

# Guidance for Girl Scouts Engaging with Project Advisors

At Girl Scouts, there is nothing we take more seriously than the safety and well-being of our Girl Scouts. The structure of the national Highest Awards is designed to give Girl Scouts the framework and platform to address a community need and expand their network in appropriate ways for each respective grade level.

As part of each of the Highest Awards, Girl Scouts may identify, connect with, and request support from a project advisor. A project advisor is an adult who has some level of knowledge, demonstrated skills, expertise, or access to resources that can help Girl Scouts with their Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award projects. A project advisor is optional for the Bronze and Silver Award and required for the Gold Award.

The Highest Awards structure encourages Girl Scouts to expand their network beyond their familiar circles, learn to describe their passions and plans to others, and grow their networks. To help Girl Scout members do so safely, please consider the following guidance and recommendations:

## **Silver Award (Cadette Girl Scouts):**

- It's highly recommended that all project advisors successfully pass a criminal background check performed by the Girl Scout Council or other credible entity, such as a public school system.
- At least one registered background-checked adult Girl Scout volunteer should be present at all in-person meetings between Girl Scouts and project advisors.
- Meetings among Girl Scouts and project advisors should take place in open public spaces (such as libraries, parks, or cafés); meetings should not be held in private homes.
- Parents/legal guardians and troop leaders are recommended to help, guide, and closely support Cadette Girl Scouts as they consider who to approach to become a project advisor. They are also recommended to join any phone calls and be included (i.e. CC'd) on written and electronic communication.
- We recommend that a separate and dedicated email is created and used with project advisors or any other adult project team members, and that one designated adult troop volunteer receives emails to eliminate direct communication with Girl Scouts. An example email address is [troop12345highawardproject@example.com](mailto:troop12345highawardproject@example.com). This is a versatile address that can be used for Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award projects! We recommend retiring the email address once the projects are complete.
- There should be no exchange of personal phone numbers belonging to Girl Scouts between the project advisor and Girl Scout members. We recommend the project advisor be provided with a phone number for one designated adult troop volunteer; all other communication should be conducted in person, virtually (e.g., Zoom), or via email.

