



*Achievement
Impact
Highest Honor
Take Action
Commitment
Journey
Change
Empower
Dedication*

girl scouts
spirit of nebraska



Silver Award Guidebook

Take Action Project





Dear Prospective Silver Award Recipient:

The Girl Scout Silver Award is the highest honor a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. Your Silver Award will help you to discover who you are while building a better world around you. You will not only be recognized as a future community leader, you will find yourself supported by the community on your quest for leadership.

Although earning the Girl Scout Silver Award is not a prerequisite for earning the Gold Award, should you choose to do so, you will already have developed skills that prepare you for that next step on your Girl Scout journey. By earning the Silver Award and completing the paperwork, you are also preparing for a time when you will be filling out college and job applications.

You have until September 30 of the year you bridge to Girl Scout Senior to complete your project and turn in your final report paperwork to me, the Silver Award coordinator. However, if you would like to participate in a council ceremony, final paperwork must be turned in by March 31. If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

You are already taking steps toward your Silver Award and for that you can be proud. With this award, you will create change, both for yourself and for the world around you. Who knows what you can accomplish when you discover, connect and take action? Good luck on your journey towards the Silver.

Yours in Girl Scouting,

Jennifer Barker

Silver Award Coordinator

Girls Scouts Spirit of Nebraska

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Girl Scout Silver Award Guidelines

Have you ever looked around your neighborhood or school and wondered how you could make a change for the better?

Going for the Girl Scout Silver Award—the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn—gives you the chance to show you are a leader who is organized, determined, and dedicated to improving your community. Earning the award puts you among an exceptional group of girls who used their knowledge and leadership skills to make a difference in the world.

Here are the steps you will take to earn your Girl Scout Silver Award:

1. Go on a Cadette journey.
2. Identify issues you care about.
3. Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team or decide to go solo.
4. Explore your community.
5. Pick your Take Action project.
6. Develop your project.
7. Make a plan and put it into motion.
8. Create a timeline.
9. Reflect, share your story, and celebrate.

Once you complete your journey, the minimum time requirement for earning your Girl Scout Silver Award is 50 hours.

Remember, too, that the hours include the fun and challenges you will share with your Silver Award team. Each step taken towards making a difference in the world around you provides a great chance to learn and grow, making your award project an amazing one!

Step 1: Go on a Cadette Journey

The first requirement for earning your Girl Scout Silver Award is completing one Cadette journey. Choose either It's Your World—Change It!, It's Your Story: Tell It or It's Your Planet—Love It! This important step helps you build the skills needed to take on your award project and understand how to show leadership through the discover, connect, and take action keys.

Once you have finished your journey, celebrate your accomplishment and get ready to move forward toward your goal: earning a Girl Scout Silver Award! Tip: Keep your journey(s) handy as you work toward your award—you might find yourself going back to it for ideas.

The Journey I completed is: _____

Step 2: Identify Issues You Care About

To solve any problem, you must first identify it. Start by asking yourself what matters most to you.

What issues do you care about that affect animals? _____

What comes to mind when thinking about homeless? _____

What issues effect younger kids or/ and youth of your age? _____

What other topics and issues do you care about? What connections can you make? _____

Start by jotting down some issues that concern you in the following Issues Chart. You are not choosing your project yet, just tuning in to the topics you care about.

Issues Chart

Issue that concerns you	Why is it important to you?	How does this issue affect your community?

Step 3: Build your Girl Scout Silver Award Team

There are two ways to earn your Girl Scout Silver Award: You can work with a small team of three to four girls, or you can create and implement your own project.

Small team model

The girls you work with can be Girl Scouts, non-Girl Scouts, or a combination of both. If the other Girl Scout Cadettes on your team also wish to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award, each girl must play an active role in choosing, planning, and developing the team's Take Action project. Keeping your team small ensures that everyone can fully participate. You and your team will also partner with others in the community to complete your project.

Silver Award Team Members

Name	Phone	Email	Special Interest

Solo model

You can create and implement a project on your own. However, if you choose the solo option, you will still want to partner with others in your community (friends, neighbors, and business owners) in order to earn your award.

If you have decided to work independently, you can skip to step 4. If you are working with other Girl Scout Cadettes who also wish to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award, use the following tips to create a great team.

Build a team whose members all commit to:

- Respect different points of view and ways of working
- Contribute to the project—everyone needs to help out!
- Accept constructive suggestions
- Work together to create and develop a plan
- Resolve conflicts

Team members do not always agree, but leaders know how to help others get along. When disagreements arise, remember:

- To be considerate and respectful of your fellow teammates
- To be a sister to every Girl Scout on your team
- Cooperation is very important when working with others

After you have built your team, hold your first meeting! If you do not know each other well—or even if you do—play a team game to get better acquainted. Spend some time discussing what makes a great team and how you would like your team to work together. Write everyone’s suggestions on a large piece of paper and post on the wall every time you have team meetings. Before the end of your first meeting, discuss how often you want to get together and where you will meet.

Meetings will be held on _____ at _____
Time and Date Location

Step 4: Explore Your Community

Now that you have been thinking about issues that concern you, it is time to explore what your community needs are and where your interests and the community needs may overlap.

Communities are groups of people who have something in common. You belong to many communities: Your school is a community, for example. So is your math class or your debate team. Even kids who ride the same bus every day are a community. Other communities include your neighborhood, your place of worship, your town, and so on. Think about what communities you belong to.

