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New chief, new uniform, new green initiative, new Day of the Girl An exciting new year of Girl Guides begins!

Toronto, Ontario – As tens of thousands of girls and women nationwide begin the new Guiding year, **Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada (GGC)** is pleased to introduce Canadians to our [new Chief Commissioner, Sharron Callahan](#), a [new uniform for girl Members](#), our [new National Service Project: Operation Earth Action](#) and our [YouTube initiative to celebrate International Day of the Girl](#). You won't believe what girls and women are set to achieve in Girl Guides this year!

Empowering, challenging and engaging – that's what today's Girl Guides is all about. Guiding's high-impact, hands-on programs help girls and young women learn more about global awareness, the environment, healthy relationships, anti-bullying, media awareness and so much more. The 2012-2013 Guiding year is just getting started and **girls aged 5-18 can join at any time!** Girl Guides is a rewarding way for women to share their time and talents and mentor girls to inspire Girl Greatness. Information on Girl Guides of Canada's programs and opportunities is available at girlguides.ca or by calling our Membership hotline at 1-800-565-8111. Girl Guides of Canada's [online registration system](#) is a quick and easy way to find local Guiding Units and to sign girls up for the Guiding year!

[New Chief Commissioner – Sharron Callahan](#)

Newly installed Chief Commissioner Sharron Callahan has been an active Member of GGC for many years and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the top role at Girl Guides of Canada. Sharron began Guiding as a Brownie in Grand Falls, Newfoundland and Labrador and has held many positions within Guiding including serving as the Provincial Commissioner, Newfoundland and Labrador Council and as the national Deputy Chief Commissioner-Member Services. She also has an extensive background in social work and youth justice and currently leads a Girl Guide Unit in a shelter for women and children.

“As Chief Commissioner my commitment is to enable the empowerment of girls and young women to be all that they can be and to make a difference in the world. At Girl Guides we trust that girls can lead, so I want girls to be active not only in their communities but by also contributing to all aspects of Girl Guides. We want to engage them in ways that appeal and interest them as this strengthens Canadian Girl Guiding. By giving girls a voice in everything we do, we empower them to take on leadership roles.”

[New uniforms for girls](#)

Girl Guides of Canada is thrilled to introduce a stylish new Girl Guide-blue uniform T-shirt that unites all girls in Guiding. Girls in Sparks, Brownies, Guides, Pathfinders and Rangers are all instantly recognizable as part of the same dynamic organization when wearing the new T-shirt. The modernized uniform truly reflects the dynamic and cohesive organization that Girl Guides is today.

In designing the uniform, GGC surveyed our Members and listened to what girls say they want to wear – a

uniform that is modern, practical and comfortable – so that they can show their pride in being a Girl Guide. The T-shirt's contemporary design and fit is comfortable as girls participate in the wide range of activities that Girl Guides is all about – whether they are planting trees in a community garden, volunteering at their local food bank, or canoeing down a river. Each branch of Girl Guides still has its own distinctive colour, styled into an accent colour in each branch's shirt – pink for Sparks, brown for Brownies, blue for Guides, green for Pathfinders and red for Rangers.

Operation Earth Action

For the 2012-2013 Girl Guide year, 90,000 Guiding Members across the country will join forces and take action to help improve our collective environment with our **National Service Project Operation Earth Action**. Service to our communities has always been an integral part of Girl Guiding, and GGC's National Service Project is a shared opportunity for girls to take real action on the issues that matter to them and make an impact in their communities and in our world.

Operation Earth Action challenges girls to become more environmentally aware and to take simple actions that collectively have a big impact. Activities include:

- **Plant a Tree** supported by [TD Friends of the Environment Foundation](#) - offers girls and young women a hands-on way to raise their awareness of environmental issues while supporting them to transform green spaces in their communities.
 - **TD Tree Days** presented by [TD Friends of the Environment Foundation](#) - throughout the month of September 2012, Girl Guide Units across the country are out in their communities alongside TD employees planting trees
- **Be an energy detective** supported by [Sears Canada](#) – girls and their families are encouraged to investigate ways to make their homes and lives more energy efficient
- **Map your meal** supported by [Sobeys Inc.](#) - examines the impact of our food choices and explores the importance of eating locally grown and raised food when possible
- **Create your own beauty and cleaning products** – hands-on activity that looks at chemical-free alternatives to everyday products that girls can create themselves
- **Pledge to use reusable bags** supported by [Loblaw Companies Limited](#) – girls and Units will use their crafting skills to “upcycle” their own reusable bags out of old t-shirts – maybe even an old Girl Guide uniform t-shirt or a favourite that they have grown out of as a step to help reduce waste.
- **Pledge to use reusable water bottles** – girls and Units are encouraged to think about all the one-use drink bottles they use and pledge to instead use a reusable bottle whenever possible

The Operation Earth Action website launches in October 2012 and Girl Guides is keeping an online tally of every Earth action Members take across the country at [nationalserviceproject.ca](#).

Girl Greatness Playlist on You Tube - celebrating International Day of the Girl Child

The United Nations has declared October 11, 2012 as the first ever [International Day of the Girl Child](#), a time to recognize girls and young women as citizens and powerful agents of change in their own lives, the lives of their families and of their communities. It's a day to hear from girls about what empowers them

and Girl Guides of Canada is celebrating this special day by collecting and amplifying girls' voices on our [YouTube](#) channel.

Every girl in Guiding, from Sparks to Rangers, is encouraged to record a short video telling us about her favourite female singer or band that promotes confidence, resourcefulness or courage in girls and women. Our girls will become "Video Hostesses" for their song choice. These video submissions will be mixed into one collaborative video playlist that will launch on our GGC YouTube channel for everyone to see on International Day of the Girl!

In addition to all this, Girl Guides of Canada has also released two new [public service announcements](#) as part of a new ad campaign and later this fall, will launch a new website. Mid-October look for a newly redesigned Girl Guide Cookie Box as our popular chocolatey mint cookie campaign begins.

About Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada: The place for today's girls

For more than 100 years, Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada has been the leading organization dedicated solely to girls. In an environment where girls and young women feel safe, respected, supported and inspired, girls in Guiding learn to develop the skills, resources and qualities they need to achieve greatness. Girl Guides is continually adapting to meet the ever-changing interests and needs of girls and introduce them to many fantastic opportunities that await them. Girl Guides continues to be a safe place where girls can focus on exciting activities that help them become the best they can be.

Along with the camaraderie of special friendships, girls and young women involved in Guiding develop leadership and life skills and have opportunities for international travel and to further their education with scholarships. They are empowered to be responsible citizens and are given a voice on the world stage as participants in international symposia and conferences including the United Nations (UN) Conference on the Status of Women, COP 17 – UN convention on Climate Change, Rio 20+ Sustainable Development conference, Young Women's World Forums in Mexico and Switzerland and more.

Girl Guides of Canada strives to ensure environments where girls and women from all walks of life, identities and lived experiences feel a sense of belonging and can fully participate.

Join us!

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This release, as well as photos and b-roll is available via [Canada Newswire](#).

For more information or to arrange interviews, contact:

Nisha Lewis
Supervisor, Marketing and Media Relations
Girl Guides of Canada, National Office

Tel. (416) 487-5281 ext. 248
Fax (416) 487-5570
E-mail: lewisn@girlguides.ca