

Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas

Troop Camp Information



IMPORTANT LEADER INFORMATION ENCLOSED

(Please share with your girls and their parents)

Dear Girl Scouts,

This is an information packet to help you prepare for your camping experience at the STEM Center of Excellence. Inside you will find lots of information that will help make your visit to the STEM Center of Excellence as enjoyable as possible for your girls, parents, and volunteers. We always appreciate input from our membership; if you have any ideas, feedback, or great stories/pictures, please email us at stem@gsnetx.org

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Camp Address: 6010 Whispering Cedars Dr. Dallas, TX 75236

STEM Center Main General Contact: 469.998.5484 stem@gsnetx.org

Camp Program Manager:

Directions to Camp:

Take 408 to Kiest. Head East on Kiest. Turn Right (South) on Ledbetter. The road comes to a sharp curve to the left. This is where you will turn right onto Whispering Cedars. Please make sure to go slowly on this road as there is a sharp curve on this road and we want Girl Scouts to remain good neighbors to the people who live on the same road coming into camp. There are kids and family pets that play on this road. Be considerate and drive slowly. When you arrive at the gate, please press the call button on the call box for entry.



GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

CHECK IN PROCESS

The Speed on our property 10 MPH or UNDER- We cannot stress this point enough. We CAN accommodate late arrivals. The safety of everyone in our camp is the highest priority. Whether you are entering or exiting camp, you must keep your vehicle at 10mph or under. No speeding. No excuses.

Check-in is between 6pm-8pm on Friday night. Please do not arrive before your scheduled check in time as there will not be someone available to answer the gate call box before 6pm. More information about check-in is below. If you need to arrive on

Saturday morning instead, we ask that you make prior arrangements due to busy Saturday schedules at camp.

When you arrive at the STEM Center of Excellence, you will drive up to a call box located outside of our gate. Please press the call button when you approach the gate. You will then be instructed to park behind the Welcome Center (first building located on your right as you enter camp) and **send in one adult to check in at the Welcome Center**. At check in, you will receive a camping folder that contains your parking permit for your visit, a paper copy of your schedule, and a map which will lead you to your unit. Once checked-in and given directions, you may drive up to your lodging unit to unload, but you may not park your vehicle at your lodging unless our STEM Team specifically directs you otherwise upon arrival. Be mindful to park closely together, in an organized way, so that we can fit in other visitors to the STEM Center as they arrive.

Parking permits will be issued to your group for your visit. Please make sure to turn these permits in at check-out. Our camp roads are **ONE WAY ONLY** to keep our members safe. Please follow all directions and abide by barriers/cones placed throughout camp for traffic flow.

Access Codes

If your lodging unit has a code required for access, it will be given to you when you check in with our STEM Team Member inside the Rees-Jones Welcome Center.

Gate Information

You will not be given the access code to the gate. Entry requires the driver to press the call button to be given permission to enter camp. For larger events, our STEM Team may have the entrance gate open with a STEM Team Member at the front to stop vehicles and provide specific directions. To exit camp from the inside, simply pull forward to the exit side of the gate to trigger the sensor that opens the gate door.

CHECK OUT PROCESS

You have chosen a check out time while making your reservation. Please complete the checkout list provided at check in and wait for a STEM team member to come at your designated time to verify your check out is complete. **Remember: A Girl Scout always leaves a place better than she found it.** Please go over your expectations with the girls and budget time appropriately for the girls to clean. If you are sharing a unit with other Troops, please display the ideal model of adult cooperation in figuring out areas of responsibility before leaving. If you have chosen to do other workshops and activities after the noon, check out time, you will still be required to check out on time.

Maintenance Requests

Call or text the number on the check in sheet. If the call goes to voicemail, please leave a message. Write any other maintenance concerns on your check out sheet.

Burn Ban/ Weather Information

Check the website <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/TexasBurnBans/> for burn ban information. Burn bans are occasionally implemented by the Texas Forest Service for the protection of both lives and property. During these burn bans, only solar, propane, and indoor cooking is allowed. For further information relating to weather or burn bans, contact the main number or site cell phone.

Trash and Recycling

The STEM Center of Excellence has trash bins and bags provided for you. Put trash in black trash bags only. Recycling (blue bins) goes into clear bags only. The companies that handle our trash will not be able to process recycled items if they are not in a clear bag. When you take out your trash and recycling, please place them in the appropriate bins in the overflow parking lot behind the Moody Observation Tower, please make sure to close the side doors of the trashcan/recycle bin when throwing anything into the garbage. Please put new bags into the receptacles in your units, using black bags for trash bins and clear bags for the blue recycling bins.

