



2012-13 Impact Report



Devin, Girl Scout Daisy

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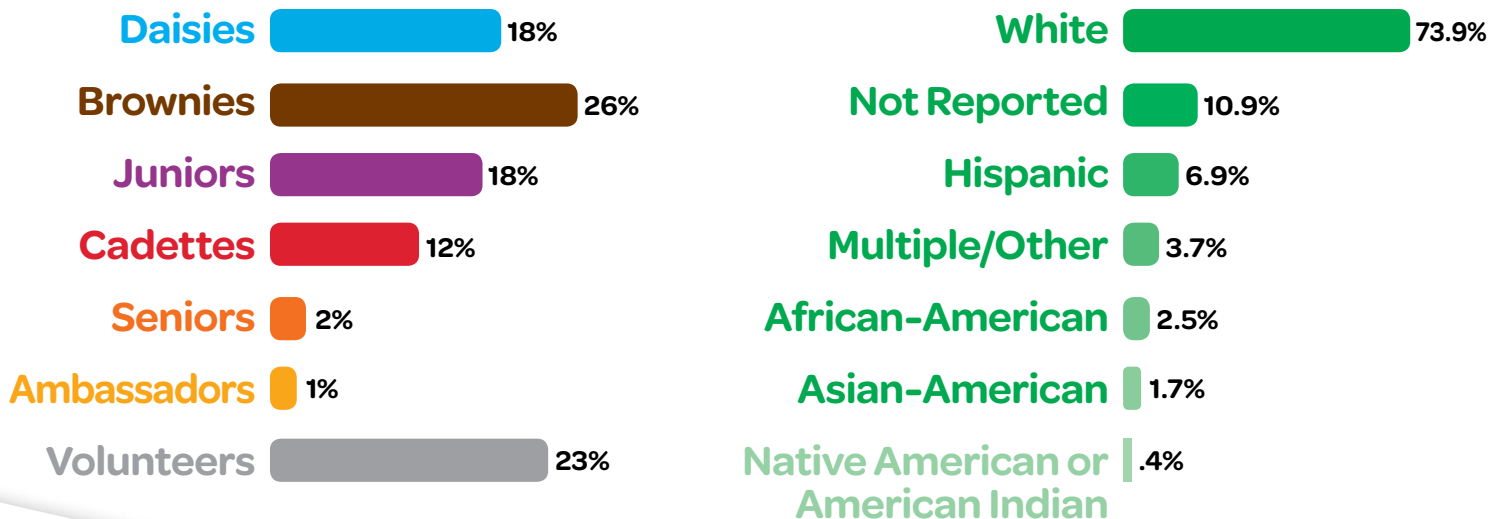
“I love my troop. They are the best friends ever!”

Girl Scout Brownie

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois (GSNI), is dedicated to delivering meaningful, high-quality programming throughout all pathways of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Every year, girls at every Girl Scout level are asked to participate in the program evaluation process through the *Girl Scout Voices Survey*. This survey is designed to empower girls and give them a voice in Girl Scouting. It also allows us to measure the success of our program delivery and engages our program team in continual improvement. This evaluation tool provides us with the data and feedback needed to create a tangible and clear picture of how Girl Scouting is positively impacting girls in northern Illinois.

Total Membership

17,084 girls + 5,020 adults = 22,104 total



The Girl Scout Leadership Experience

The Girl Scout mission is to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Girl Scouts is the premier leadership organization for girls and an expert on their growth and development. We have identified the three keys to leadership: girls **Discover** themselves and their values; **Connect** with others; and **Take Action** to make the world a better place. At Girl Scouts, everything centers on the girl—activities are girl-led, which gives girls the opportunity to learn by doing in a cooperative learning environment. To accomplish this, programming focuses on 15 short-term and intermediate goals (outcomes) that help girls gain specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and values. These outcomes work in tandem with the three keys to leadership and combined, they make up the Girl Scout Leadership Experience curriculum.

