

January 2026 Council Updates

girlscouts 
of greater chicago
and northwest
indiana



Service Unit Team

Meeting Schedule for MY26

A virtual SUM Meeting
will be held January 13
from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

February & May SUM Meetings
from 6:30-8:00 p.m.
(plus a social from 8:00-9:00 p.m.)

[Click here to join
the meeting](#)

(An email will also be
sent about a week
before the meeting.)

February “Voluntine’s Day”
meetings:

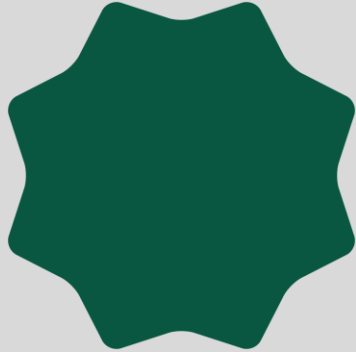
- February 10:
Columbus Park Refectory,
5701 W Jackson, Chicago
- February 11: Virtual
- February 12: Greene Wood

May meetings:

- May 14: Schererville
- May 18: Virtual
- May 19: Joliet

[Click here to RSVP for the February meeting](#)

ACTION ITEMS



- Happy New Year!
- Join us for the February Service Unit Team “Valentine’s Day” Meetings. RSVP via the link on slide 2.
- Claim your Service Unit Membership Incentive Funds! See **slide 5** for the details.
- See **slides 8-13** for updates on the Cookie Sale!
- Check out our new Girl Experience Guide. It has programs, outdoor programs, highest award learning opportunities...and so much more!
girlscout.info/GirlExperienceGuide

Announcements



Time to Claim Your Service Unit Funds!

2026 Service Unit Membership Incentive Check

Congratulations! Your Service Unit has earned **\$1 for every girl membership registered by December 31, 2025.**



Don't miss out—collect your funds and put them to great use supporting your troop and activities!

To request your funds, please complete [this form](#) by February 1, 2026.

You will receive a check mailed to the address you specify in the form.

To be eligible to receive your check, Service Units need to have a current 24-25 SU Annual Financial Report on file.

Checks will be mailed out in mid-April 2026.

Questions to
customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org
with the subject line: Membership Incentive



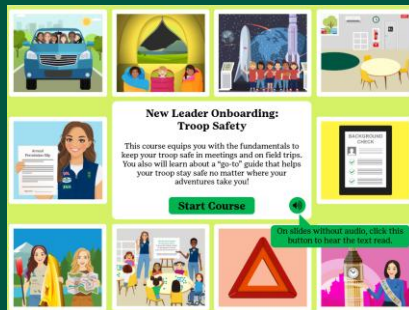
Badge Boost of the Month

Adventure awaits!

Badge Boost is our monthly training spotlight just for volunteers—each one designed to give you new skills, fresh ideas, and a boost of confidence to bring back to your troop.

This month we have a full **learning path** designed to get you ready for Girl Scout trips and travel. Whether you're planning a simple local outing or dreaming of adventures beyond, this path is packed with practical tips, safety know-hows, and creative ideas to make every journey memorable.

This Month's Badge Boost is Here



Safety in Girl Scouting



Field Trips and Travel



In this course, you will learn how field trips and travel in Girl Scouts are different from traveling with family, school, or other groups, and how to get your Girl Scouts started.

START COURSE

Head to the gsLearn library and search

430 Ready, Set, Travel!

Explore the new learning path and get inspired for your troop's next adventure!

Product Program



COOKIE DELIVERY

January 22 - February 1

*Council will update you with your
delivery time and location*

BRAVE, FIERCE & FUN—LET'S KEEP GOING!

COOKIE PROGRAM *PHASE TWO*

- Digital Cookie order taking continues
- Cookie Cupboards open and the Goal Getter Program begins (January 26)
- Booth Period begins (January 30)

**Locations and processes are
subject to change.**

Cookie Program Training Schedule

All Sessions are Virtual

<https://bit.ly/47Z6fvY>



eBudde Training: January 6 | 6:00 p.m.