We support the shift to sustainable practices and ask that you limit the use of environmentally harmful products and single use plastics. This is a great opportunity to talk to your girls about the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling when they are planning the visit.

Feminine Hygiene Products

DO NOT FLUSH ANY FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS DOWN THE TOILETS AT CAMP EVEN IF THE BRAND LABELS THEM AS "FLUSHABLE". They go in the trash receptacles provided by each toilet at camp. No exceptions.

What is Provided/What to Pack

Toilet Paper/Paper Towel Dispensers

Our maintenance team will stock and refill the bathrooms with toilet paper and paper towels in the dispensers. Additional toilet paper is provided in clear bins at each restroom (typically under the sink). If you need more during your stay, please contact the the number on the check in sheet between 8:30am and 9pm. Troops should plan on packing their own napkins and roll(s) of paper towels for use during your stay. The STEM Center of Excellence does **NOT** provide paper towels outside what is used for drying hands in the restroom areas.

Ice

The STEM Center does not provide ice for camp outs. You must bring your own. There is a fridge in the shared troop shelter areas that has a freezer to store your ice.

Each Lodging Includes

- Cast Iron Skillet
- Dutch Oven
- Oil for Cleaning Dutch Oven
- One Set of Pots and Pans
- 2 Oven Mitts
- 2 Hot Pads
- Baking Sheet
- Manual Can Opener
- Sponges
- Brooms
- Shovels
- Rakes
- Metal Buckets
- Trash Cans and Black Trash Bags
- Recycling Bins and Clear Recycling Bags
- Outlets for charging devices in the kitchen areas.
- Toilet Paper
- Bed Frame (Excludes Hickory Hollow)
- Mattress
- Heating/AC unit

Appliances Included in Each Lodging:

- Four Burner Stovetop
- Oven
- Microwave
- Refrigerator
- Coffee Maker

You Must Bring Your Own:

- Dish Soap (do not leave soap behind, please take it with you)
- Food Storage Containers
- Aluminum Foil/Parchment Paper
- Ice (do not leave ice behind, please put it in the sink and recycle any plastic bags)
- Food (Traditional Troop Camping/ Primitive Camping)
- Snacks (NUT FREE)
- Mess Kit
- Refillable Water Bottle (please reduce bottled water and single use plastics)
- Plate Ware (please reduce your Styrofoam products)
- Silverware (please reduce single use plastics)
- Cups (please reduce Styrofoam and single use plastics)
- Kitchen cooking utensils
- Materials for badge/troop activities (if you plan on doing these with your girl(s))

Suggested Camp Packing List

- Sheets (optional. Twin XL)
- Sleeping Bag
- Pillow
- Towels
- Hygiene Items
- Shower Shoes
- Clothing
- Modest Swimsuit (if swimming)
- Capri or full-length pants (Juniors and up that are participating in the Giant Swing or Climbing Tower/Zipline-- NO SHORTS. The Harnesses are very uncomfortable for the wearer if she has on shorts.)
- Flashlight/Batteries
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellant
- Shoes Suitable for Walking Trails/Mud/Running
- Rain Gear
- Luggage or Bag for Items
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Hat or Bandanna to Prevent Sunburn

Do not Bring

- Expensive personal items. The STEM Center is not liable for any lost, stolen or damaged personal/troop items.
- Electronics
- Any Nut Products

Meals- Tejas Dining Hall

If you have purchased meals in the dining hall or if meals are included as part of your camp out (S/He and Me or Camp's a Breeze), then all dining ware is provided. Coffee is available at all meals in the dining line during these specific camps. Powdered creamer and sugar are provided. Meal plans will be emailed to you with your schedule and check in communication prior to your camp out.

To reduce food/liquid waste, encourage your campers to only take what they will eat and drink during the mealtime.

Girls are responsible for cleaning up in the dining hall after each meal. Extra food on the plates must be scraped into the trash prior to putting the plates in a stack in the post service window. Encourage girls to drink any excess liquid before watering trees outside (water only) a separate bucket for liquids will be provided. You can even make it a contest to see who produces the least amount of waste!

Utilities

Remind your girls that we use resources wisely, which includes how we use electricity and water. Please turn off lights and help us conserve heat/AC in our buildings. Reduce water wasted (don't brush your teeth with a running faucet!) and report any leaks or drips in water lines.

TLC

Earn a TLC patch during your stay (available for purchase in our Girl Scout Shops). Please contact us at stem@gsnetx.org for current TLC patch projects around camp! All projects must be approved by the STEM Team one week before attending camp.