Program delivery occurs through the use of “Leadership Journeys.” In a Girl Scout Journey, awards (badges) link experiences, discussions and ideas that girls explore together. As girls progress through the levels from Daisy to Ambassador, their awards signify attaining new and higher levels of knowledge and skills, and ultimately a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader who makes a difference in the world.

Girls have access to three core Leadership Journeys at each level of Girl Scouting. Current themes for the Journeys are advocacy, the environment, and storytelling and creative expression. Each Journey has activities and strategies that are appropriate for every Girl Scout level.

15 Outcomes of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience

Discover (self)

1. Girls develop a strong sense of self.
2. Girls develop positive values.
3. Girls gain practical life skills.
4. Girls seek challenges in the world.
5. Girls develop critical thinking.

Connect (with others)

1. Girls develop healthy relationships.
2. Girls can resolve conflicts.
3. Girls feel connected to their communities, locally and globally.
4. Girls promote cooperation and team building.
5. Girls advance diversity.

Take Action (service)

1. Girls can identify community needs.
2. Girls are resourceful problem solvers.
3. Girls advocate for themselves and others, locally and globally.
4. Girls educate and inspire others to act.
5. Girls feel empowered to make a difference in the world.

Leadership

Girl Scout Troops and Community Service

According to volunteers working with Girl Scout troops, 87% of girls have completed a community service or Take Action project in the past year.

- That means that if each girl who participated gave only an hour of community service through Girl Scouts, more than 15,000 hours of service have been provided to communities all over northern Illinois.
- Projects like food and clothing drives, awareness campaigns, school and park clean-ups, and conservation projects would never have happened in your community without the many Girl Scouts making them possible.
- Community service greatly increases girls' scores on outcome measures, improving their self-esteem, strengthening their values and relationships with peers, enhancing their problem-solving skills, and increasing their ability to advocate for their communities' needs. (See graph below.)



"We worked together with the city to clear trash from two local parks after the spring flooding. We separated the trash into recyclable and non-recyclable items, so items that could be recycled do not enter the landfills and we could teach girls about sustainability."

– A Girl Scout Volunteer



Outcomes Scores

- Completed Community Service
- No Community Service

Leadership Awards



The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement for Girl Scouts today. It is a reflection of the dedication and determination of each recipient. For many, the leadership skills, organizational skills and sense of community and commitment that come from “Going for the Gold” set the foundation for a lifetime of active citizenship.

Every Gold Award recipient—100%—has learned how to educate and inspire others to take action in their communities, such as working with local media and other youth-serving organizations to spread their messages more effectively. Only 74% of other high school Girl Scouts meet this outcome.

Most importantly, 86% of Gold Award recipients feel empowered to make a difference in their communities, locally and globally. They feel capable of using their skills to better the functioning and governance of communities and know how to approach community stakeholders with their ideas.

Every Gold Award recipient—100%—agrees that Girls Scouts has helped them become a better team member, connect with people in their schools and communities, be a leader in activities outside of Girl Scouts, and work with others to accomplish shared goals.

Because of Girl Scouts, I...



% of high school girls who attribute Girl Scouts to their success.



Community Outreach

While participating in Girl Scouts is one of the lowest-cost extracurricular activities when compared to sports and school clubs, GSNI knows not every family can afford to have their daughter(s) participate. That is why we offer membership and program assistance, scholarships, and camperships to more than 1,000 girls each year. Generous donors, grants, and other contributions help cover the cost of providing this assistance and, without it, many girls would never have the opportunity to participate.



We provided \$11,505 to 962 girls or adult volunteers for membership dues.

We provided \$6,001 for 47 girls to attend programs or camp.

In addition, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois understands that girls who are at-risk, in crisis, or living in poverty or homelessness do not always benefit from the troop model due to economic, social, or transportation barriers. In response to their differing needs, Girl Scouts offers alternative outreach groups, formed to receive customized services based on interests, needs, and skill development. The lessons, activities, and mentoring, focus on creating healthy relationships, promoting conflict resolution strategies, and building self-esteem and life skills to prevent risky or unhealthy behavior, violence, and poor decision-making now and later in the girls' lives.