<https://bit.ly/4ilyQFt>



eBudde Training
For NEW troop cookie managers
January 8 | 6:00 p.m.

<https://bit.ly/3XhqY9D>



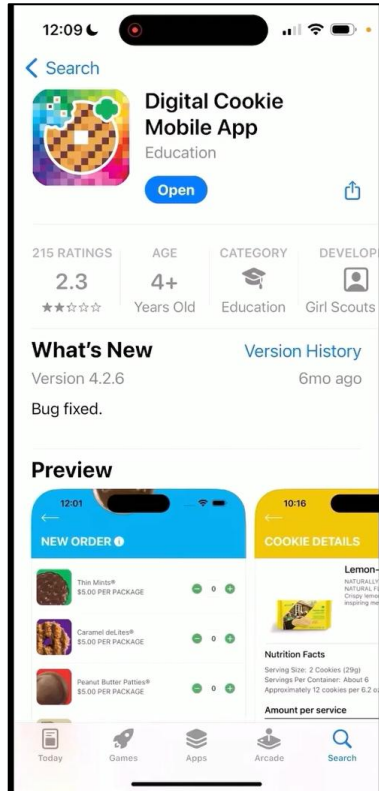
Open Mic Nights: January 13 & 14
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Cookie Bites and Cookie Chats:

Explore cookie program topics and get your questions answered.

Questions? Contact productprogram@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

Digital Cookie Mobile App



IOS App Store



Google Play Store



- Download a new version of the mobile app each year.
- Mobile app found in App Store or Google Play store.



Booth Sites

Council Booth Site Signup

Sunday, January 11 at 7PM CST
(2 additional booths)

Sunday, January 18 at 7PM CST
(unlimited booths)

Troop Booth (My Sales) Signup

Sunday, January 25 at 7PM CST

**Booth Site Weekend
begins January 30**



Need more cookies? Having a booth site?
Stop by a **Cookie Cupboard**

January 26 thru March 9

Visit bit.ly/GCNWICookieCupboard to learn more



Goal Getter Order Card
Thank you for helping me reach my goal!

My Goal _____ First Name _____ Troop # _____

girlscouts *We will deliver your donated cookies to _____

NAME (PRINT) _____ CONTACT INFO. (PHONE/E-MAIL/ADDRESS) _____

NUMBER OF PACKAGES ORDERED

COOKIE PACKAGES DONATED	Adventurefuls	Lemon-Ups	Trefoils	Do-it-dos	Samosas	Tugaboys	Thin Mints	Exploremores	Toffee-tastic	PRICE PER PACKAGE	TOTAL PACKAGES
AMOUNT DUE											
CHECK WHEN PAID											

Adventurefuls
Brownie-inspired cookies with chocolate shavings and orange
Approximately 15 cookies per 6.5 oz. pkg.

Lemon-Ups
Crispy lemon flavored cookies that include lemon zest
Approximately 12 cookies per 6.5 oz. pkg.

Trefoils
Classic shortbread cookies
Approximately 38 cookies per 6 oz. pkg.

Do-it-dos
Peanut butter sandwich cookies
Approximately 20 cookies per 6 oz. pkg.
Made with natural flavors

Samosas
Cherry and rich chocolate, coconut, and caramel
Approximately 15 cookies per 7.5 oz. pkg.

Tugaboys
Peanut butter puffies
Approximately 15 cookies per 6.5 oz. pkg.

Thin Mints
Thin, crisp, chocolate and minty cookies
Approximately 30 cookies per 6 oz. pkg.
Made with vegan ingredients

Exploremores
Small and deliciously flavored Swedish cookies with chocolate, marshmallow and almond flavored centers
Approximately 18 cookies per 7.5 oz. pkg.

