



COUNCIL WRITING STYLE AND VOCABULARY

Reference for Service Units and Troops/Groups

August 1, 2008

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GRAMMAR AND WRITING STYLE

Proper English matters. It promotes Girl Scouts of Connecticut (GSOFC) as a professional organization and reflects back on the Council and GSUSA. In addition, clarity and use of appropriate terminology are essential in effectively communicating the Council's message. Be sure your quotations of Girl Scout programs or trainings are correct. Do not speak for GSUSA or the Council. Contact your Membership and Marketing Manager or the Communications Department if you are in doubt

Listed below are general Girl Scout guidelines for words, phrases, grammar, and spelling.

- Never use the masculine pronoun to refer to both sexes; use *he* or *she*, or *they* (if referring back to a plural noun). Use the proper form of *alumna/ae* (feminine singular/plural) or *alumnus/i* (masculine singular/plural). Girl Scouts would be unlikely to use anything but *alumna* or *alumnae*, since all our young so-called graduates are female. We do have male Girl Scout members, but they would not have been Girl Scouts when young and, therefore, could not be categorized as *alumni*.
- Always refer to *Girl Scouts* or *Girl Scouting*, not *Scouts* or *Scouting*. This is a legal matter and has to do with registered names by the Boy Scouts of America.
- Always capitalize membership levels of Girl Scouting, as in *Girl Scout Daisy* or *Daisies*, and use that term in text before the more casual name of *Daisy* or *Daisies* (note: not spelled *Daisy's*, which means either *belonging to a Daisy* or *Daisy is*). There are some circumstances, such as fliers, where space limitations may necessitate the shorter term.
- Council should be capitalized when referring to the official council, not to councils in general or in mass. Capitalize Council when it refers to our council and when it substitutes for Girl Scouts of Connecticut. For instance, "A new statewide council was formed on October 1, 2007, when five councils merged to form Girl Scouts of Connecticut. The Council offers the empowering Girl Scout Program to girls in grades K-12 across the state."
- Capitalize Girl Scout Mission, Girl Scout Law, Girl Scout Promise, Girl Scout Movement, Girl Scout Program (the one progressive Program has many different components).
- Capitalize Girl Scout special occasions, such as Thinking Day, Girl Scout Week, Girl Scout Leader's Day.
- Capitalize titles: First Aider, Trainer, Troop Leader, Advisor, etc.
- Capitalization of badges is not consistent: Brownie Try-It; Junior Architecture badge; Cadette and Senior Car Sense Interest Project Award, but Car Sense Interest Project patch.

GRAMMAR

- Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Inc., is ... (note commas surrounding Inc.)
- January 1, 2008, is... (spell out the month, no 1st, note commas surrounding year)
- Times should be indicated as 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., but to save space in some publications, may need to be 11 AM – 2 PM.
- 1980s (not 1980's, unless you mean of or pertaining to the 1980s)
- its = possessive of it; it's = it is
- GSOFCT uses the series comma. (She bought apples, oranges, and pears.)
- Subject consistency. Make sure written materials are consistently the third or second person. Don't jump from "the volunteer" to "you" in different paragraphs. Also be careful to have singular and plural nouns consistent and logical without jumping from "a girl" to "girls".
- Bullets. Make sure indentation style is consistent and logical throughout documents.
- Alphabetize lists if possible and appropriate.

PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY

Girls with disabilities not *disabled girls*
underserved girls not *disadvantaged girls*

SPELLING AND SPECIAL NAMES

a.k.a. = also known as

A-frame shelters

Advisor

alumna/ae (singular/plural for women)

alumnus/i (singular/plural for men)

alumnae/i (plural for women/men)

Ambassador = name for Girl Scouts in grades 11 and 12

Annual Meeting

at-risk girls

backpacking

Basic Leader

bridging ceremony

buddy burner

Bylaws (pertaining to those of the Council)

Cadette aMAZE (a journey)

Camporee

canceled, canceling, cancellation

council = a council

Council = this Council (standing for Girl Scouts of Connecticut)

council-wide

coursework

crisis-intervention organization

crisis-prevention organization

Daisies = more than one Girl Scout Daisy. Preferable term is Girl Scout Daisies, but
Daisies may be used if space is limited.

destinations (formerly STUDIO 2B *destinations*; before that Wider Opportunities or
Wider Ops)