Types of Camp Available

Traditional Troop Camping is \$25 per camper (youth & adult) for 2 nights' stay in your booked lodging. This camp is ideal for those who want to plan their own activities and meals. This requires Troop Camp Certified and CPR/First Aid trained adults. The \$25 covers lodging only. Other amenities and workshops can be booked on our events page. For a list of what is offered, please see the chart at the end of this booklet.

Camp's a Breeze/Themed Camp's a Breeze is \$85/girl and \$65/adult. This covers lodging, 3 meals on Saturday, breakfast on Sunday, archery (slingshots for Daisies), low ropes, a 2-hour STEM badge workshop (badges available for purchase at Girl Scout Shops), and S'more STEM campfire ceremony. You do not have to have Troop Camping Certification; this means there are NO FIRES allowed during any Camp's a Breeze/themed Camp's a Breeze. The only fire at camp will be facilitated by our STEM Team. No exceptions. There are open slots during this camp to allow for additional booking of amenities. See our "What's offered" chart for more details. A pool slot is also included with the price when it is seasonally available. Juliettes and Leaders are encouraged to attend this also. **This is not a drop off event.**

S/He and Me Camps. We host She and Me camps as well as He and Me camps. We do not offer family Camping. S/He and Me have all the same offerings as Camp's a Breeze. Adults

are included as participants in all activities for \$85/girl and \$85 adult. **This is not a drop off event.** For questions, email stem@gsnetx.org

Primitive Camping Primitive camping is the space on site designated for tent camping. There are five sites of varying sizes with a fire circle, shovels, rakes, and buckets. You may either bring your own items or rent ours through your booking with us in Ultracamp. Potable water is provided seasonally (March/April-October/November) to the camp area. Outside of these months you must bring your own water. **There is no electricity.** There will be specific instructions for our on-site restrooms at the Primitive Camping site. **DO NOT DEPOSIT URINE OR FECAL MATERIAL ANYWHERE BUT IN THE DESIGNATED RESTROOM AREA.** The site is close to a creek and on a geological escarpment. We follow coding for Dallas County and have provided restrooms to prevent human bio waste from interfering with the environment. More specific instructions on unloading/loading up camp/ site specific protocols, will be sent to you after booking and prior to your camp out. For questions, contact stem@gsnetx.org.

Sleeping Arrangements

All lodging is at maximum capacity. We cannot increase the number of bed spaces in a sleeping unit per city coding by which we abide. Do not put more girls or adults to sleep in a space than are legally allowed.

Camp Sleeping Arrangements

Each lodging site has designated and separate areas for girls and adults. No adults may sleep alone or in the same bed as a girl/girls. Girls are prohibited from sharing beds. If you are in a situation where adults and girls must share sleeping units, two, unrelated, adult females who both have current memberships and background checks on file with us may sleep in the same unit as girls. This is in our volunteer policies and procedures. Keep in mind that any time you are asked to supervise a girl who is not your own, you **MUST** have a current membership and background check on file! Do not put yourself in a 1 on 1 situation. All safety-wise ratios must be maintained.

Adult Male Volunteers

It is expected that men who are camping with troops are an active part of the adult team accompanying the troop camping. If a male volunteer is one of the adults camping with a troop, these rules must be followed.

- Males must sleep in the designated sleeping area per the STEM Team
- Registered Males **CANNOT** be counted as “Safety-Wise” Adults (Volunteer Policies and Procedures)
- Limited sleeping space is available for adult males and will be placed as space allows.

- Males should plan to be in their units from 10pm-8am.

For more details on Adult Male Volunteers, please see our Volunteer Policies and Procedures at gsnetx.org

Adult Males during He and Me/ Troop Camping

Adult males may not share a space with girls UNLESS it is during the He and Me camp where He does not share lodging with ANY other girl(s) except the girl(s) he is directly responsible for. Example: girl and the dad/significant adult male in her life with whom she is camping that weekend have one of the cabins all to themselves. No other campers (adult or girl) are sleeping in that cabin.

All adult male volunteers must have a background check on file. See our Volunteer Policies and Procedures for more details at gsnetx.org

Adult males are always assigned separate sleeping and restroom facilities at the STEM Center of Excellence. For questions about this, please contact stem@gsnetx.org

Are We Ready for Camp?

The STEM Center of Excellence understands that being so close to the city, it is easier to come and go from camp. Minimize coming and going to pick up/drop off your girl as it can be disruptive to her and other girls' camping experience. Pickups/drop-offs are NOT allowed between 9pm and 8:30 am.