In 2012-2013, GSNI served more than 1,500 girls in outreach programs throughout our council, including:

- Project Opportunity after-school program for girls in grades K-5 in the Rockford School District #205
- YES! Mentoring for girls ages 12-17 in residence at the Norman C. Sleezer Home in Freeport
- MyTime after-school activities for girls in 6th-8th grades in West Aurora School District #129 through Communities in Schools of Aurora
- Girls Go Techbridge activities for 7th and 8th grade girls in the English Language Learner program in School District U-46 in Elgin, and 4th and 5th grade girls at Washington Academy in Belvidere
- Healthy living outreach programming for girls at the Sage YMCA in Crystal Lake
- Journeys and financial assistance for girls in St. Charles School District #303
- Start-up assistance for low-income Daisy troops in Freeport
- Skill-building activities for girls attending multiple community centers and daycare centers, such as Boys and Girls Club sites, HUD-funded housing complexes, many local park district locations, and other community centers

Healthy Relationships

Be a Friend First (BFF)

Incidents of bullying have reached almost epidemic proportions and, in some cases, have ended in tragedy. Girls more frequently manipulate their relationships in subtle ways to bully. Their bullying behavior can include: gossiping, teasing, deliberately excluding others, spreading mean rumors online, and betraying trust.

To combat this growing epidemic, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois offers the BFF (Be a Friend First) experience, which actively involves middle-school girls in helping to solve the problem of bullying. BFF engages girls in activities that help them develop the skills to bring about individual and cultural change.

In 2012-2013, GSNI offered this program in two separate school districts, Rockford Public Schools #205 and School District U-46 in the Elgin area. More than 950 girls participated in eight or more weekly sessions during or after their school day. We are excited to expand this program to the Sycamore/DeKalb area and other interested areas in the coming school year.

Girls learned to:

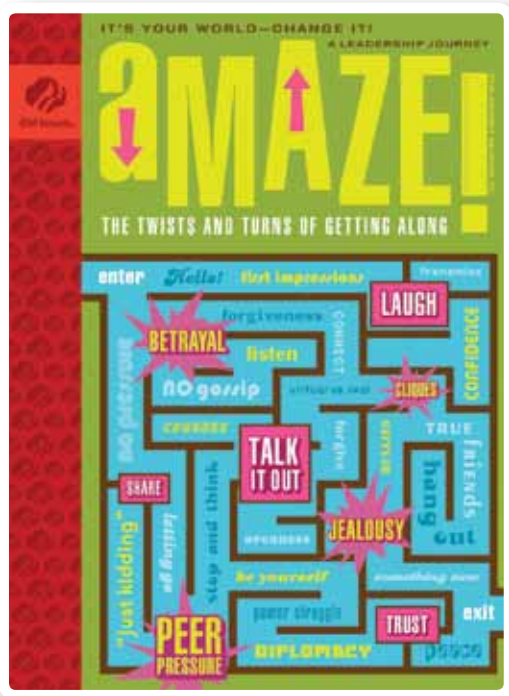
- Stand up for themselves and others, or how to get help from a trusted adult
- Make a decision to avoid forming cliques, gossiping, and teasing others
- Recognize what healthy friendships look like—and develop more of them
- Resolve conflicts peacefully



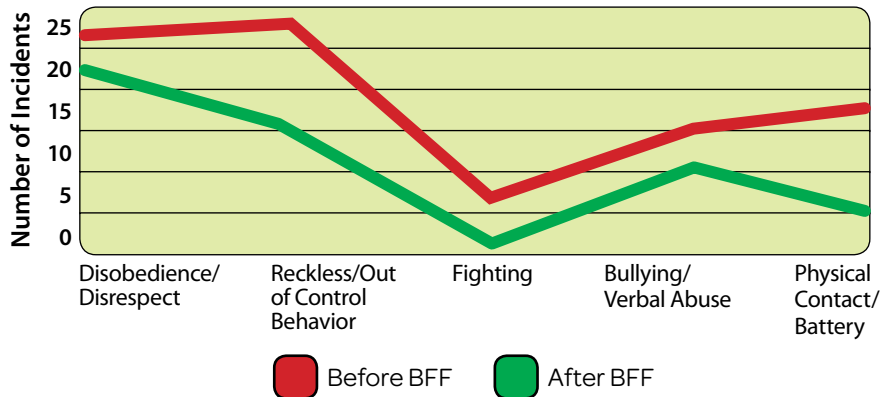
"I learned how to respect my classmates during the aMAZE Journey. I learned how to make friends and defend others from being bullied. And I learned how we should speak out and don't stay quiet."

