

Being a Junior Leader

Junior Leader Support Document

You're a Junior Leader!

Girl members become Junior Leaders for lots of reasons – maybe you like working with younger girls, want some volunteer hours, or you're looking for more leadership opportunities in GGC! You may have heard this role called "Girl Assistant", but no matter what you call it, you're going to make a big difference as a volunteer in a younger unit.

So, what do you need to know? There are a few important pieces of information that will help you along the way as you take on this new position.



Who are Junior Leaders?

Junior Leaders are girl members (Guide, Pathfinder, or Ranger-aged girls) who assist Guiders in units at least two branches below them. This means a Guide-aged Junior Leader can only assist in a Spark Unit, a Pathfinder-aged Junior Leader can assist in a Spark or Ember unit, and a Ranger-aged Junior Leader can assist in a Spark, Ember, or Guide unit.

You might be:

- Registered as a Guide, Pathfinder or Ranger;
- A girl 9 to 17 years old who is registered in the unit that you're assisting with (but you don't have to be part of a unit at your own branch level). You can participate in all Guiding activities (camps, international trips, etc.) for your age group;
- A bridging member who works with a unit until you reach the age in your province where you can register as an adult member.

Why be a Junior Leader

As a Junior Leader, you will strengthen your leadership skills by:

- Helping younger girls work together
- Planning and leading fun, exciting programming
- Adapting activities to meet the needs of girls in your unit while balancing different personalities and interests

You will also be a role model for younger girls – they will be looking up to you to learn specific skills and understand how you should treat others. It's an important job to be a role model for other girls, and you can be proud that you are helping them become everything they want to be.

What You Might Do

What you do as a Junior Leader is up to you and the unit Guiders. Work together and talk about:

- Personal goals that you want to work toward. For example, maybe you want to work on your public speaking skills, get more practice at long-term planning, or learn how to explain games to younger girls;
- The skills and interests you have that you can share with the girls in your unit;
- What the unit needs the most help with.

Once you and the Guiders have discussed these things, together you can find the best way to use your skills, work toward your goals, and help out the unit!

Here are a few ideas for things you might do as a Junior Leader:



Reflect and Learn

Being a Junior Leader can be a great learning experience! You can boost this experience by taking time to reflect on your accomplishments and progress. Alone or with the unit Guiders, you might think about:

- ✓ What were some successes? What went well?
- ✓ What can I/we do differently next time?
- ✓ What is one thing I/we can learn from today?
- ✓ What are some questions I/we have?

Glow:	Grows:
♥	🌱
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There are lots of ways to reflect and set future goals. Here's one example: Write down some "Glows" (things that went well) and "Grows" (areas for growth or improvement in the future).

Another way to grow is to ask the Guiders to share some of the things your doing really well and areas where you could keep improving.

Goal-setting, reflection, and accepting feedback will make you a stronger leader!

Tips for a Great Year!

- **Get to know your team** – you are an important part of the unit’s leadership team, and you can work best together if you get to know each other. Share stories, ask questions, and have fun together.
- **Communication is key** - if you’re not sure about something or want to share your opinion, speak up! Sharing your thoughts, feelings and ideas will help you to problem-solve together and have a great year.
- **Be honest about how much you can take on** – life can get busy, so it’s important to be clear with your team about how much time you can commitment to the unit (and it’s totally fine for this to change throughout the year). You can take on less tasks and responsibility during times that are really busy for you.
- **Use your resources** – there are lots of leadership resources that can help you build your skills and support you on your leadership journey. You can visit www.girlguides.ca/GirlsLead to find updates on new resources and opportunities.

Recognizing Your Junior Leader Experience

Girl Assistants can earn the **Junior Leader Certificate of Appreciation** which recognizes your commitment to the leadership of a unit over the course of a year. To qualify, you must actively assist in at least 50% of the unit’s meetings and be actively involved in planning meetings. Guiders and Rangers can find this certificate on [Member Zone](#).

You develop lots of important skills being a Junior Leader that can be used when you apply for future opportunities, like jobs or schools. Consider asking your Guider to write you a reference letter to support you in applying your skills, experience, and learnings toward these opportunities.

You can also use your Junior Leader experience to [earn awards!](#)

Guides

The Lady Baden-Powell Award

- Part C involves taking on a leadership role in the delivery of a unit meeting, event, outing, or special project with your own or a younger branch.
- Part D invites girls to share their experiences and memories of Guides with their own unit, a younger branch, or a group of friends from outside Guiding.

Pathfinders

Community Service Award

- You can complete these projects with the younger unit you volunteer with.

Canada Cord Award

- Part 4 involves participating in bridging activities with Rangers and younger girls.
- Part 5 invites girls to learn about first aid. This part of the award can be completed through running activities with younger girls.

Rangers

Ranger Service Project

- This project can be completed with the younger unit you volunteer with.

Cookie Campaign

- You can earn this award by supporting the cookie sales of your own unit or the younger unit you volunteer with.

Girl Protection and Well-being

One of the roles that you hold as a Junior Leader in a unit is to protect yourself and the girls in your unit. When you create a safe space for everyone, it's not just about preventing injuries. A true safe space is one where everyone feels like their whole selves are protected. A few ways that you can protect everyone in your unit is by looking at the bigger picture.

Below are a few situations you might experience. Feel free to discuss them with your Guider and come up with other strategies for the situations that might be common in your unit:

You're an assistant in a Guide unit and a parent wants to drop off a girl before the other leaders have arrived.

- Make sure you're not alone in a room with a girl. There should always be more than one adult or more than one girl in a space. This way there is always another witness in case something happens. If you have to be alone with a girl, make sure that you keep doors open and let others around you know what is happening. In this case, you should ask the parent to stay until the other leaders arrive.

An Ember in your unit has fallen during a game and is upset but not hurt.

- Younger kids often look for hugs and touch to reassure them that they are okay. It's okay to put your hand on their shoulder or give them a side hug until they are feeling better. Sometimes they will just want someone to sit beside them until they are ready to re-join the activity. Remember that some kids don't like to be touched, so it's important to ask beforehand.

A Spark in your unit wants help wiping themselves after they have gone to the bathroom.

- It's important that all girls are responsible for cleaning themselves up after they go to the bathroom. You can offer instructions or wet-wipes for them to use.
- If a girl in your unit has an accident, you can reassure that accidents happen and walk them through how to clean themselves up without touching them. With gloves on, you can take their soiled clothing and put it into a bag so they can take it home with them.

After you have created a safe space in your unit, girls might feel comfortable sharing things about their lives with you. This might include secrets or surprises - a surprise is a good thing for everyone and will eventually be revealed and celebrated (surprise party), but a secret is something that could lead to harm and doesn't feel right or good.

If a girl tells you a secret, like sharing that they are being neglected or abused at home:

1. Listen openly and calmly.
2. Let her know you believe her - state 'I believe you.'
3. Reassure the girl. Say 'I'm glad you're telling me this,' and/or 'It's okay to share this with me.'
4. Do not question the girl - this is the job of skilled professionals and the proper authorities.
5. Let the girl know that you must share this information with someone who can help. Tell a Guider in your unit. If it's about one Guider, talk to the other Guider or another adult that you trust. They can support you and have the tools to make the next steps.

Ask your Guider any questions you have about Girl Well-being.