Developing independence is important for your girl. There are steps you can take to prepare her, and yourself, for the camping experience.

Adult Readiness

- One Troop Camp Trained Adult
- One Adult Certified with First Aid/CPR
- Have helped the girls plan, practice, and prepare
- Want to go camping!
- Understand living conditions in camp
- Adults and leaders sleep separately from the girls
- Transportation arrangements made
- Adult males have separate lodging/restrooms and do not stay past lights out in other lodging areas

Girl Readiness

- Parent support

- Can cope with
 - Darkness
 - Woods
 - Insects and small creatures
- Can cope physically
- Can carry all her own equipment
- Is responsible for her own personal hygiene
- Understands she will be assigned camp kapers/chores
- Have skills and knowledge
 - Using kitchen/camp tools
 - How to wash dishes
- Have participated in day/overnight experiences with Troop/Group
- Have practiced packing personal belongings for easy carrying
- Understands behavior expectations

Troop Readiness

- Planned and practiced outdoor experience together
- Understands behavior expectations
- Practiced camp safety (buddy system etc.)
- Planned an “after camp” reflection/evaluation

Parent Readiness

- Forms filled out
- Understands girl behavior expectations
- Has appropriate contact information
- Understands Camp Policies and Protocols
- Ready to let girl develop the necessary skill of independence

Sharing Camp Space

You may choose to share your contact information with other troops ahead of time. Please contact stem@gsnetx.org if you consent to share your contact information with troops with whom you will share spaces during your booked camp out. This is a great opportunity for you and other leaders/you and your girls to discuss:

- Fridge Space and Supply Labeling
- Cooking Equipment/Fire Pits
- Troop Shelter/Activity Space/ Activity Schedules
- Shower Times/ Bathroom Usage
- Lights Out/ Quiet Time

- Personal Space and Respecting Others (do not go into other Troop's Cabins)
- Cleaning and Check Out Duties

Camping Checklist

Before you head to camp, be sure to go through the following information with your families.

- Permission Forms (to be kept with the supervising adults during the camping trip)
- Emergency Contact Information Exchange (leaders/adults are the first point of contact)
- Weather Forecast (to prepare appropriately)
- Meeting Times (if meeting prior to check in/after checking out)
- Check In Procedures (if girls are being dropped off with leaders at camp)
- Sleeping Arrangement Information
- Activity Schedule/Kapers
- Behavior Expectations
- Troop Camping Booklet

Helpful Hints

- Dress in layers for our lovely Texas weather. Plan ahead, and plan accordingly.
- For younger girls, label everything you can with your girl's name.
- Encourage rain gear even with a little drizzle to keep worn materials dry and comfortable.
- Include extra clothes, socks, and undergarments, just in case.
- Dark colors absorb heat. Light colors will be cooler in hot weather.
- Halter Tops, tube tops, crop tops, and spaghetti strap tops should not be worn or packed.

Reminders- Camp Policies, Procedures, and Practices

This is not intended to be an all-inclusive summary. For an extensive list, please refer to the Policies and Procedures located on our website at gsnetx.org

Cancellations and Council Refund Requests

No refunds will be granted within 30 days of your camp out. For questions, please contact customer care at 972-349-2403 M-Th 9am-5pm and Fridays 9-3pm.

Smoking/Alcohol/Illegal Practices

Alcoholic beverages, smoking, vaping devices, illegal drugs, fireworks, firearms, and abuse of prescription drugs are strictly prohibited.

Domestic Animals or Pets at Camp

Domestic animals or pets, other than documented and authorized service animals, are not allowed at any GSNETX property, including camps. Pets that belong to on-site, permanent staff will be contained—either indoors, behind a secure fence, or on a tie out while campers are on the property. We may have scheduled vendors who bring animals for programmatic elements from time to time for specific events. This will be outlined on our events page and in post-registration communication for those events.

Personal Property

Girl Scouts of Northeast Texas is not responsible for property damage such as theft, vandalism, acts of nature to personal vehicles, and effects brought on to camp property for programs, events, training, Girl Scout camps, and special events.

Firearms

Guns and ammunition are not carried during Girl Scout activities. No firearms or fireworks are allowed on council properties for program activities. Peace officers legally required to carry weapons are the exception.

TROOP CAMP EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

THE STEM CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AT CAMP WHISPERING CEDARS

Until a siren is installed, the immediate camp-wide emergency signal will be the constant honking from on-site vehicles.

