

Camporee Planning Guide

Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee

Revised 2023

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Before you get started:

There are some requirements and timelines you need to keep in mind before you plan to make any property reservations.

- Only Service Unit Managers (SUMs) can make property reservations for service unit events, including camporees.
- Anyone making a property reservation, including SUMs, must have signed their Property Liability Waiver in CouncilAlignMENT and have someone in their group with the following:
 - CPR/FA certification in their profile
 - Online Camping Skills training OR Camp Ready
 - Camping Skills 1 and 2 training OR Outdoor Skills Training

You should also keep in mind the following general property availability schedule:

- First (full) weekend of each month: Service Unit Events/Camporees
- Second weekend of each month: Council-sponsored programs and trainings
- Third weekend of each month: Troop Camping
- Fourth and Fifth weekends of each month: open for all depending on availability
- Camp Holloway and Camp Sycamore Hills are not available from the end of May – the beginning of August due to summer camp programming.

Does this schedule mean that you can never have a camporee on a weekend other than the first one? Nope! It just means that these reservations have priority. If you see availability in CouncilAlignMENT even on a “non-camporee weekend,” you can take it! It means that the property wasn’t reserved and it’s open for everyone.

Properties open for service unit event reservations 180 days in advance and popular months (September, October, March, April, May) fill quickly!

Quick Council Checklist:

Plan for these dates when you're organizing a camporee. Failure to do so could result in you losing your reservation or being unable to request your activities.

- Reserve your property (180 days or less)
- Pay deposit (when you reserve your property)
- Request activities (90 days or more)
- Final payments for units and activities (60 days or more)
- Receive gate codes/information from property manager (1 week out)
- Head to bed (housing rosters to registrar/property manager (1 week out)
- Clean units/areas based on property checklists (before you leave property)
- Final Attendance (after your Camporee, required to get deposit back)
- Property survey in CouncilAlignMENT

Step 1: Choose your dates and reserve your camp property.

When choosing your dates and camp property, there are several things to consider:

- How many people do you expect to attend?
- What activities are you hoping to do?
- Where are you located and what is easiest for your troops to access?
- Where was your last camporee located?

Camp Holloway, Camp Sycamore Hills and Camp Piedmont each have varying accommodations and program spaces. It is also possible to hold camporees at locations such as state parks, etc. While this guide focuses primarily on procedures used to host camporees at Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee (GSMIDTN) properties, the same basic idea can be used to plan off-council property camporees as well.

For more information on each property, maximum number of beds, etc., please visit the GSMIDTN properties website: <https://gsmidtn.org/camps/>

In addition, if you're planning on participating in Council-led adventure activities, be aware that some are only available in specific months and at specific properties. Activities are age-specific based on *Safety Activity Checkpoints*. For more information, visit our Adventures and Activities pages here:

<https://gsmidtn.org/programs/adventure-and-activities/>

To reserve a property in CouncilAlignMENT, follow these steps:

- Login to CouncilAlignMENT.
- Click "Property Reservations"
- Select "Make a New Reservation"
- Choose:
 - "Camporee" or "Service Unit Event"
 - Desired Property
 - Desired Dates
 - Reservation type (day-only, overnight, etc)
- You'll see a screen like this:

Date	Adventurer Tent - A Side	Adventurer Tent - B Side	Courage House	Grove's Cabin	Honor House	Independence House	Inspiration Hall	Josephine's Lodge	Josephine's Commercial Kitchen	Sisterhood House	Trail Blazer Tent - A Side (ADA handicap accessible)	Trail Blazer Tent - B Side	Check All
Thursday, April 20, 2023	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only
Friday, April 21, 2023	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Saturday, April 22, 2023	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Sunday, April 23, 2023	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Monday, April 24, 2023	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only
Tuesday, April 25, 2023	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only	Check In Only

Choose the dates to check-in and check-out on and all dates in between. For example, if you're wanting to stay a Friday – Sunday, click Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Once you've chosen your dates, you'll see a screen like this:

Confirm Reservation

Confirmation

Reservation from 4/24/2023 3:01 PM to 4/26/2023 1:00 PM

Units	Total \$300.00 (Including Activities if applicable)					Attendance	Incomplete	Communication Methods
This reservation is for 2 Overnight (Council Sponsored) reservations.								
	Fee	Deposit	Total Fee	Total Deposit	Total Amount	Activities	Complete	Email
Adventurer Tent - A Side	25.00	25.00	50.00	25.00	75.00	Activities selected: 0		Text
Adventurer Tent - B Side	25.00	25.00	50.00	25.00	75.00			Message Notification
Courage House	50.00	50.00	100.00	50.00	150.00			

[Review](#)

[Go Back](#) [Submit Reservation](#)

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Click on “Incomplete” under Attendance, and enter the number of expected participants. This doesn't have to be exact – but an estimate is helpful.