—Girl Scout Cadette

The chart below shows a 48% average decrease in negative behaviors among 6th grade girls in Rockford, Illinois.



Behavior in school before and after BFF



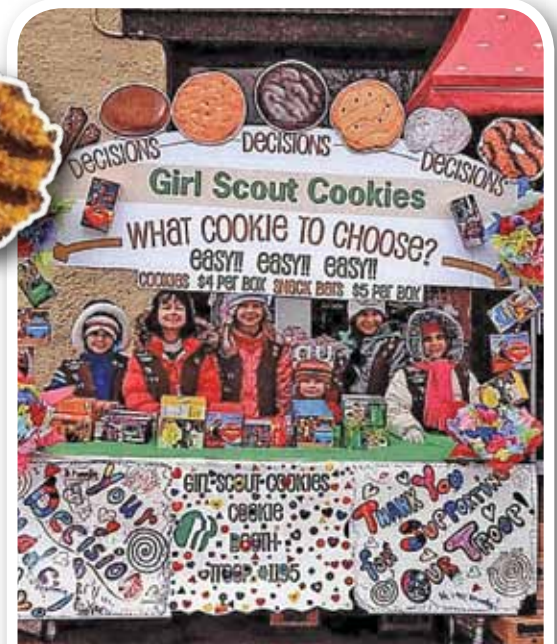
Financial Literacy

5 Skills for Girls

1. Goal Setting
2. Decision Making
3. Money Management
4. People Skills
5. Business Ethics

There's more to Girl Scout Cookies than what's in the box. When a Girl Scout sells you Cookies, she's building a lifetime of skills and confidence. She learns five important life skills: goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. Selling Cookies puts a Girl Scout on the path to being an effective leader, an entrepreneur, and a successful adult.

In a 2013 survey to parents and adult volunteers, GSNI asked parents if they felt their daughters were able to set goals, make decisions about selling, manage money from customers, communicate with people effectively, and display ethical behavior in business transactions. **A majority of parents felt that girls improved on the 5 Skills during the 2013 Cookie Program.** We know we still have work to do to help girls achieve the 5 Skills, especially when it comes to money management. GSNI needs to help parents and adult volunteers understand that even the youngest girls are capable of learning simple money handling and budgeting skills.



Bling Your Booth Contest Winner:

**Troop 1195
St. Charles, IL**

% of parents who felt their daughters learned the 5 Skills



Technology & Innovation

GSNI has a long history of offering Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Over the past five years, we have offered hands-on experience in STEM to more than 5,000 girls.

GSNI offers the following STEM programs and partnerships:

- FIRST Lego League Robotics Teams for girls in grades K-12
- Color Me Curious, Under Construction, and It's Electric program kits for girls in grades K-3
- Girls Go Techbridge and other STEM program kits for girls in grades 4-8
- Imagine Your STEM Future career exploration program for girls in grades 9-12
- NASA Summer of Innovation Rocketry and Space workshops (pictured on right)
- Programs in partnership with Northern Illinois University, including Enhancing Engineering Pathways (EEP), Saturday Engineering Workshops with Society of Women Engineers, and NIU STEMfest
- Siemens, Inc. Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day



