will work, everyone comes out more confident.

PRO TIP: Some of the most common virtual meeting obstacles can be learned by playing a game. Play a game that teaches everyone how to "virtually raise your hand", mute and unmute themselves, and change their name (if needed) so everyone knows who is on the call.

2 - Ask Adults to Come to the First Several Meetings With Their Girl Scout to Model Persistence, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking



Virtual environments can sometimes remove the feeling of accountability that girls may have in a regular troop meeting. A leader at an in-person troop meeting commands girls' attention in a way that is different from how she can keep girls focused in an online setting. For some girls it's more challenging to stay in sync with what's happening, and that's a big reason why you need additional adult support.

This is because of the way kids take in stimulus and process it within the brain.



As girls get more comfortable with meetings -- through their adult caregivers support --they can quickly become more engaged. If something is not working, then adults can ask questions, reach out to leaders, and open the conversation to problem-solving.

Ask adults to be your partner at meetings to help their Girl Scout to keep moving forward. Ask them to role model critical thinking skills when their girl is up against anything that is challenging her ability to communicate her needs.

--- Example: "The zoom meeting keeps cutting out. Maybe we could try moving to a different part of the house to see if that works better."

--- Example: "I'm having a hard time staying engaged with the meeting because I'm sitting in an uncomfortable chair. I'm going to switch my chair."

OTHER WAYS ADULTS CAN HELP -

- How to make a to-do list to complete any assigned badge work.
- How to mark meetings on a calendar.
- When your scout learns a new skill, ask them to share it with the rest of the family one evening.
- Ask what they learned or talked about in their meeting after it ends.



Staying positive can be tricky for adults when they are tired, so try to keep your meeting plans straight forward and simple. At the same time, it is important to a girl's mental health to have role models who demonstrate how to handle challenges.

In some cases, girls with learning differences or special needs might need their adults to sit with them and have in-person interactions alongside them. There's no reason why parents can't "earn the badge" too!

Remember - this is temporary. Co-attendance is needed only for as long as it takes for girls, adults, and leaders to become confident and competent.

3 - Set Up a Designated Workspace

Help girls set up a designated workspace that is comfortable. This includes good lighting, a comfortable place to sit, a way to reduce background noise, and a place where they can quickly source help from you if they need it.



It's also a great idea to have paper, crayons, pencils, and other supplies there for your Girl Scout. Some families have created a "meeting caddy" that girls use for their online virtual troop meetings. You can also include things like her badge booklet or memory book.

4 - Invite Supporting Adults Who Weren't at the Family Meeting to Get to Know the Online Learning Platform



If someone who is supporting a Girl Scout has never attended an online meeting, now is a great time to try! Adults shouldn't wait until the first virtual Troop Meeting to try to learn how to log into, set up, or configure a virtual learning account. Reach out to these people and invite them to connect with a troop leader or another troop volunteer and practice logging in and navigating the platform.

5. Ask All of the Supporting Adults to Stay In Communication with the Troop Leaders

Troop Leaders should let a girl's parent or caregiver know if their Girl Scout is having trouble during virtual meetings, just as they would in a traditional meeting session. Supporting adults should also "check-in" with their troop leaders and their Girl Scout regularly to see how things are going. Discuss when and how adults should check in at your first digital family meeting.

Troops who communicate well often describe a 3 prong, waterfall approach to communication:

1. A **private community / social / group space** in order to communicate larger chunks of information to everyone at the same time. A place to share photographs, have conversations, or publish materials needed lists or handouts as downloadable files.
2. A **group text list or app** that can send out short and quick blasts to everyone like meeting reminders or change of plans.
3. **Email** for private communication or longer, in-depth information that comes with attachments.





CFAC - a Modified Virtual Meeting Format That Works!

Here is an acronym to help plan your virtual meeting agenda:



Pronounced "Sea-Fack" for Connect, Focus, Activities, and Close.

Connect (5 - 10 minutes)



Spending time up front to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere will make a positive difference in girls' engagement and enjoyment levels throughout the meeting. The usual time frame is 5 to 10 minutes.

TAKE CARE OF THE EMOTIONAL NEED TO FEEL RECOGNIZED & SAFE!



The same emotional need girls have to feel recognized and safe in the physical environment also extends to the digital space. Plan to spend a small portion of time at the beginning of each meeting for girls to reconnect with each other by using their voices and sharing themselves in some way.

Spending time up front to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere will make a positive difference in girls' engagement and enjoyment levels throughout the meeting. The usual time frame is 5 to 10 minutes.



IT LOOKS & SOUNDS LIKE THIS:

- Greet girls warmly as they arrive. Be sure to say everyone's name. A warm and friendly greeting goes a long way. *"Hello, Sarah!" "There's Morgan; good to see you!"*

- Use an engaging short ice breaker or a mental warm up question to help the girls mentally transition from what they were doing prior to the call.

- **IDEAS:** You can do a scavenger hunt for something they must run and find at home in 90 seconds and then show on camera. Prompts can be as simple as something they love, something they are proud of, or something that makes them laugh.

