

# How to Recruit Parent Volunteers for Your Troop

Tried and true ways to get parents to jump on board.



## 1. Set an expectation that everyone volunteers and we are in this together.

Your first opportunity to let parents know you need their help is when new members join the group. Always welcome each new member and their family at the girls' first troop meeting. Introduce key members of your troop leadership and let parents know that they will be asked to volunteer for at least one thing. Have a list available and a brief description of what responsibilities are involved. This way parents are free to select what interests them.

A few jobs you might need filled in your troop are:

- Troop Money Manager
- Troop Cookie Manager
- Troop Nut Manager (Fall Product)
- CPR/FA Certified – Trips and Camping
- Carpool Drivers
- Event Planning
- Communications Helper
- Add areas where you need help!

## 2. Use a family talent survey and require every family to fill one out.

Create a survey where parents are asked about their own Scouting background as well as what talents and tasks they may be able to help with. From this you can learn a lot about who's on your team! You will quickly discover if you have parents with camping gear and the skills to go with it. You might also learn that you have parents who are CPR certified and who might have financial knowledge. Go through your roster and make sure every parent has responded and remind non-responders that this is one way you can get to know them and learn how they all can support the troop.

## 3. Plan a family event.

When you host a fun family event, you'll quickly learn a lot about the parents in your troop. Some love to be in front of kids, some have great teaching skills, while others are terrified and don't know what to do. Make sure to have a mix of activities, games and teambuilding activities that everyone participates in with their girls.

## 4. Ask parents personally for their help.

In the age of social media and email, avoid the mistake of asking for volunteers by a broadcast email. That approach almost never works and will only cause you frustration. Instead address parents in a small group or in a one-on-one conversation. Speak with a positive tone. Campouts, BBQs and events that are geared to be "mixers" are a perfect time to ask because parents tend to be relaxed and not stressed about other obligations. Don't feel like you have to fill every role by the end of your first month. Some people may need to get to know you and your group before they step up.

## 5. Once they say yes, follow up and set them up for success.

As soon as you can, contact the volunteer to give them all the information they need to be successful. Let them know if there is training specific to their position. You can check in *Volunteer Essentials* or on line at [girlscouts-swtx.org](http://girlscouts-swtx.org) to find the information for all troop volunteer roles. Check back with your new volunteers to see if they are completing the requirements and ask how you can help them.

## 6. Recognize the volunteer right away.

Once someone says they will help, thank them. Write a personal note and hand it to them at the next meeting. Also at the next meeting in front of other parents and girls, announce the new volunteer's role. Then ask everyone to thank him or her for stepping up and helping support the troop. This makes the new volunteer feel great about volunteering and makes it a bit tougher to back out! It also lets the girls know they have a team supporting their Girl Scout experience throughout the year!

Follow these tips and keep a positive attitude and you'll quickly learn that there are many parents that want to be a part of their girl's Girl Scout journey.

**Remember that all adults participating or present at Girl Scout troop/group meetings are required to have a current Girl Scout membership and an approved background check screening on file with Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas.**