If you're choosing activities, click on “Review” and enter activity numbers (see below for this process). You can also choose to enter those later, but the earlier, the better! Activity information must be entered at least 90 days prior to your reservation date.

Click “Submit reservation” to finish this process. You'll be taken to your shopping cart, where you can pay your deposit. Your property reservation is not held until you have made the required deposit *per building/unit*. Service Units now have a \$2,000 spending limit on Pinnacle bank accounts. If you need a higher limit, please speak with your Regional Executive well in advance of making your reservation or final payment. Don't risk losing your reservation because of bank logistics!

Step 2: Planning your Camporee

Now that you've secured your property reservation, it's time to plan your camporee! Please find some considerations below as you think about the experience you'd like your girls to have.

Forming a Committee:

You don't have to do this alone! We recommend having 3-5 people on your planning team, with each person handling one aspect of the camporee. This allows for each person to handle a smaller number of tasks suited to their strengths, and also allows for the planners to enjoy the camporee!

Girl Planning:

Remember, as you plan, that the heart of Girl Scouting is for Girl Scouts to eventually be able to plan their own meetings, events, and travel. Though that can be a challenge for a large event, it's always possible to ask for input via surveys, an advisory or planning board made of Teen Mentors, and by letting troops preference activity choices and meals (see the activity section below).

Theme:

Many Camporees have a theme. This is a great way to tie many activities together, to encourage participation via costumes or special crafts, to aid in the design of patches and t-shirts, and simply to have fun! Themes can center around popular movies or characters, be badge based (everyone earns the same types of badges, for example), Journey-based, or just have a general theme. It's truly up to you! It's also not required – many camporees just focus on coming to camp and being together.

Activities:

GSMIDTN properties have multiple activity options. You can choose to request activities provided by our facilitators OR to provide your own. Most service units do a combination of both, and some choose not to use facilitated activities at all.

Service Unit Provided Activities:

If providing your own activities, you can host them in any space you have reserved, or in pavilions. You are responsible for all the materials, instruction and clean up. Be sure to adhere to the *Safety Activity Checkpoints* for rules regarding self-provided activities. Some activities, such as archery, require permission and authorized facilitators. Please

be aware that Council-owned supplies and some buildings/activity areas require prior reservation and/or cannot be used by non-facilitators.

Depending on the size of your camporee, consider having a loose schedule, or several stations available that troops can float to as they have time. With many people, this is often more helpful than having one large schedule that can be thrown off if a few groups are late.

A camporee is a great opportunity to utilize older girls to run/plan events for younger girls. Older girls can often accumulate hours towards their Program Aide award, or Service to Girl Scouting award. If you do choose to have older girls assist in running your camporee activities, be sure to build in time just for them! It's fun to help younger troops, but it's important for them to have time for themselves.

Council Provided Adventure Activities:

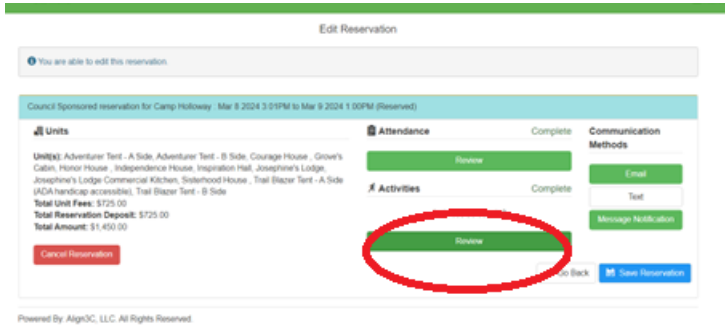
To see which activities are available, please visit <https://gsmidtn.org/programs/adventure-and-activities/>