- **MORE IDEAS:** You can ask a fun or silly question such as "do you prefer your eggs over easy, scrambled, or poached?" Your questions could have more depth from time to time. Girls could be asked to come to the meeting prepared with a "knock - knock" joke to share. There are any number of things you can do to help girls get laughing and talking. Google icebreakers for kids and see what you can find!

If girls feel safe contributing at the beginning of the meeting they are more likely to engage later while working on badges or during group discussion.

Some girls who are normally introverted at in person meetings may feel more comfortable in the virtual setting, and thus, may begin interact more. Others may take some adjustment time if this is new to them. Just watch and see, and do what you can to provide a warm and friendly welcome at the beginning of every troop meeting. Everything gets easier with repetition and practice. You've got this.

Focus (5 - 10 minutes)

What are we here to do? This is where you pull back control and refocus the attention of the group.

RE-ESTABLISH CONTROL

It is important to reestablish control so that you can mentally focus the girls on what they are here to do today and drive the rest of the meeting. Using visuals switches the girls' attention from talking back to looking and listening. This important transitional step allows you to introduce the topic and give instructions for activity #1.



IT LOOKS & SOUNDS LIKE THIS

- Transition from connecting to focus by officially opening the meeting by with the Girl Scout Promise and Law and your announcements.
- If possible, incorporate some meeting kapers by having roles that girls can perform such as leading the Promise and Law, keeping time, counting votes, or being a note taker. Consider making up some creative and fun kapers, too.
- Visuals go a long way. A slide with the Promise and Law and another with a simple meeting agenda will help girls know what to expect.



Activities (30 - 40 minutes)

The troop works on badge or patch activities or any other activity that is just for fun, like a round of Mad Libs. girls can do a show and tell of something that was done offline with a family member, OR the troop can do the activity together while online. It can be a mixture of both.

LET THE FUN BEGIN!

- Decide in advance whether you want your activities to be “plugged in” or “unplugged”, or a mixture of both.

- Try to keep it simple, using items the families might have at home.

Example 1

a) **15 min** – *show & tell of unplugged activity*

b) **15 min** – *group discussion & girl led vote*

Example 2

a) **10 min** – *badge step 1*

b) **10 min** – *badge step 2*

c) **10 min** – *badge step 3*

Example 3

a) **10 min** – *Mad Libs*

b) **15 min** – *virtual field trip of museum*

c) **5 min** – *Birthday announcements*

Example 4

a) **20 min** – *guest speaker*

b) **10 min** – *question & answer*

Example 5

a) **5 min** – *knock-knock jokes*

b) **20 min** – *teams present plans*

c) **5 min** – *what I liked most was*

Example 6

a) **25 min** – *make swaps together*

b) **5 min** – *learn a song*

CLOSING (5 - 10 minutes)

Bring the meeting to a wrap by communicating what the next plugged in or unplugged activity will be so that girls get excited about what to do before the next digital check in call.



IT LOOKS & SOUNDS LIKE THIS

- Give a 3 minute warning before the end of the last activity so that girls know that time is almost up.
- At time, call a stop and let the girls know that it's time for our friendship circle so that we can close the meeting.
- Tell girls what the next plugged or unplugged activity for the troop is going to be and what you would like them to do between now and then.
- Ask girls one by one to share what their favorite part of today's meeting was.
- When girls share their meeting take away have them put their hand up to the camera to pass the friendship squeeze to the next person.

PLAY # 6 - GET THE VIRTUAL TROOP MEETINGS PLAYBOOK STARTER PACK!





Explore the Virtual Meeting Starter Pack To Get Going...

Save yourself some time and visit the Virtual Troop Meetings Playbook Starter Pack page to download some resources for the CONNECTING and FOCUSING parts of your online meeting.

What can you do when the "Quiet Sign" isn't as effective anymore? Bonus meeting energizer techniques to recapture attention are included, too!

Get Access to Starter Pack & Playbook Downloadables here



Share a Resource, too!

Hit this link to SUBMIT and SHARE your own clever ice breakers, mental warm up questions, focusing, and reflective closing activities for inclusion in our online resource cabinet. We'll take girl led voting techniques in the virtual space, adapted online meeting plans, and creative reflection examples, too!



Parting Thoughts:

- If **ALL** you do is have girls come to meetings with *knock – knock jokes* for three meetings in a row while everyone practices putting themselves on mute, and then unmute, and mute again until they get it… That is fine! **You'll get there.**

- Girls will like seeing your face, seeing each other, and laughing. Talking about themselves and with each other supports their mental & emotional heath, so any of that a win. **It will be easier to come back together if we maintain our connections while we are apart.**

- Feel free to experiment with different kinds of activities but try to **keep materials simple**. Life skills, arts, cooking, etc. often use materials easily found at home. Start there.

Remember, people return to places – in person or virtual - where:

1) *They are warmly welcomed*
2) *They receive something of value they could not have received had they not been there*
3) *They have fun*