

## TOP TEN PIECES OF ADVICE FROM A SEASONED LEADER

10. There is not just one way of doing things. Your way is just great. There are no Girl Scout Police. You don't need to be a great outdoorswoman or a life-long Girl Scout to be an effective Girl Scout Leader. (But if you know somebody like that, don't forget to use their expertise to help you along the way!)

9. Being a Girl Scout Leader is not a competitive sport. If you hear of something neat that another troop is doing, the appropriate response is not to feel inferior. It is to think of all the great things your troop is doing, too, and to file that great idea away because maybe you'd like to borrow it for your troop.

8. Network. One part of the Girl Scout Law is to use resources wisely. Don't re-invent the wheel! Talk to other leaders, as well as people involved in other youth organizations and get ideas. Don't hesitate to call team members for advice.

7. Work together, and maybe even plan some joint activities with other troops. Invite some girls from older troops to come help you, especially troops that are getting ready to bridge to the next level.

6. Remember that all those Girl Scout rules and regulations are there to help and protect you, not to be punitive or restrictive. Those rules, along with a little common sense, will keep you out of hot water.

5. Get the girls to be as self-sufficient as possible. Don't do something for them that they could do themselves, even if it takes a little longer for them to do it. Don't automatically jump in and fix everything right away. Ultimately, this will be better for them and better for you. This is an investment you'll make in the earlier years. Some day, you'll sit in a lawn chair while they serve you. I promise.

4. Take the training courses that are offered to you. It's hard to commit to yet another night out, but you'll get some great ideas and meet some really nifty people. In the long run, it'll be a time saver.

3. Attend Leader meetings. Same reasoning as the last one.

2. Delegate. Let the other parents in the troop know that everyone should have a part in the troop. There are lots of jobs to be done, large and small, and to fit every time schedule. Make it clear that you are not baby-sitting.

1. Have fun! Being a Girl Scout Leader is one of the best things you'll ever do for yourself, your daughter, and all of those other girls in the troop. It's not brain surgery or rocket science, but it's just as worthwhile and important.

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