No later than 90 days prior to your camporee (but as soon as possible), you must enter the number of people per activity requested. ***Then***, e-mail the Adventure Specialist with these numbers broken down by troops. Some tips for submitting your request:

- ONLY one person should communicate with the adventure specialist. Troop leaders should contact this designated person with questions, not the adventure specialist.
- We recommend no more than three activities per troop, and really encourage troops to choose two.
- Generally, adults do not participate in adventure activities. They *can* but we prioritize girl participation.
- Troops should choose activities together – we cannot honor individual schedules or choices. This might require compromising on activity choices and is a great exercise in compromise and including the whole group.
- Numbers should be finalized no later than 90 days prior to your reservation date, but the earlier the better.
- Requests are dependent on staffing, property conditions, and the number of requests per weekend. Though we will do our best, we may not be able to honor all requests.
- Activities are scheduled based on *full availability*. You should plan to run your activities outside of adventure activity times. We are unable to work adventure schedules around most service unit provided activities or meals. Please discuss mealtimes and any hard stop times needed for your camporee and be aware that it might limit troop activity times.

There are two ways to add adventure activities to your reservation.

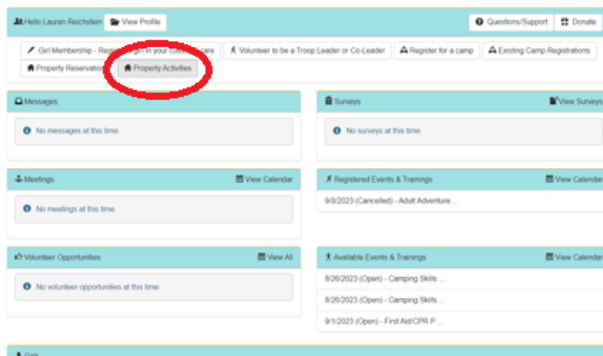
1. Go into your original reservation and click “Review” Under activities:



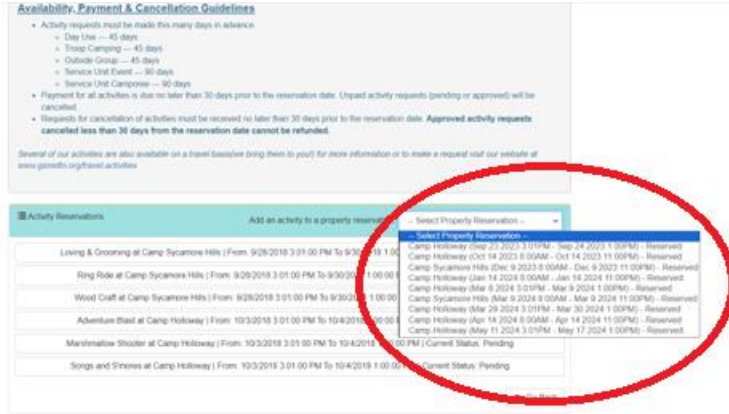
Click the red X next to the activity that you'd like to add. It will turn into a green check mark. Add the number of girls and adults who will be attending that activity. Then click save at the bottom of the screen.

Select	Activity	Girl Count	Adult Count	Grades Eligible	Fee Per Person	Minimum	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Archery	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	1.00	8	Aim for the target and learn basic archery technique. Proper stance, holding the bow, nock and fire an arrow.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pie Iron Outdoor Cooking	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, Kindergarten, 1st	6.00	8	Step into the world of outdoor cooking and make your very own delicious pie iron meal. Choose from pie iron pizzas, grilled cheese, or chicken pesto pockets.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carnies Creatives	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	4.00	6	Create your own DIY masterpiece. We provide girls with an 8 x 10" canvas board, paints, glitter, ribbons, stickers, buttons and much more. Enjoy exploring your artistic side and take home great ideas for your next masterpiece.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Knife Safety	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	1.00	8	Learn all the essential safety tips for handling a knife at camp and be better prepared for your next camping adventure. Practice your knife skills with a soap carving project.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Knot - in - Fast	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	2.00	8	Knots for the knot challenged. Is that a granny knot? A facilitator will lead the group through basic knots. If you are not tied up in the end, the girls will know a couple of knots and why they are useful and make a knot craft to take home.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lego Robotics	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	2.00	8	Enjoy building things out of Lego bricks? Ever wish those things could move or make sounds? We have Lego Robotic kits that let you create lions that stand up and roar, alligators that snap their jaws shut when they sense movement and self-propelled legs. This program can be extended to make multiple robots and challenges.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Letterboxing	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th	1.00	8	Letterboxing is an intriguing outdoor "treasure hunt" activity. Participants will make small hand-carved stamps then go out for the hunt. Clues are given for you to figure out where the other letterboxes on camp are located. Then you exchange your stamp print and the stamp in the letterbox.

