



BUILDING MY COMMUNITY PATCH PROGRAM

Welcome to the Building My Community patch program from Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana!

The goal of this patch program is to bridge a relationship between your Girl Scout (or Girl Scouts) and your community. Open to girls of any age either in a troop or individually, this program aims to teach girls how to engage with their communities in a meaningful way.

Pro tip: If you're thinking of working on a highest award project in the future, this patch program is a great starting point!

Step 1: Connect with a community leader

1. Attend a community or town hall meeting (virtually or in-person) with your parent/caregiver or troop leader.

Pro Tip: Most towns will post their upcoming meetings on their official website! Choose a meeting that works with your schedule.

Review the Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge with an adult before participating in a virtual meeting or writing an email. Download the safety pledge at girlscoutsgcnwi.org/forms.

2. Write a letter or email to the town or city council and introduce yourself and the Girl Scout organization. In your letter, tell the council two things:
 1. Information about the Building My Community program
 2. Information on how to get into contact with you or your Girl Scout troop.

Keep their contact information in case you need to reach out again!
You can use our email template for ideas on formatting your letter.

Now that you have completed step one, you have earned the base Building My Community base patch! Visit girlscoutsgcnwi.org/mycommunity to let us know.



Step 2: Choose a service project to improve your community

Now that you have made the connection with your city council members, it is time to work together on one or more service projects to improve your community!

Take some time to talk to the city or town official you met at the meeting and brainstorm some ways you could serve your town. What ideas do they have for service projects that can be done in town?

Below are 5 categories in which projects fall. If your town doesn't have any ideas for you feel free to use our list of ideas to get you started. Complete one (1) or all five (5); it is up to you or your troop to decide!

Each project below has its own add-on patch, so be sure to keep track of your service projects and fill out our feedback form at girlscoutsgcnwi.org/mycommunity every time you complete a project. Once you submit a feedback form, we will send your patches directly to the address you provide.

Follow our COVID-19 guidelines when completing outdoor/in-person service projects.

Category	Project examples/ideas	Badge/Journey connections
STEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give computer lessons to a local retirement home • Show girls how to get into a STEM field • Educate students on what STEM is • Host a pinewood derby for your town (and maybe even a car building workshop) 	<p>Daisy: Between Earth and Sky, Think Like a Citizen Scientist</p> <p>Brownie: Bugs, Think Like a Citizen Scientist, Inventor, WOW</p> <p>Junior: Animal Habitats, Get Moving, Think Like a Citizen Scientist,</p> <p>Cadette: Breathe, Think Like a Citizen Scientist, Netiquette, Wood Worker</p> <p>Senior: Think Like a Citizen Scientist, Social Innovator, Website Designer</p> <p>Ambassador: Think Like a Citizen Scientist, Water</p>
Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a town mural • Build Buddy-Benches at a local park or school • Build/Create a Little Free Library • Beautify the community with fun posters in businesses promoting kindness • Educate others on your town's history by creating a book or photographic timeline 	<p>Daisy: Outdoor Art Maker</p> <p>Brownie: Outdoor Art Creator, Painting</p> <p>Junior: Drawing, Musician, Outdoor Art Explorer, Scribe</p> <p>Cadette: Outdoor Art Apprentice, Woodworker</p> <p>Senior: Novelist, Outdoor Art Expert, Room Makeover</p> <p>Ambassador: Outdoor Art Master, Photographer</p>



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Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant a community garden • Host a recycling drive/ electronics recycling day for your community • Landscape around a community building • Start a school recycling program • Host a park clean-up day 	<p>Daisy: Eco Learner, Outdoor journey, Brownie: Bugs, Eco Friend, Outdoor journey, Outdoor Adventurer Junior: Flowers, Gardener, Outdoor journey Cadette: Animal Helpers, Eco Trekker, Outdoor journey, Trees Senior: Adventurer, Outdoor journey, Sky, Voice for Animals, SOW What Journey Ambassador: Eco Advocate, Outdoor journey, Water</p>
Those Less Fortunate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time at a homeless shelter or food pantry • Educate the underserved on first aid basics • Create and donate blankets or toiletries to a local establishment • Educate those less fortunate on women’s health 	<p>Daisy: Good Neighbor, Respect Myself and Others petal, Make the World a Better Place petal, Friendly and Helpful petal Brownie: First Aid, A World of Girls Journey, Brownie Quest Journey, Making Friends, Snacks Junior: Agent of Change Journey, aMUSE Journey, First Aid, Simple Meals, Staying Fit Cadette: Babysitter, First Aid, Media Journey, aMAZE Journey, Science of Happiness Senior: GIRLtopia Journey, Mission: Sisterhood Journey, First Aid, Women’s Health Ambassador: Coaching, College Knowledge, Bliss Journey, Your Voice Your World Journey, Public Policy</p>
Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate your school’s library. Do they offer books that represent diverse cultures, abilities and ages? If not, advocate for change. • Look into your town’s historical society? Do they accurately represent all cultures and ancestors? • Stand up for what you believe in at your school or town. 	<p>Daisy: Democracy for Daisies Brownie: Celebrating Community, Democracy for Brownies Junior: Democracy for Juniors, Inside Government Cadette: Democracy for Cadettes Senior: Behind the Ballot, Democracy for Seniors Ambassador: Democracy for Ambassadors, Public Policy</p>



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Other (Girl choice)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer babysitting days for the community (be sure you are a certified babysitter) 	n/a

Pro Tip: Be sure to keep in contact with the community connection you made at the town meeting. They will be a great resource to work alongside and brainstorm what would be beneficial to the community. Remember, this patch program is meant to bring together Girl Scouts and their communities, so the more you work together, the better the outcome will be!

Building My Community Email Template

Hello *[Insert Title/Last Name]* (ex: Mayor Smith),

I am a *(girl/member/leader/volunteer)* with the Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana, and a resident of *(insert name of town)*. Our Girl Scout council has a “Building My Community” initiative that encourages civic engagement and volunteerism by exposing interested scouts and their families to local service opportunities. The first step for girls participating in this patch program is to attend a city/town meeting and introduce themselves to elected officials and, in turn, introduce this program to those officials. I look forward to attending a meeting soon. The second step for girls participating in this program is to partner with the city/town to host a service project that would benefit the community. There are many types of service projects we would love to host for the community on the topics of STEM, Arts, Environment, Those Less Fortunate, Social Justice, etc. We hope you welcome the opportunity for us to engage with the city/town. We look forward to meeting you and discussing opportunities soon. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
(insert your name and contact information – phone and email)