The point of contact for your stay will be the Camp Program Manager (CPM) or designated Supervisor (DS). Exchange of contact information will take place at check in. The site phone # is 214-770-1556. This number is used for calls and texts. **Leaders should carefully account for every girl before, during and after emergencies. Make every effort to keep the girls calm and quiet during emergencies so that CPM/DS and leaders can effectively communicate.**

Fire Emergencies

In the event of a fire not under the control of the girls/leaders at camp:

1. The leaders will move the girls away to a safe area and notify the CPM or designated Supervisor. Remain in contact.
2. The CPM or DS will contact the fire department as necessary.
3. If the fire can be safely extinguished with equipment available in the camp, follow the instructions of the CPM or DS to work together to put out the fire. An adult should ALWAYS remain with the girls.
4. If the fire cannot be put out or is unsafe to control, all girls and leaders will evacuate the area according to instructions from the CPM or DS and relocate to a safe location.

Severe Thunderstorm

1. Lightning can be very dangerous. Stay indoors and avoid the use of telephones, and other electrical equipment/appliances. Unplug items as necessary.

Tornado Watch

No tornado has been spotted, but conditions are favorable.

1. Gather girls with their flashlights inside the unit shelters and continue with regular indoor programs to keep girls calm and engaged.
2. The CPM or DS will maintain contact with troops and monitor conditions.
3. CPM or DS will inform leaders of any changes

Tornado Warning

A tornado has been reported in the area.

1. The CPM or DS will give specific instructions to leaders regarding evacuation to a safe location.
2. The leaders and girls will gather in that location with flashlights. Sit on the floor away from windows close to inside walls—storage areas, bathrooms, kitchens, etc. --until the leaders notified by CPM or DS that the danger has passed.

Evacuation from Camp

1. The CPM or DS will determine when it is necessary to evacuate the camp and will relay specific instructions to each unit. Follow instructions to reach the evacuation point.
2. The leaders should prepare girls for evacuation calmly and swiftly and come to the front gate in an organized fashion so that everyone can be seen and accounted for.
3. The leaders and girls in your troop/group will exit together to the evacuation point and communicate with the CPM or DS.

Serious Accident or Medical Emergency

1. Immediate first aid should be given by the designated troop First Aid Adult. Notify the CPM or DS immediately.
2. If the situation is critical, 911 should be called immediately. Another person should notify the CPM or DS to assist emergency personnel with the gate or navigating camp.
3. If the victim requires medical care, the leader should see that the victim's medical information and health history is obtained and kept with the victim before transporting to the hospital.
4. If it is possible to transport the victim by private vehicle, the victim should be placed in the designated emergency vehicle on site and taken by a driver to the hospital. The leader accompanying the victim should keep the victim calm.

5. The CPM or DS must be kept informed of the situation and any need to transport them to the hospital. The CPM or DS will see that the following people are notified:
 - a. The parents or designated contacts
 - b. The STEM Center Director and Chief Program Officer
6. The leader accompanying the victim should keep the CPM or DS informed of the arrival to the hospital, victim's condition, victim's return to camp, and any other pertinent or helpful information.

Missing Persons

The best safeguards against missing persons are vigilant leaders and a consistent buddy system. In the event it is established that someone is missing:

1. The leader will notify the CPM or DS, giving as much information as possible.
2. The CPM or DS will arrange assistance and organize the search procedure.
3. If the missing person is not found in a reasonable time, the CPM or DS will notify 911, the STEM Center Director and the Chief Program Officer.

Unauthorized Visitors to Camp

The CPM or DS and STEM Team interacts with everyone who comes on site to understand the nature of their visit. If a leader or member of the STEM Team establishes that the person(s) who has entered camp has no relationship to the camp or any persons at camp:

1. The leader or STEM Team will communicate immediately with the CPM or DS who will summarily investigate and determine the appropriate course of action.
2. Unauthorized visitors will be informed that the camp is private property and be directed to leave the premises.
3. If the visitors do not leave immediately, or leave and then return, 911 should be called.
4. The leaders will monitor the safety and location of the girls until the unauthorized visitors leave camp.

Additional Emergency Information

Emergency procedures and numbers are posted in each building and troop shelter. Directions to the nearest hospital and a map of camp are also posted in each unit. For non-emergency situations, questions, or inquiries, please contact the site cell phone at 214-770-1556. This phone also uses texting until 10PM. From 10pm-8:30AM, please call—do not text the site cell phone.

If you have any questions about the information in this guide, please reach out to us at stem@gsnetx.org

Thank you for all that you do for our girls!

STEM Center Team