Toffee-tastic
Rich, buttery toffee cookies
Approximately 14 cookies per 6.5 oz. pkg.
No artificial flavors

All of our cookies have:
NO High Fructose Corn Syrup
NO Paraffin (Non-GMO) Oils (PFOA)
Zero Gluten Free per Serving
BSP-Certified (Mass Balance) Palm Oil
Halel Certification

NSF
NSF Certified for Food Service

Little Bites
BAKERS
FORM G-4c

Goal Getter Program

January 26 thru March 9

5 Easy Steps (online - faster)

1. Visit **shop.girlscoutsgcnwi.org**
2. Select **GOAL GETTER COOKIES** from the main navigation.
 - You must log in before placing an order.
3. Complete the Goal Getter information page.
4. Enter the quantity for each cookie variety you wish to order and proceed to checkout.
5. Select the pickup location, date and time, and proceed to payment.

EARN THE PATCH!

Purchase 15+ packages of cookies in one Goal Getter transaction at one of our council cookie cupboards.

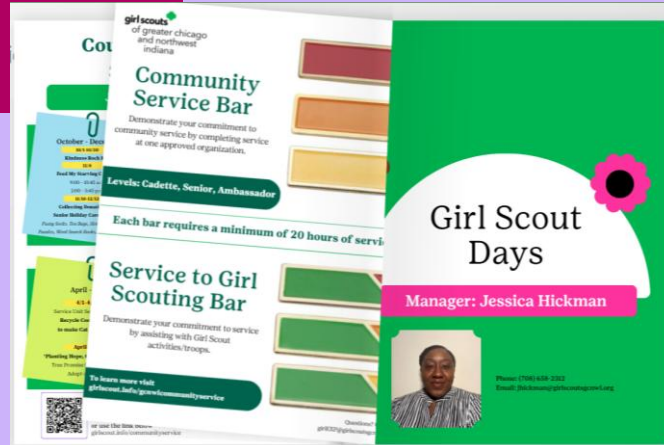


Girl Experience

Check out the Girl Experience Guide!

Find all program fliers, all in one place! Flip through the Girl Experience Guide to discover exciting, hands-on experiences. The guide will be updated regularly, bookmark the link for easy access.

To view it, scan the QR code or visit:
girlscout.info/GirlExperienceGuide



Older Girl Listening Sessions

Girl Scouts in grades 8-12 are invited to our Older Girl listening sessions!

These sessions will give participants space to have an open conversation about what they want to see from council. During the conversation, we'll have pizza and patches to personalize a tote bag or an item of your choice!



Schererville Gathering Place
705-A US-41, Schererville, IN 46375
Saturday, January 10
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.
girlscout.info/OlderGirlListeningSV

Beverly Branch Public Library
1962 W 95th St, Chicago, IL 60643
Sunday, February 8
Time: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
girlscout.info/OlderGirlListeningBeverly



Camp Greene Wood Gathering Place
3155 71st St, Naperville, IL 60540
Sunday, February 1
Time: 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
girlscout.info/OlderGirlListeningGW

Vernon Hills Gathering Place
650 N Lakeview Pkwy Vernon Hills, IL
Sunday March 1
Time: 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
girlscout.info/OlderGirlListeningVH



For Ambassador Girl Scouts

The Pinnacle Award honors Ambassador Girl Scouts (grades 11-12) who have demonstrated outstanding leadership through their Girl Scout experience.



To qualify for this GCNWI award, Girl Scout Ambassadors must document their experiences by earning at least seven leadership points, which can be achieved through a combination of Girl Scout and other extracurricular experiences.

**Applications for the 2025 Pinnacle Award
are open
January 1 – May 31, 2026**

For a full list of ways to earn leadership points
and to apply visit: bit.ly/PinnacleGCNWI

Questions? Email Alaina at agreene@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

Girl Scout Days

4 Seasons Horse Stable Crown Point, Indiana

Saturday, March 7, 2026

3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Cost \$30 (includes patch for Girl Scouts)



girlscout.info/4seasonshorstable

STEM on Wheels

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Location: MLK Skating Rink (Chicago, IL)

8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Girl Scout Cost \$30

(includes STEM lesson, patch, skating, pizza & drink)

Non Girl Scout Adult Cost \$25

(includes skating, pizza & drink)



girlscout.info/STEMonwheels





Project Law Track

If you enjoy tackling challenges and standing up for what you believe in, using your voice, or if you're simply curious about the life of a lawyer, then Project Law is for you!