Double Dutch

dropout

EarthPACT grant

E-Blast = weekly e-newsletter for SUMs, Troop Leaders, and other volunteers
eBudde = Little Brownie Baker tracking system for cookies
email
e-newsletter
fax
Financial Edge (finance software also referred to as FE)
fire ring
First Aider
First Aid/CPR
First Aid Training
first-come, first-served basis
flier (not flyer)
fly-up (the noun)
Focus Book
fundraising, fundraiser
GAP (Girl/Adult Partnership)
Gift of Caring (GS cookies bought and donated to military or to charity of troop's choice)
Girl Guides
Girl Scout Mission
Girl Scout Movement
Girl Scout Program
Girl Scout Retail Shop (e.g., North Haven Retail Shop)
Girl Scout Week
Girl Scouts' Own (see Scout's Own)
GirlSports
GIRLtopia = Girl Scout Senior Journey
Girlz R.U.L.E. (Respect, Understand, Leader, Empower) – identify fully at first mention
Go For It insert (Note capital F from GSUSA)
Governance Committee
grade level training (not age level anymore)
GSOFCCT (not GSofCT) = Girl Scouts of Connecticut
iMIS (registration software)
Independently Registered Girl = Juliette, a Girl Scout not affiliated with any troop/group
Internet
Issues for Girls (programs dealing with current issues that girls are facing)
Jennifer Smith Turner (no hyphen)
Journey – GSUSA term. A coordinated series of activities grouped around a single theme and delivered over a set period of time. Each journey is tied to some of Girl Scouts' 15 national outcomes for girls, as defined in the Girl Scout Leadership Model.
Journey Adult Guidebook
Juliette (Independently Registered Girl, not affiliated with any troop or group)
Juliette Gordon Low (Birthday is October 31)
Juliette Low World Friendship Fund (Girl Scouts contribute to the fund on Thinking Day by sending money to the Council, which sends a check to the GSUSA fund that makes foreign travel and educational experiences possible for interested girls through its contribution to the WAGGGS World Thinking Day Fund)
kaper chart = jobs list usually for troop meetings or camp
Leader (for a troop or group) vs. leader in general
Leader Appreciation Day (April 22)
legacy councils

Lady Baden-Powell (World Chief Guide Olave), founder of the Girl Guides
Linking Girls to the Land grant
Lord Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, founder of Boy Scouts
MEA = money-earning activity
MEAs = money-earning activities
Membership and Marketing Manager (MMM)
MetLife Foundation
National Convention
National Delegates (and Alternate National Delegates)
Nominating and Development Committee
nonexempt
non-Girl Scout
non-member
non-parent volunteers
nonprofit corporation
online
on-site course
Outdoor Program Centers (camps)
outdoors
out-of-doors
OutReach Troops
Pathways – GSUSA term. Ways girls choose to participate in Girl Scouting
(troops/groups, virtual, camps, special interest groups, etc.)
P.A.V.E. the Way (Project Anti-Violence Education), a national GS initiative funded by
the Corporation for National Community Service
porto potties
PowerPoint presentation
preteen
principal = head of a school
principle = fundamental doctrine, law, or truth, etc.
program age level training (now known by grade level training)
Program Box, Program in a Box
Program Center
Orientation
QSP = G.S. program through Reader’s Digest for girls to gain communication skills
while earning money for troop and council support; sometimes QSP/Be a Reader)
Querks
Raiser’s Edge (fund-development software, also referred to as RE)
R.E.T.R.Y. (Respect Everyone to Respect Yourself)
RMS (inventory and sales software used by Girl Scout Retail Shops)
Roberts Event, not Robert’s Event
Safety-Wise
Scouts’ Own (a.k.a. Girl Scout’s Own)
Service Center
Service Unit
self-confidence
self-esteem (both noun and adj.)
self-study (both noun and adj.)
shape UP! (award)
SmartMailer
statewide

STEM. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) (grant from National Science Foundation)
SU = Service Unit
SUM = Service Unit Manager
SWAPS = Special Whatchamacallits Affectionately Pinned Somewhere
Take Action Project
townwide
Thinking Day
Trainer (title)
Troop 50005
Troop Leader
troop/group
Try-It
underserved girls
uniquely ME! the Girl Scout/Unilever Self-Esteem Program
uniquely ME! the Girl Scout/Unilever Self-Esteem Program/¡Nadie Como Yo! (Spanish version)
VRG = Volunteer Resource Guide
voice mail
WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts)
WAGGGS World Thinking Day Fund
website
workday
World Thinking Day (February 22)
worldwide
year-round facilities
Zink the Zebra