

# PROMOTING HARMONY & “SISTERLINESS”



Girls this age will often establish cliques within the troop that can lead to exclusion of some girls and hurt feelings. Here are some ways to build ‘sisterliness’ in your troop:

- ♥ Badge work (Healthy Relationships; Being My Best) Include open discussion on how a girl might feel if everyone else is paired up for an activity and she hasn't been selected and what other girls can do to prevent this from happening.
- ♥ Open discussion within the troop on Girl Scout principles (such as being a sister to every other Girl Scout) as applied to one another.
- ♥ One-to-one discussion with individual girls and their parents/guardians (if situations can't be resolved within the troop or between leaders and girls.)
- ♥ Rotating patrol members or work group members.

- ♥ Changing buddies frequently on long outings or overnights ("Now buddy up with someone new!")
- ♥ Using various methods to group girls for carpools, small group activities, buddies, etc. Choose by using the splitter activities in the New Leader Basics training booklet, alphabetical first names or last names, birth dates, shoe size, drawing straws, etc. so that different girls end up together.
- ♥ Choosing secret sisters or secret pals. Draw names at the beginning of the year. Ask the girls to be a special friend to that person by complimenting her, sitting by her, choosing her as their helper, etc. Have the girls brainstorm other ways to make their Girl Scout sister feel special. Possibly, have a small gift exchange with inexpensive, preferably handmade gifts exchanged on Girl Scout holidays such as Founder's Day (Juliette Low's October 31

birthday) or the Girl Scout birthday on March 31 to reveal secret sisters - or you could extend through the entire year.

- ♥ Specific reinforcement by leaders of desired behavior ("I'm glad to see that Susan and Maria have teamed up today!"; "Shawna, thanks for helping Sam with her bracelet!")
- ♥ Inviting two high school aged Girl Scouts to come and talk to girls about their lasting friendships within Girl Scouts even though their GS friends may go to different schools or they may not be best friends at school (this is especially effective if the visiting girls have been together since Daisies or Brownies!)