2. Click on the “Property Activity” button on your CouncilAlignMENT home screen:



Then select the reservation that you'd like to add activities for. All of your active reservations will be in the drop down menu. Be sure to select the correct one!



Now, choose each activity and enter the needed information. Hit save after each entry.

The screenshot shows the "Add Activity" form. It has a header "Add Activity" and a "Save" button. The form is divided into two main sections: "Activity Info" and "Communication Options".

Activity Info:

- GirlCount ***: Input field with value 6.
- AdultCount ***: Input field with value 0.
- PropertyActivityID ***: Dropdown menu with "Pony Ready" selected.
- Minimum**: 3
- Grades Eligible**: 3
- Description**: This one-hour non-riding program allows participants to advance their grooming skills and learn to lead a horse or pony. Girl Scout Brownies will earn the Pony Ready badge.

Communication Options:

- Email**:
- Text**:
- Message Notification**:
- Voice**:

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Congratulations! You have successfully made activity requests! The adventure specialist will be in touch with you about approval (or denial) of your activities, as well as scheduling.

Accommodations:

There are many ways to arrange sleeping assignments when organizing a camporee. The two ways most service units organize this are:

- Assign units based on number of attendees per troop and needed accommodations. Usually this requires the camporee planner or committee to assign troops to sleeping spaces and for troops to share units. Camporees are a great time for girls to meet girls from other troops in their area, as well as adults.
- Allow troops to choose their units. This is less work for those planning the camporee, but often means less attendees, especially for high capacity units (for example, if one troop takes up Riverview at Camp Sycamore Hills but doesn't have 44 people, there are unused beds). It also doesn't allow for intermingling of troops in your area.

Some considerations and tips:

- Adults and children *can* share sleeping spaces as long as those adults are female, they have been registered and background checked (this is required to attend a camporee if adults are monitoring girls for more than 6 hours) and there are *at least two unrelated* adults in each space. It is not required, though it is advised, when possible, that girls and adults sleep in separate spaces.
- If the camporee organizer is assigning units (versus troops choosing their units), consider assigning units by age level. Girls of similar age tend to share spaces with less complaining than troops with big age differences (such as a troop of Cadettes and a troop of Brownies). This also allows the leaders to share ideas, tips and tricks.
- The more adults you have, the less space you have for girls, and often the less cohesive of a troop experience. Some service units restrict adults to those strictly needed for *Safety Activity Checkpoints* ratios. Others allow parents to come for the day but not stay at night. In addition, some service units require any attending adult to have a job (ie, volunteer in the kitchen, run an activity, clean, etc) and volunteer for that job ahead of time.
- Adult men are welcome at camporees! They must have their own sleeping and bathroom arrangements (either their own unit, or pitched tents), and cannot enter girl living spaces unescorted.
- Tagalongs, or non-Girl Scout siblings, are not permitted at camporees or troop camping.

Meals:

Food can be one of the most memorable parts of going camping, but it can also take a lot of planning on the back end. Some things to consider:

- If you're planning on cooking for the entire camporee, you must use the commercial kitchen for most meals. You may not "cook for a crowd" out of a cabin kitchen. However, some service units will host one campfire meal. This can be a fun option, but does require some planning and expertise.
- Whoever uses the commercial kitchen must have taken commercial kitchen training with GSMIDTN. Please note that the commercial kitchen is reserved separately from the main building.
- You can "mix and match" – many camporees provide one meal, and have troops bring other meals.
- Ordering pizza is always an option (and not just pizza – all three properties are close enough for delivery from various restaurants), though it's not the cheapest option.
- "Build your own" options (tacos, baked potatoes, spaghetti with sauces on the side) are an easy way to accommodate dietary needs without making many separate meals.
- Be sure there is a mechanism for participants to inform camporee organizers about food allergies and dietary needs well in advance.

