

What are the 2017 Girl Scouts Voices Count Surveys?

Girl Scout Voices Count is a national survey of girls, parents and troop volunteers that is conducted each year by the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI), a group of researchers who work at GSUSA. At Girl Scouts, we care about your experience, good or bad, and we want to hear from you! The survey results help GSUSA and local councils understand how to make Girl Scouts the best it can be.

When is the survey being sent out?

The first survey email invitations will be sent out on Monday, April 3. The survey will close on April 30. GSRI will be sending out reminder emails on April 12, 20 and 28.

Who will invitations come from? Is it the same for girls and adults? Should I check my spam folder?

The survey invitations will come from Qualtrics, the online software GSRI uses for surveys. Invitations for girls will be sent to their parent's email address. It may get caught by your spam filter, so be sure to check your spam folder if you can't find the email!

The **sender name** on the email will say "Girl Scouts of the USA." And the reply-to email address will be noreply@qemai server.com. The **subject line** will differ for each customer group and for each reminder; however, every subject line will begin with either "Girl Survey," "Parent Survey," or "Volunteer Survey."

Will I receive an invitation to take a survey?

If you are a **registered girl member** – Yes! Parents will receive a unique invitation for each child who is a Girl Scout. The headers for the surveys will designate which survey it is (e.g., "Girl Survey: Girl Scouts wants to hear from your girl!" or "Parent Survey: Girl Scouts wants your opinions! Share your voice and be entered to win!"). Within the body of the email, the girl participant's name will be listed, to help you identify who should be taking each survey.

If you are an **adult** who is a parent and/or troop leader - Maybe! This year the survey process is designed to have a 50% sample of adults – that means that only 50% of each survey group at our council –parents and troop leaders – will receive a survey invitation. The sample selection was randomly generated from a list of parents and troop leaders who have NOT opted out of receiving emails from GSUSA.

Because the adult surveys have a 50% random sample some adults will receive:

- an invitation for girl(s) only but *not* them OR
- invitations for *both* them and their girl(s)

My sister/mom/caregiver/daughter received a survey invitation, but I didn't – what's up with that?

If you are a **girl** who wants to complete a survey, ask your parents to check their email to see if they received an invitation for you. If not, have them check their spam folder. If that doesn't work, ask your parents to contact GSRI at GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org and they can help with sending a survey invitation to your parents.

If you are an **adult** who wants to complete a survey, you can check with GSRI at GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org to see if you were chosen for the sample – they can tell you if you should have received one and will make sure they have a correct email address for you. If you were **not**

chosen for the sample and would like to participate in upcoming council opportunities to share your thoughts about Girl Scouts, you can let us know (this might be a survey, but could also be an interview or focus group or some other form of data collection).

GSRI will **not** be sending survey invitations to adults who are **not** troop leaders or **not** parents of a girl who is currently a Girl Scout in April. However, they are **planning to survey other types of adults in May** and will be sharing information with councils soon about how to participate. If you are in this group of adults (not currently a parent of a current Girl Scout nor a current troop leader) and would like to participate in upcoming opportunities to share your thoughts about Girl Scouts, you can let us know.

In the past girls had to sign up in some kind of panel thing before they could take a survey. Is that happening again this year?

No! Which makes everything much easier! GSRI revised the process through which they recruit girls for the survey. Basically, they will be sending parents of girls 13 years old and younger an email asking them to give consent for their girl to take the survey. There will be a few links in their email to choose from:

(a) Yes, and my girl is available to take the survey now—this link will directly open the girl survey;

(b) No – this link will opt them out of this survey

Younger girls, especially Daisies and Brownies, will most likely need some adult help to fill out a survey.

How much time does it take to complete a survey?

It will take about 15 minutes to complete a survey, depending on how much you choose to write in answering open ended questions.

What kinds of questions are in the survey?

Each survey group – girls, parents, troop leaders – will receive slightly different questions. Everyone will be asked about how satisfied they are with their Girl Scout experience and how likely they are to stay in Girl Scouts in the coming year. Other questions include things like: what is unique and special about Girl Scouts, reasons for staying in or leaving Girl Scouts, the kinds of activities girls do in Girl Scouts, relationships with other girls and with adults in Girl Scouts, the support parents and troop leaders receive from GSUSA and the council, the benefits of being a troop leader and why it is important to participate in Girl Scouts. This year surveys will also measure the girl outcomes that were revised in 2016.

Who will be able to see my answers?

Your survey answers are used for research purposes only, and they are private (a girl's troop leaders won't see them). You will never be personally identified in any publication, written or spoken. The results of this survey are only for the use of your council and Girl Scouts of the USA. You will not receive any sales or marketing contact as a result of your participation.

Are there any special rewards being offered for taking the survey?

There are rewards (these are called incentives in social science research) being offered to encourage and thank people for taking the survey:

- National incentives: GSRI is offering incentives. Among each customer group (girls, parents, troop volunteers), survey respondents will get a chance to win one of twenty \$50 gift cards.

I'm trying to take the survey and having technical problems – what should I do? What a bummer! If you're having a problem, email GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org. Because this is a national survey, GSSA is not able to fix technical problems directly. GSRI should reply within 24-48 hours.

What if I have questions or want more information about the survey?

For more information about the survey, email GSVoicesCount@girlscouts.org. Because this is a national survey, GSSA is not able to send out survey invitations or fix technical problems.

Is it hard for my younger girl to complete the survey since she is still learning to read and type. Why are younger girls given such hard surveys?

This is a tricky issue! Researchers know that it is difficult for some younger girls to take surveys but it is so important to hear from girls of **all** ages that they think it is better to ask younger girls to complete surveys with some technical help from adults so that their voices are represented in the results. The council does other types of in person data collection with younger girls that is easier for them to participate in, but we can't reach nearly as many girls that way. We really appreciate the time and energy younger girls and their caregivers put into completing surveys.

So this is a national survey, not a council survey. Does the council also send out surveys? Sometimes. The council also conducts surveys, often at in person events or programs for girls and adults. We also send out specialized online surveys for specific things, like the cookie sale, travel, feedback from Service Unit volunteers and more. This varies from year to year.

Why is it important for me to take the survey? How will survey results be used?

It is very important for the council and GSUSA to hear directly from girls and adults about what is happening (or not!) for them in Girl Scouts. The survey is a great way to collect the same kinds of information and feedback from a large group across councils. This allows us to see and try to understand big trends and differences between groups, regions, councils, etc. Councils and GSUSA use survey results to improve our programs and customer service. We really want to know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about your Girl Scout experience – good and bad. If you had a difficult time this year in Girl Scouts and receive a survey invitation, please let us know so that we can make changes and do better.

What other kinds of research projects does Girl Scouts do? Can I read about any of them?

The Girl Scout Research Institute does all kinds of cool research about girls, Girl Scouts and other topics, including: the benefits of Girl Scouts for girls and alumnae, Girl Scout outdoor experiences, girls/Girl Scouts and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), the Gold Awards, the cookie sale and entrepreneurship, trends in girls' well-being, Girl Scouts and academic success and more! You can read more about GSRI and read some of their reports here: <http://www.girlscouts.org/en/about-girl-scouts/research.html>.