

Cover Memo | 2024-2026 Editions

Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials

Date: March 25, 2024

This memo outlines updates to the 2024–2026 editions of Safety Activity Checkpoints (SAC) and Volunteer Essentials.

Going forward, GSUSA will review and release these two important volunteer resources every two years to ensure continuity and align content across documents.

Below is a breakdown of the significant updates made to each document along with the general updates specifically focused on inclusive language. However, we advise that you review the sections in their entirety for all details.

2022-2024 Edition | Safety Activity Checkpoints

Safety Activity Checkpoints provides the standard safety guidelines for GSUSA and council approved activities. In addition to providing volunteers with safety guidelines to ensure the physical and emotional safety of girls, information is also included throughout SACs to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusive thinking when planning Girl Scout activities so everyone with a desire to participate is included.

As with previous years, these national guidelines are developed in collaboration with the Girl Scout Council Safety Activity Checkpoints team and council risk committees, which include a balance of regional representation as well as in-depth expertise and experience with Girl Scout programs, safety, and risk management.

Safety Activity Checkpoints Updates

The following items detail the significant updates:

- **Adult Supervision (p.6).** Updated Volunteer to Youth ratios to include all youth present at Girl Scout activities.
- **Swimming and Swim Assessments (p.195).** Significant changes that apply to most aquatic activities.
- **Drugs and Alcohol (p.12).** Updated to include recreational drugs and substances.
- **Paddling (p.130 and various).** Significant updates including clarity on experts required for paddling sports.
- **Equity and Inclusion.** Expanded the inclusion section in the introduction as well as updates to the equity section of some checkpoints to enhance diversity and inclusive thinking when planning Girl Scout activities.

- **COVID-19 (p.8).** Specific language related to Covid was removed and replaced with generalized information on infection disease.
- **Various updates** for clarity and relevance throughout the document

2022-2024 Edition | Volunteer Essentials

Volunteer Essentials is designed to provide details and information to help volunteers begin their journey with Girl Scouts and connect them to the resources and support they need to get started.

The items below detail major updates to the 2024–2026 edition of Volunteer Essentials. However extensive changes were incorporated document-wide to provide for inclusive thinking and language.

- **GSLE (p.5).** entire section was enhanced.
- **Adult Supervision (p.18).** Adult to Youth ratio chart is updated to include all youth present at Girl Scout activities.
- **Tools and Resources (p.24).** Expanded to include Troop Year Plans, gsLearn
- **Take Advantage of Learning Opportunities (p.18).** Section expanded to include gsLearn, new leader onboarding courses.

General Updates: Both Documents

The following general updates were made to align Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials as ‘partner’ resources with a drive toward volunteer simplification.

- **Both documents reviewed** for grammar, continuity, and consistency.
- **All links tested** to ensure they are still active; broken links were reviewed and re-linked to the correct website/s or resource/s.
- **Layout and formatting changes were made throughout both documents** to standardize the overall look and feel of these resources.