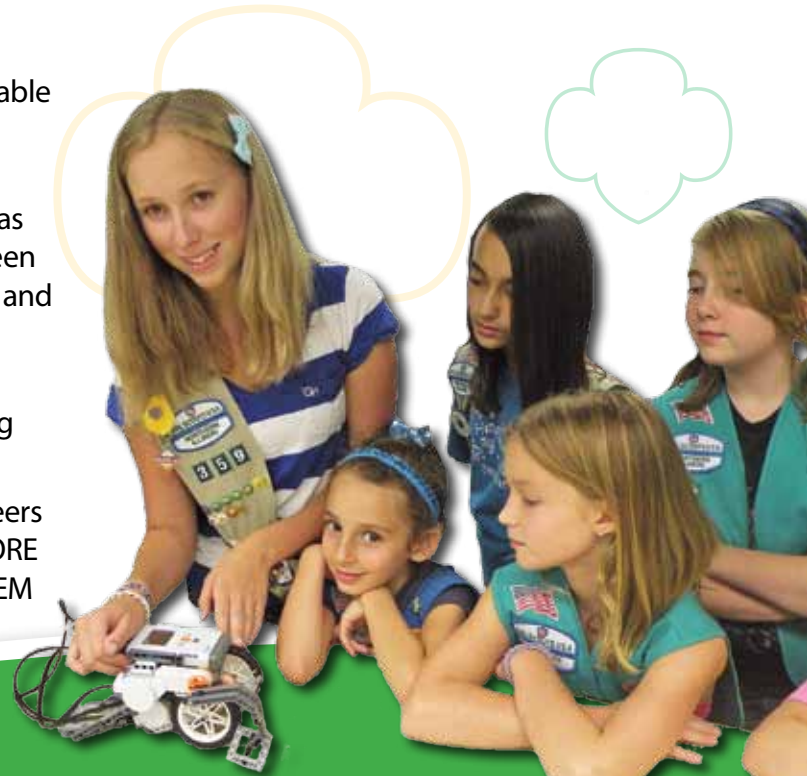
“My favorite part of the NASA workshop was building things and thinking about how they would work.”

Girls Go Techbridge

GSNI received a program grant from Techbridge, Inc. that included five different **Programs-in-a-Box** which focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. These program kits have been checked out by troops and service units, used at council-sponsored programs and events, implemented at camp, and incorporated into our community outreach programs. As a result, more than 1,500 girls have experienced hands-on STEM learning over the past two years.

Techbridge Results:

- 82% of girls felt increased self-confidence and more capable in science and engineering activities after using the Techbridge kits.
- Girls' competency in STEM skills increased by 16%, such as knowing how electrical circuits work, understanding green design and building, demonstrating the design process, and using simple machines.
- 79% of girls showed resourceful problem solving and critical thinking skills, compared to only 69% before using Techbridge kits.
- 86% of girls reported increased knowledge of STEM careers after participating in Techbridge programs, and 54% MORE girls said they were interested in pursuing a career in STEM fields listed.



Health & Fitness

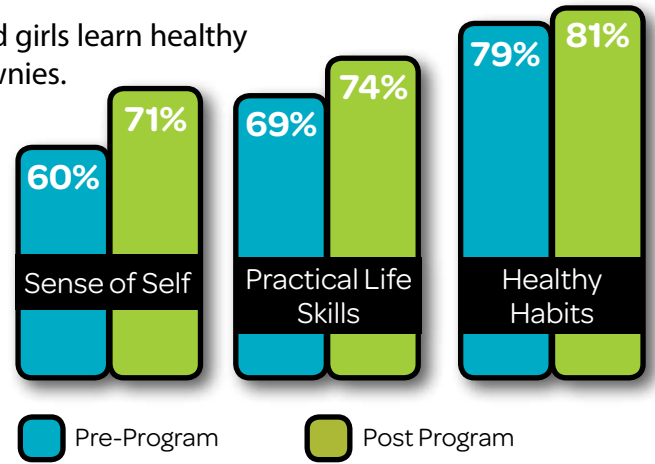
My Best Elf Self

GSNI knows it is never too early for girls to learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle. And we also know that this healthy lifestyle can be fun! Whether they're hiking, trying a new sport, or preparing tasty, nutritious snacks, Girl Scouts enjoy many fun ways to lead healthy lives. Healthy living activities are woven throughout the Girl Scout program in varied ways to provide girls with choice and flexibility.