Project Law Track Chicago: February 28, 2026

Cost: \$35, Time: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Apply today at: girlscout.info/PLTinfo

Registration link will be provided after a short interview

Project Law Track DuPage: March 14, 2026

Cost: \$30, Time: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Register at girlscout.info/ProjectLawDupage

**Whitney M. Young
Branch Library**



Date: March 21, 2026
Time: 10:30-12:00 a.m.
Address: 415 E 79th St,
Chicago, IL 60619

girlscout.info/IMPACTSelfDefenseWY

Camp Greene Wood



Date: April 11, 2026
Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Address: 650 N
Lakeview Pkwy, Vernon
Hills IL 60061

girlscout.info/IMPACTSelfDefenseGW

Vernon Hills



Date: April 26, 2026
Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Address: 3155 71st St,
Naperville, IL 60540

girlscout.info/IMPACTSelfDefenseVH

Personal Safety Tools Course with Impact Self Defense

Join us for a Personal Safety Tools Course with IMPACT Self Defense! This course will equip participants with the necessary tools to protect themselves, and to step up when others need support.

Cost: \$40*

Register using the QR codes/links
for your desired location!



**Financial Assistance is available*

True North Leadership to Awards (Grades 4-12)



Scan the QR code or visit
<https://girlscout.info/awards>

The True North award is about discovering what matters to you and staying true to yourself.

Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors can earn most of the True North Award, followed by highest awards training, at a local Gathering Place:

Greene Wood Gathering Place
January 10, 2026
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Vernon Hills Gathering Place
February 7, 2026
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Cost: \$25



Bronze Award Leader Training

Join us for a training for troop leaders, to help you confidently guide Girl Scouts through their FIRST Highest Award.

We'll go over each step, project inspiration, and new prerequisites.

Participants will be mailed their guidelines, plus other helpful resources for you and your Girl Scouts!

Dates: January 20 or April 21

Time: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual - meeting link will be emailed to participants.

Cost: \$8



January Registration Link:
girlscout.info/JanBronzeTraining



April Registration Link:
girlscout.info/AprilBronzeTraining

Got a vision for a better world?

Join us for our **Highest Award** workshops to learn everything you need to know to be ready to get started on your **Silver or Gold Award**.



Upcoming Silver Award Workshops:
February 19



Upcoming Gold Award Workshop:
January 15

All workshops run from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
(Link provided after registration)

Cost: \$8

Scan the QR code or register at
girlscout.info/awards



Supporting volunteers, check out the new training in gsLearn:
"GSUSA How to Support a Gold Award Girl Scout"

GIRL SCOUT DAY

DuSable Black History Museum

740 E 56th Place, Chicago, IL

Sunday, February 22, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Open to troops, families, and friends
Scan QR code or visit girlscout.info/travel



Discover the stories, achievements,
and rich cultural heritage of African
Americans through hands-on
exhibits and interactive experiences
designed to inspire curiosity and
courage.

Cost: Free museum admission!

Optional \$15.00 includes an
exclusive, custom T-shirt &
matching Black History patch

Questions? GSTravel@GirlScoutsgcnwi.org



GIRL SCOUT TRAVEL

Savannah, Georgia Takeover!

August 3–August 7, 2026



- Round-trip private charter bus (Chicago ⇌ Savannah)
- Four-night hotel stay + daily breakfast
- Local transportation in Savannah
- Tours of Juliette Gordon Low's birthplace and first Girl Scout HQ
- Tybee Island visit + dolphin cruise
- Open to troops, individually registered members, leaders, and families

Secure your spot today!

Deposit of \$200

per room.