Budgeting:

Part of planning a camporee is figuring out how much to charge each person/troop which comes from the decisions you've made in the above sections. Most camporees are priced based on actual number of attendees. The Service Unit is welcome to supplement the fees (by paying for a portion of the total camporee), but your Service Unit should not use a camporee as a fundraising opportunity. Please be aware that Service Units themselves are not permitted to fundraise. If there is a need for additional funds to offset camporee cost to girls, troops must fundraise independently of the SU.

A budget spreadsheet is available on the GSMIDTN website to help you plan your expenses and determine costs based on participant numbers.

Step 3: Open registration:

Now that you have the specifics chosen, you can open your registration to your troops! It's important that you are clear about what you're providing, who can attend, and when payment is due.

Service Units do this in many ways:

- Google forms
- Cheddar Up
- Event Bright
- Sign-Up Genius
- Physical registration forms or e-mails

Troops will need to provide a roster for you to submit to the property manager, and you will need to know specific numbers if you're making activity requests and housing assignments.

Step 4: Pay your balance

Final payments are due for camporees no later than 60 days prior to the camporee. This is when your schedule will begin to be finalized. It's essential that you have an accurate count so that the Adventure Specialist can plan for your visit to camp and ensure your camporee is properly staffed.

Payment will include: fees for all of your reserved housing, and approved activities.

Step 5: Have a Camporee!

Communication Prior to Your camporee

Communication with families/troops

Because we ask service units to designate one person to communicate with the adventure specialist, you also need to provide communication to families and troops attending. Please do not encourage anyone but the designated person to contact the adventure specialist except in specific circumstances. General information should be provided by the service unit. This includes:

- Property Liability Waiver info
- Required forms
- Meals
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Suggested packing list
- Arrival and departure times

We recommend having an information packet with commonly asked questions, requirements, contact information etc. Make this available to everyone attending the camporee as early as possible.

One way to communicate is with a series of reminder e-mails. The council standard for council-sponsored programs is 3 weeks out, then another 1 week out with last-minute reminders. However, this is up to you based on what works best for you and your service unit.

Communication with Property Manager

- When you make your reservation, you should receive communication from CouncilAlignMENT with general information for all three properties.
- You should receive timely communication from the property manager the week of your reservation with contact information and any needed gate or building codes.
- You should provide a detailed “head-to-bed” to the registrar no later than a week prior to your event with the following information for each person attending organized by unit.
 - Name
 - Troop Number
 - Property Liability Waiver Y/N

Communication with Adventure Specialist

- The Adventure Specialist will be in regular communication with you regarding your schedule when you submit your numbers.
- You can expect a final schedule approximately 2 weeks prior to your camporee.

Requirements of Attendees:

- All Camporees need one designated First Aid Person
- Each cabin/unit must have one person certified in first-aid/CPR and have taken Camping Skills 1 & 2 OR Outdoor Skills
- All Girl Attendees must be registered members
- All Adult overnight attendees must be registered and background checked.

Forms:

Everyone, including adults, are required to have:

- Health History and Permission Form
- Signed Liability Waiver in CouncilAlignMENT

Check-In:

Coordinate with your property manager on your arrival time. Once you have arrived and confirmed that they have everything they need, you're the person in-charge on property for your service unit.

When girls/troops arrive, it is important that:

- You check to be sure that everyone has their required paperwork
- You know who has dietary needs and restrictions
- Medication, if applicable, is in the care of the designated first aider for each unit.

Check-Out:

As your camporee winds down, it's important to assign Kapers to each troop both for unit cleaning, and for other general areas. There is a check-list for what should be completed in each cabin. However, this is a good guide for units and buildings:

- All belongings, food, snacks, craft supplies, etc. removed from all buildings
- Mattresses moved to designated locations
- Bathrooms have been cleaned (toilets, showers, mirrors and counters wiped down)
- All trash taken to the dumpster (or off-property if Camp Piedmont)
- Fire-pits cleaned out
- Entire unit swept and mopped (if applicable)

Coordinate with the property manager to ensure that everything is clean, and that you will receive your deposit back based on the condition you left the property. If areas used are not clean, your deposit will be retained.