One of the exciting ways Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois has helped girls learn healthy habits is through the My Best Elf Self Day Camp for Girl Scout Brownies.

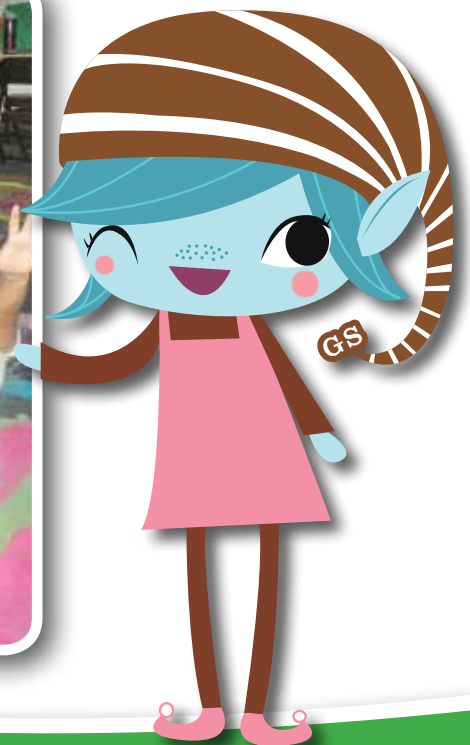
Girls learned about:

- Energy In: the calories you get from eating and drinking
- Energy Out: the calories you burn from physical activities
- Fun new physical activity that doesn't feel like exercise—such as dances from around the world, hula-hooping, yoga, and swimming
- How to prepare and choose healthy snacks, and look for locally grown foods at a farmer's market



When asked what they learned at camp, **87%** of girls could name at least one thing that was directly related to the material presented at camp. Most said, "eat fruits and vegetables" or "don't drink soda." Because we know enjoyment is related to the retention of the material, it is also important to note that **85%** of girls rated the camp the top rating of "**Super Fun!**"

Girls practicing yoga at My Best Elf Self





Outdoor Education

In 2012-2013, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois conducted a Long-Range Property Planning survey and assembled a volunteer, board, and staff committee to develop a plan to help improve and manage our four office locations, five shops, and five camp properties. The survey found that on average, **85% of our parents, volunteers, and girls are satisfied with our camp properties.**

Girls also reported on their favorite activities while at camp. Activities girls want at their ideal camps are:

- Water sports, like swimming, canoeing, kayaking, and tubing
- Outdoor adventure activities, like archery, hiking, and outdoor cooking and survival skills
- Animal-related activities, like horseback riding and learning about wildlife
- Arts activities, like painting, crafts, pottery, and photography

All of these activities lead to positive outcomes for girls. In fact, national research has shown that girls who participate in outdoor experiences in Girl Scouts are more likely to seek challenges and solve problems in their everyday lives. They're also more likely to enjoy their time in Girl Scouting, and stay in Girl Scouts longer. In Northern Illinois, we know that resident and weekend camps help girls resolve conflict among each other, learn from their mistakes (problem solving), try new things, and meet new friends.