Payment plans available



girlscout.info/SavannahTakeover26



Summer Camp Kickoff | January 31, 2026

Help us celebrate the launch of Summer Camp 2026!

Join us for our Summer Camp Kickoff and enjoy a delicious s'more, talk to the camp staff, and ask any questions you have about the upcoming summer camp options.

Summer Camp registrations go live on February 2, 2026 at 6:00 a.m.

Register by clicking a location below:

[Camp Butternut Springs](#)

for information about Camp Butternut Springs

[Vernon Hills Gathering Place](#)

for information about Camp Juniper Knoll

[Camp Greene Wood](#)

for information about Camp Greene Wood



Camp
Butternut
Springs



Camp Juniper Knoll/
Vernon Hills
Gathering Place



Camp
Greene
Wood



Get Outdoors Challenge – Winter

February 7, 2026 at Camp Palos



Join us for an exciting Winter Outdoor Challenge designed specifically for Girl Scouts and families!

Explore camp during winter! Make your very own snow ice cream to enjoy with some warm hot cocoa. Join in the fun and play some winter-themed games. Get crafty with some winter art and even make your own snow.

Sign-Up:

[Morning](#)



[Afternoon](#)





NOW HIRING: Summer Camp Staff

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago & Northwest Indiana is hiring for summer camp staff at Camp Butternut Springs (Valparaiso, Indiana), Camp Greene Wood (Woodridge, Illinois), and Camp Juniper Knoll (East Troy, Wisconsin). A variety of jobs and internships are available at each camp. For more information and job applications, check out the link below!



Scan QR code or [click here](#) to visit our Summer Camp Employment page

Customer Care and Retail



BRAND NEW!

**Council-own Certified Cookie Seller Sweatshirt.
ORDER TODAY!**

**NOW
OPEN!**

Build-A-Bear
Workshop
at our
Schererville
Shop!



shop.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/contact-us/

TROOP 76072

1234567890

1234567890

1234567890

Booth Essentials



<https://girlscout.info/cookieseason>

December 23 - Jan 31



**SEMI-ANNUAL
CLEARANCE SALE**

**Extra
20% off!**

<https://girlscout.info/shopclearance>





2026 Booth in a Bag!

\$35



www.girlscout.info/cookieseason

Belonging and Culture

Building Safety, Trust, & Support in our Communities

What You'll Learn

- How immigration status impacts youth, families, & communities
- Practical ways to create safe, inclusive spaces
- Resources and supports available for our communities

[Click here to register!](#)

Community Care in Uncertain Times

girl scouts
of greater chicago
and northwest
indiana

Latino
POLICY FORUM

Monday, January 12
7:00 p.m.

Building Safety, Trust, and Support in Our Communities.

Every child and family deserves to feel welcome, safe, and valued regardless of their actual or perceived immigration status. The goal of this workshop is to empower you with tools and resources to support yourself, your loved ones, and community during these uncertain times.

Volunteer
Workshop

The Latino Policy Forum works to improve education outcomes, advocate for affordable housing, promote just immigration policies, and strengthen community leadership.



Scan QR code to register.



Nina Sedeño is the Senior Immigration Policy Analyst for the Latino Policy Forum. As part of the Civic Engagement team, Nina builds and maintains relationships with community partners, government agencies, elected officials, and other stakeholders to advocate for just immigration policies. Nina earned her Master's of Public Policy from the University of Chicago Harris School and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Northwestern University.

Save the Date: Social Inclusion Week 2026

THE LONG TABLE



ROOM FOR EVERY VOICE

Social Inclusion Week will
kick-off in February 2026.

Experiences will include:

- Community Service
- Food & Culinary Experience
- Arts, Music, & Expression

Questions?

Contact: Veronica Aguiñaga, Director of Belonging and Culture
vaguinaga@Girlscoutsgcnwi.org

We're for EVERY Girl Scout!

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana welcomes the participation of all youth and adults.

Our council strives to ensure that our activities are accessible to everyone, regardless of ability.

Looking for accessible supports?