Be sure that you enter final attendance and complete the property survey for your camporee in CouncilALIGNMENT. Your deposit cannot be returned to you unless this step has been completed.

Emergency Procedures

Fire:

Fire Precautions:

- Know where the nearest fire extinguisher is located.
- Know fire escapes in your unit and discuss it with your troop
- Do NOT remove batteries from smoke detectors – contact the site manager if the batteries are dying and causing the detector to beep
- Build fires in designated fire rings or fireplaces only.
- Extinguish all fires completely and carefully – look for any glowing embers.
- No flammable liquids may be stored in cabins or tents.

If there is a fire:

- Put out the fire using water or a fire extinguisher
- If using a fire extinguisher, pull the pin and squeeze the handle. Use the hose to “sweep the base” of the fire (aim low, not at the top of the flames).
- If the fire cannot be contained, call 911 and notify the property manager IMMEDIATELY.
- Gather entire group and evacuate to location on camp away from the fire.

Severe Weather

- Thunder, lightning, heavy wind: stay indoors
- Thunderstorm warning: seek shelter indoors and stay away from windows
- Tornado warning:
 - Seek shelter in a building/room without windows. Shower houses and bathrooms work best.
 - Sit with your back against an interior wall and cover your head.
 - Use towels, mattresses, etc. to cover your head.
- Flood warning:
 - Site manager will be in contact with your troop regarding the safest location for you.
 - Do not cross streams or flowing water unless directed

All camps have evacuation locations posted in each unit.

Injury:

- Minor Injury:
 - Treat the injured person and provide first-aid.
 - Notify parents/guardians if they are not present.
- Severe Injury:
 - Seek medical treatment (keep all paperwork for insurance claims)
 - If you call 911, provide the camp address. Notify the property manager IMMEDIATELY
 - Afterward, write an incident report and submit with insurance claim if applicable

Intruder:

- If a person you don't recognize or who is acting suspiciously or erratically is spotted on camp property, notify the property manager immediately. They will verify the identity of that person.
- If you have contacted the property manager and the unidentified person is acting in a threatening manner and/or has a weapon, call 911, notify the property manager AND:
 - Depending on the location of the intruder, seek shelter in a nearby building, lock the doors, and stay away from windows.
 - If you cannot get to a building take your group to an outdoor location where it's easy to hide (such as the woods) and scatter.
- After the incident is under control, verify that your entire group is present and contact parents/guardians

Missing Person:

- Gather your troop together in one spot, and check every known location of the missing person including your unit, program areas, and bathrooms.
- If you cannot find your person after a quick search:
 - Notify the Site Manager who can assist in the search if they are on property.
 - Notify the family/guardians of the missing person
- If necessary, the site manager can assist in calling local law enforcement to continue the search process.

Calling EMS/911:

- If you call 911, notify the property manager IMMEDIATELY with:
 - Name of who called and the situation
 - Where you're located on camp
- If the property manager is on site, they will meet emergency personnel at the gate and escort them to where you are.
- If the property manager is not on site, an available adult should proceed to the gate to escort emergency services to your location.
- In the event of any injury or 911 calls, you should fill out an incident report form. These are required for Mutual of Omaha insurance claims.

General Camping and Outdoor Program Information:

Lauren “Flip Flop” Reichstein
Manager of Camp and Adventure Programs
(615) 460 – 0212
LReichstein@gsmidtn.org

Outdoor Training Information

Hailey “Cappuchinno” Strother
Volunteer Resource Specialist
(615) 460 – 0252
HStrother@gsmidtn.org

Adventure activity information and scheduling:

Heather “Airborne” Masigat
Adventure Specialist
(615) 460 – 0213
HMasigat@gsmidtn.org

Horse activity information and scheduling:

Ashley “Abu” Gary
Manager of Equestrian Programs
(615) 947-3214
AGary@gsmidtn.org

For property information:

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Camp Holloway Property Manager
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Paul Parker
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Dewayne Barnes
*Camp Sycamore Hills Property
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EConwell@gsmidtn.org