What Girls Do at Camp

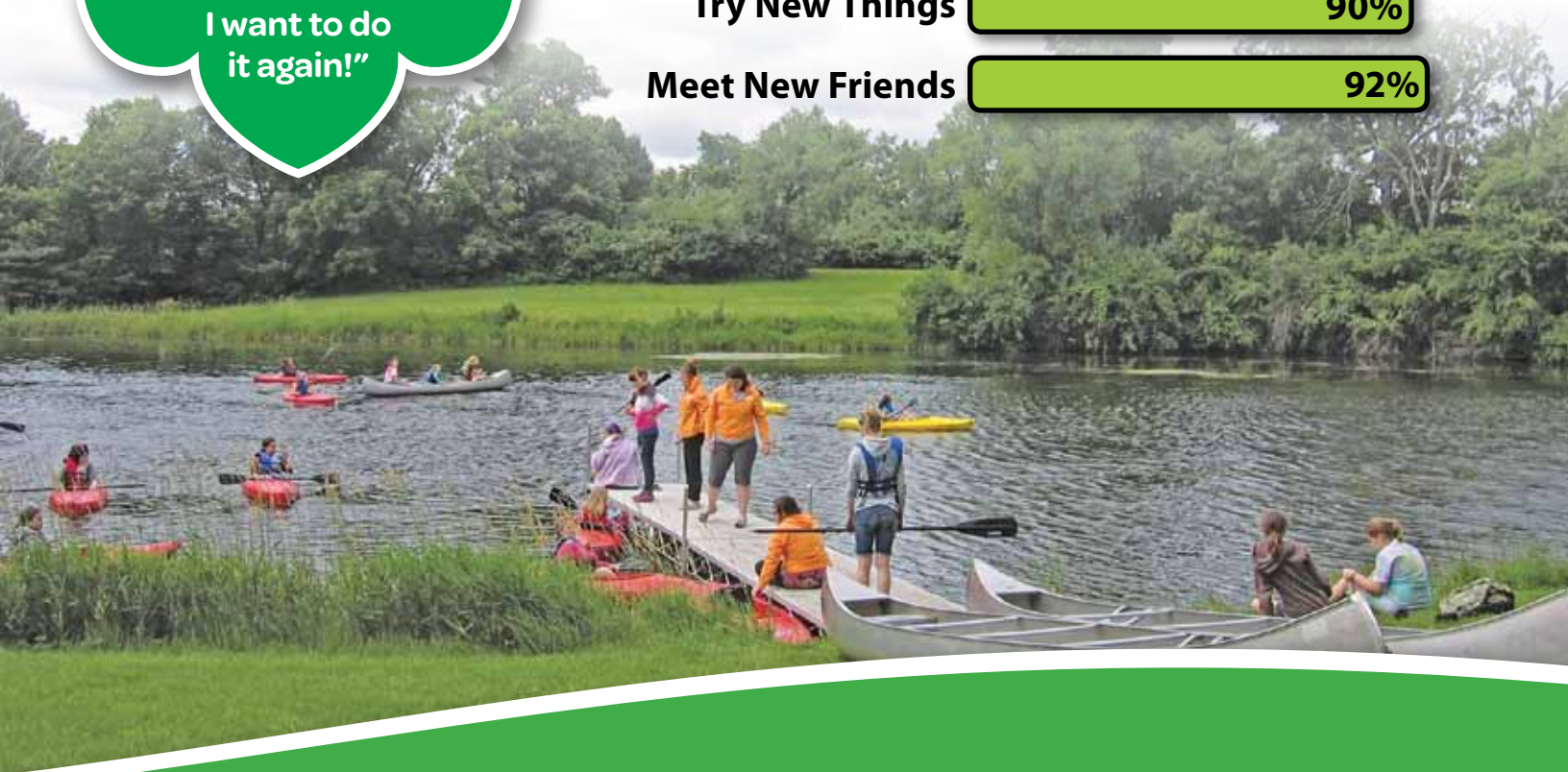
Resolve Conflicts 78%

Learn from Mistakes 86%

Try New Things 90%

Meet New Friends 92%

"Everyone should have canoeing time. I had never done it before and now I want to do it again!"





Elgin Service Center

12N124 Coombs Road
Elgin, IL 60124
847-741-5521

Freeport Service Center

5040 Bus. Rt. 20 West
Freeport, IL 61032
815-235-8777
or 800-925-3327

Girl Scout Express

200 Applebee Street
Barrington, IL 60010
847-620-5043

Rockford Service Center

2820 McFarland Road
Rockford, IL 61107
815-962-5591
or 800-242-5591

Sugar Grove Service Center

200 New Bond Street
Sugar Grove, IL 60554
630-897-1565

www.girlscoutsni.org