[Click this link to compete the request form](#)

ALL ABILITIES Patch Program

Completing this patch program will strengthen the following skills:



- Recognizing the abilities of others
- Embracing one another and appreciating our individual talents
- Embodying the fundamental human right to belong

Click here or visit
bit.ly/AllAbilitiesPatchProgramRequest
to request a copy of the All Abilities Patch Program

Questions? Email: everygirl@girlscoutsgcnwi.org



Membership



Annual Financial Report (AFR)

- Now that the Fall Product Sale is complete, it's a great time to remember that **AFRs are due by July 30.**
- You can find training in **gsLearn** under the **430: Managing Troop Finances** course. The **Detailed Report** is located under the **Additional References** tab.
- **Pro tip:** Update your Detailed Report **monthly** to stay on top of your finances and avoid the summer rush!



2025-26
Membership
Girl Goals

New 10,701
Renew 22,799
Total 33,500

What is our girl membership goal status?

As of December 3, 2025

New Girls = 6,441 *-3.4% to last year*
Council ranks #2 nationally

Renewed Girls = 21,054 *-3.5% to last year*
Council ranks #4 nationally

Total Girls = 27,076 *-3.5% to last year*
Council ranks #3 nationally

2025-26
Membership
Adult Goals

New 5,184
Renew 11,816
Total 17,000

How are we doing with our
adult membership?

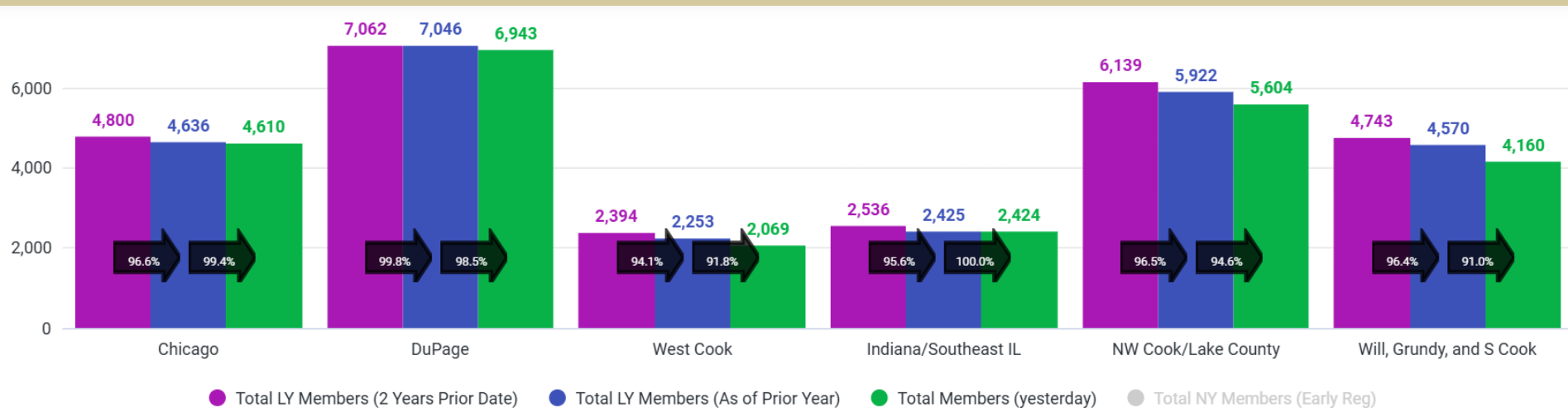
As of December 3, 2025

New Adults = 2,428 *0.2% to last year*
Council ranks #3 nationally

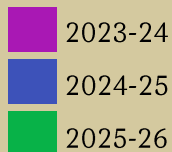
Renewed Adults = 12,543 *0.5% to last year*
Council ranks #5 nationally

