

Safety Tips of the Month

for Girl Scout Leaders, Parents/Guardians, Volunteers, and Girls

Background Checks - Safety for girls and adult volunteers is our council's number one concern. During Spring Registration, the volunteer application procedures include background checks of all new adults and volunteers. Also, four references should be checked within 30 days of the application completion. See *2008 Panorama: A Guide to Council Services*, under Volunteer Personnel System, Adult Development, and Recognitions Module, pages 4-5.

Spring Registration and the Importance of Health History Cards and HIPAA Forms

Each April and May, VISTAs **are required** to conduct a Spring Registration and Family Partnership Campaign for Girl Scout troops that will be returning in the fall. Spring Registration participation prevents a lapse in membership and helps the VISTA cabinet focus their efforts on organizing new Girl Scout troops in the fall.

One of the documents vital to a girl member and adult volunteer's registration is the Health History Card and HIPAA Form. This document is meant to provide reliable, accurate medical information to provide adequate health care during Girl Scout Program or in the event of an emergency. Here are some items to note about this important record:

- Health cards *can* be photocopied and distributed to adult volunteers driving girls to and from a Girl Scout activity; they need to have the information on the health cards, in case of an emergency.
- Make sure the *Consent for Release Form* on the back of the Health History is signed. Signing this form allows medical information to be passed on to the appropriate family members and medical professionals to facilitate the care of a sick or injured individual. If the *Consent for Release Form* is not signed, then no medical information can be given to outside medical professionals or family members of the sick or injured. **This is the law.**
- Health History Cards and HIPAA Forms are held in limited access by the trustee (leader /facilitator / staff) of a Girl Scout Program. **This information is confidential, protected under law.**

Emergencies and Accidents Safety and Risk Management Reminder - As the weather turns warmer and more troops are venturing out beyond the meeting place, please remind leaders to be prepared for emergencies. Reference *2008 Panorama: A Guide to Council Services*, under Troop/Group Management and Safety module, pages 14-17, for council specific instructions.

For most accidents, follow these steps:

- (1) Take care of the injured person.
- (2) Notify parents/guardians immediately.
- (3) Call the VISTA Manager and The Hub in Vernon Hills at 847-573-0500 or 708-386-1872.
- (4) If the accident or emergency occurs after business hours, call one of the council managers at: 847-840-8200 or 847-909-6625. Be prepared to provide pertinent information: who, what, where, when, and how. Give the telephone number of where you can be reached.
- (5) Fill out insurance forms.
- (6) Also reference Chapter 4 of *Safety-Wise* for general instructions set by GSUSA.

Permission Slips - signed by a parent/guardian, are required for activities in Girl Scouting including:

1. Permission for a girl to become a Girl Scout member.
2. Permission for all activities that take place outside the regularly scheduled meeting location.
3. Participation in product program activities or other approved money-earning activities.
4. Participation in activities that involve travel.
5. Participation in activities that focus on controversial or sensitive topics.

Resources: GSUSA *Safety-Wise* and Illinois Crossroads Council *2008 Panorama: A Guide to Council Services*