

Short and Snappy – Instill Confidence in Girls



Objective

To point out some key ways to help instill self-confidence in girls through everything you do as a Girl Scout leader.

Length

20 minutes

Materials Needed

Pencils and paper

Information to Share (spend 10 minutes on this section)

As girls get older they tend to lose their courage and self-confidence. As Girl Scout leaders and volunteers, it is our job to help them maintain that self-confidence, so that they do not have so many of the personal issues that women face in our world today. Here is a list of ten ways for you to help your girls maintain, and even gain, confidence.

1. ***Creating opportunities for leadership:*** Giving your girls more responsibility in planning their troop activities is just one of the way that girls can gain confidence in themselves. As adults, we can help by allowing them the freedom to make decisions and, sometimes, mistakes.
2. ***Let her be heard:*** Nothing screams louder than a girl who just wants to be heard, so give your girls the opportunity to speak up about their opinions and ideas. Take their thoughts and ideas seriously, and make sure the whole troop treats each idea with respect. It means the world to them for you to listen, validate, and praise their input. This is applicable to any age, be it five years old or seventeen.
3. ***Creating a safe and protective space:*** Girls crave a place where they can talk about real issues without fear of retribution. Emotional safety is very important for girls to grow and build confidence.
4. ***Allowing the chance to explore:*** Give girls an ample amount of activities to choose from, specifically ones that allow them to learn new things, experience diversity, and give back to their communities. Confidence thrives on risk-taking, so get those girls out of their comfort zones!
5. ***Let them be themselves:*** Girls are experiencing social pressures at younger and younger ages. Some girls may have problems that are difficult to deal with because they are beyond their emotional, social, and cognitive development. It's important to provide a time for girls when they can just be themselves, as goofy or innocent as they may be, without any judgment from the outside world.
6. ***Build self-image:*** Many girls' self-images are dependent not only on their own self-perception, but also on how they are perceived by others. Do not just accept girls for who they are – praise them for it! Be helpful, encouraging, and supportive of girls at all times.
7. ***Allow self-expression:*** Every girl has a different way of expressing herself, so allow your girls a chance to choose activities that encourage that expression. If you have a variety of personalities in your troop, try to be accommodating to all of the girls, and incorporate multiple types of skills and interests into each activity.

Information to Share (continued)

8. **Connect with positive role models:** This might be college students or a professional in their field of interest. Get girls out there meeting good role models in their areas of interest.
9. **Respect every girls' experiences:** Girls are generally more fearful of social rejection than of being physically attacked. Maintain a safe environment where each girl is expected to respect each other's experiences.
10. **Provide a free environment for self-expression:** Girls are more willing to express themselves and be themselves when they are in an all-girl environment. When possible, do activities as a troop that involve trying new things and risk taking, when no outside observers are around to evaluate or pass judgement.

Activity (spend 10 minutes on this section)

1. Break up into smaller groups, and have each group discuss how the Girl Scout organization helps build confidence.
2. Have each group report their findings, using a specific example for each of the ten items discussed in the information.
3. Make sure that new ideas are given each time, and nothing is repeated