Total Adults = 14,971 *0.5% to last year*
Council ranks #5 nationally

Total Girls Year over Year by Region



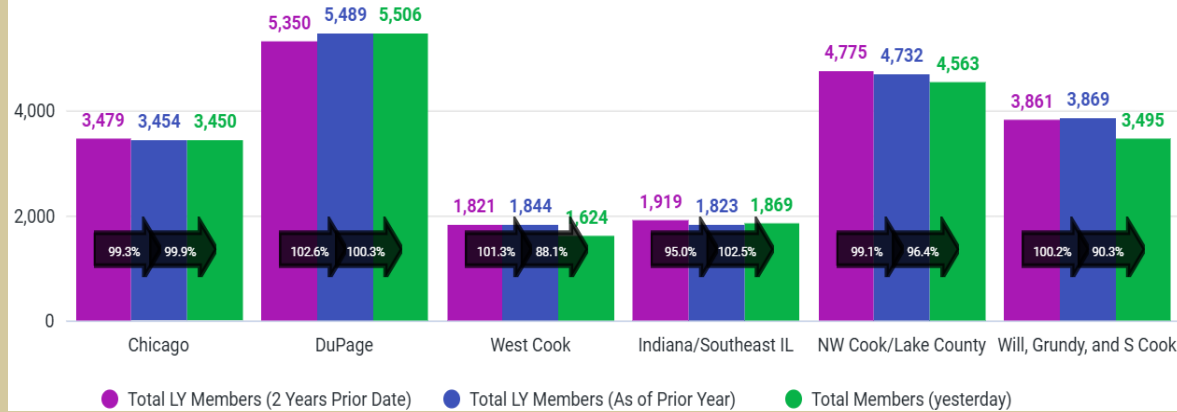
Color Key:



As of December 3, 2025

Girls Year over Year by Region

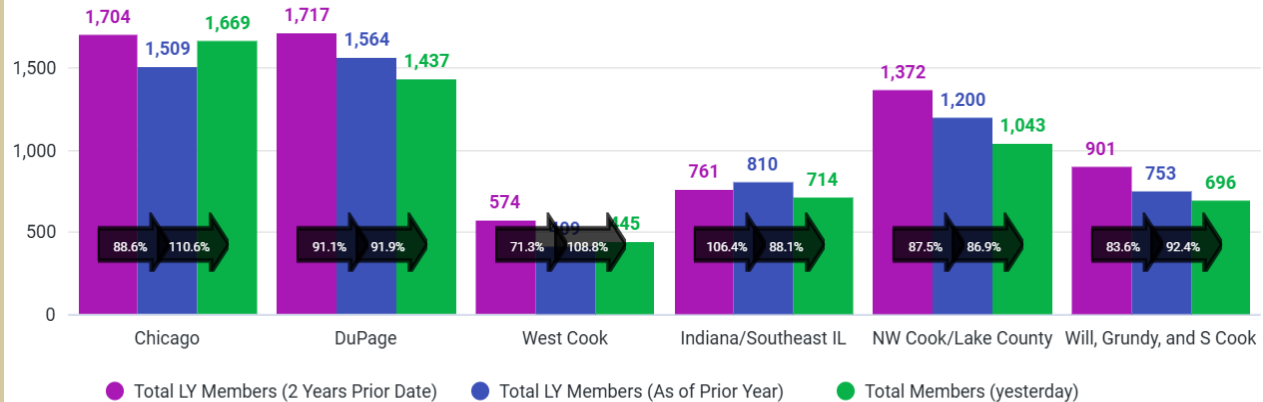
Renewed Girls YoY View by Region ⓘ



Color Key:



New Girls YoY View by Region ⓘ



As of December 3, 2025

Invite a Friend to Join the Fun!

Did you know that
you can get fun patch when you
invite a friend to join Girl Scouts?

All new Girl Scouts in grades K-12 who
refer a friend to join Girl Scouts are
eligible to receive:

- A lily pad friend patch...and
- One baby frog patch for every friend
you bring!

[Learn more here](#)



There is always room for MORE Girl Scouts!

- Encourage troops to make sure all their spots are filled
- Creating new troops in your communities

To learn more about the areas of opportunity in your community, contact your Community Specialist or email us at customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

If you're a returning volunteer recruiting girls in your community, visit GirlScoutsGCNWI.org/recruitment to access flyers and other recruitment materials.



A large, solid purple rounded rectangle with a light gray background. The text is centered within the purple shape.

Girl Scout Democratic Process

Registration
Now Open!



GIRL SCOUTS UNITE

July 23-25, 2026 | Washington, DC



Once every three years, Girl Scouts from across the movement gather for the Girl Scout convention and you can join them!

Want to learn more?

Visit the [GSUSA Convention Page](#). Tickets and hotel room blocks are now available.

General questions about the convention experience?
Email Alaina Greene at agreene@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

Why are District Delegates important?

District Delegates – along with our National Delegates and our Board of Directors – make up the voting body for our council. In other words, District Delegates have a direct impact on decision making for our council!

Learn more by visiting our [Democratic Process](#) page

Here are the details:

- Each Service Unit is allowed to select 2 District Delegates
- Delegates may be Adult Members or Girl Scouts who are at least 14 years of age at the time of selection
- Delegates typically attend 5-9 virtual meetings a year and our Annual Meeting (which typically happens in April)

Interested? Contact your Service Unit Manager to see if your Service Unit is looking for a District Delegate.

SUMs may use the email below to inform us of any selections.

Questions? Email democraticprocess@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

Become a District Delegate!



Volunteer Experience



Girl Scout Enthusiast

Don P.
Ridge Elementary
Plainfield, IL



Do you know an amazing Community Partner who supports Girl Scouting?

Did you know we have two awards to recognize these amazing supporters?

The Girl Scout Enthusiast Award
honors community partners at the local
(troop or service unit) level.

The Girl Scout Hero Award
honors community partners at the
council or movement level.

Nominations are accepted year-round.

Learn more and nominate someone
today by visiting

www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/recognition

Starting this fall,
all registered Girl
Scout adults will be
required to
complete our
**Volunteer Basics
Training.**

**This learning path
includes five
courses:**

- Delivering Inclusive Program
- Mental Wellness 101
- New Leader Onboarding: Troop Safety
- Troop Safety Update
- Girl Scouts Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention



Why was this new learning path created?

This new training is an opportunity for all adults who register with us to learn about the Girl Scout mission, culture, and how we keep Girl Scouts safe.

Having this new training in place for everyone also minimizes the amount of training volunteers will need to take for other roles as they grow with the organization.

**All five courses (combined) will take about 2 hours to complete.
They do not need to be completed all at once.**

Learn more about our adult training at

<https://www.girlscoutsgcnwi.org/en/members/for-volunteers/volunteer-resources/volunteer-training.html>



Troop and Volunteer Resources



Use the **Troop Year Planner**
to plan an amazing Girl Scout year!

Visit bit.ly/TroopYearPlan to learn more





Council programs, camp, outdoor programs, and leadership training:

<https://girlscout.info/gcnwiregistration>

How to use your Cookie Dough voucher:

Use this link <https://girlscout.info/useCDandNB> to request that Cookie Dough be applied to your account on our registration site. Follow the instructions on the form and we will apply the requested amount towards your registration.

If you have any questions, contact
customercare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org

**Using Cookie Dough, Nutty Bucks, or a Gift Card
for council programs, camp, outdoor programs, and leadership training,
on our registration site.**

Are you looking for a no-cost meeting space for your Service Unit or troop?

Look no further.
You can reserve space at one of
our Gathering Places.



Scan the QR code or
[click here to book meeting space](https://fs24.formsite.com/gsgcnwi2/jgrefeuz7u/index)
fs24.formsite.com/gsgcnwi2/jgrefeuz7u/index



Need Help?!

Whether you need help with a parent meeting or recruiting to fill your troop, we are here to help.

Contact Girl Scouts by phone or email to get connected to someone who can assist you!

Phone:

855-456-8347

Email:

CustomerCare@girlscoutsgcnwi.org