After you have listed your communities, think of ways to “map” them. A community map is a drawing that shows the community’s needs and resources, including contacts that might help you when you start working on your Take Action project.

The key to making a community map is observation. Because a community is made up of people, you will be looking for what people need—that is, what will improve their lives, help them out, or make them happier. To get started, try walking through your school, biking around your neighborhood, or taking a bus ride through your town. During the course of your travels, you will naturally see different aspects of your community as you shop at stores, gather at your Girl Scout meeting place, go to school, and so on. You can also visit places (such as the library, town hall, or community center, church, synagogue, or mosque) where there are people and resources that can help you identify community needs. You might even attend town meetings to find out what concerns people in your area.

Continue to draw your map by writing down the things you see that could be improved or places where your special talents and skills could be used. (Tip: Go back to your journey(s) for more ideas about spotting community needs.) When you meet people who might be able to help you with your project, jot down their names and contact information in the following Community Contact List.

Step 5: Pick Your Take Action Project

You have come a long way to get to this point! Now that you have thought about the issues you care about and explored your community, it is time to choose a project based upon what you have learned.

Before you pick your project:

- Review your Issues Chart, community map, and interview notes. If you are working with a team, do this together, of course! If you are on your own, pull a few people together (such as your troop/group volunteer, friends, sisters or brothers, a teacher, and so on) to help you sort through all you have gathered.
- Choose a project based upon what matters most to you or where you think you can create some positive change. If you have a hard time deciding, write a pro/con list for each choice. If you are working on this part solo, ask your troop/group volunteer for help.
- Many issues are big and complicated—and hard to fix! It might be a good idea to narrow your focus. Pick just one aspect of your issue, and then develop a solution to that specific problem. (Imagine focusing a camera lens in order to get a clear picture. The process of focusing an idea so it is simple and clear is just like that.)
- Remember, you can always go back to your Journey books for project ideas and examples.

After you have chosen your project, make sure everyone is clear about what you want to do and why.

As a team, answer these questions:

What is our project? _____

Why does it matter? _____

Who will it help? _____

Think about the following:

Which of your leadership skills do you think you will use as you work on your Take Action project? _____

How will these skills help you better understand who you are and what you can do? _____

How will you live the Girl Scout Promise and Law while earning your Girl Scout Silver Award? _____

Step 6: Develop Your Project

Now that you have chosen a project, it is time to make a plan.

Before You Start

The following questions will help you think through your project before you get started:

What steps do we need to take to reach our goal? _____

What special talents can each girl or I use to help make the project a success? _____

What did we learn while earning Girl Scout Cadette journey awards that will help us make sure this project runs smoothly? _____

Do we know enough to get started or do we need more background information? Where can we get that information? _____

Which groups or organizations can we work with? Who can we ask for help? _____

How can we get other people involved? _____

What supplies will we need? _____

How will we earn money for our project, if necessary? *Your troop volunteer can help you come up with money-earning ideas that follow Girl Scout policies. You can also seek donations—for example, if you want to create a mural, the owner of the local hardware store may give you paint. And remember, your time and talents are often more important than money. For example, one girl was worried about food waste at her school. She could have raised money to buy compost bins. Instead, she used her advocacy skills to persuade school and town officials to set up a composting system. So be creative! You may realize you don't need that much money after all.* _____

How much time do we need to finish our project? Is that timeline realistic? _____

Make It Last

You will be investing a lot of yourself in your project, so of course you will want to develop it in such a way that it keeps going even after you are done. After all, this is a chance for you to make your mark in your community!

For example, if you think the kids at your local elementary school need more interesting stuff to do at recess, you might plan a week of special activities. But then what? Well, how about planning team games that the fourth-graders can do with the second graders all the time! Your Take Action project keeps going and going and going. . .

Remember to keep it simple! A clear, focused, and well-thought-out plan can often be more sustainable than taking on a huge project. Here are some examples of Take Action projects that will last:

Take Action Project #1

Problem: Kids can not walk to school safely because there are not any sidewalks.

Root cause: Lack of planning when the roads were built.

Solution with long-term impact: Create a petition asking that a sidewalk be built, get local residents to sign it, and present it to the city council.

Making the solution sustainable:

- Once the sidewalk is built, it will be in place for years, offering a safe route for future generations.
- You may need to encourage kids to change their habits and walk—that can be a fun group activity.

Take Action Project #2

Problem: Children in homeless shelters often struggle in school.

Root cause: Lack of stability and family resources, both financial and emotional.

Solution with long-term impact: Work with a local homeless shelter and school to establish an ongoing tutoring program that matches student volunteers with children in the shelter.

Making the solution sustainable:

- Work with the school and shelter to find adult staff members who will continue to coordinate the program.
- Establish a transition tradition, such as an end-of-school-year party, where potential new student volunteers can meet current volunteers and people in the homeless shelter.

Find a Project Advisor

Your project advisor is an expert who can answer specific questions about your issue. Look at your list of the people you met while researching issues. Is there someone who can serve as a project advisor? If you have not yet met anyone who is familiar with your issue, talk to your troop volunteer. She or he might be able to help you identify experts in your community.

My Project Advisor is _____

Make a Global Connection

Think about others who may have worked on the same problem in the past, or check the Internet to see how others around the globe deal with your issue. What can you learn from their approach? Consider how you may be able to extend the reach of your project into other communities besides your own. Are there ways to share your plan with other communities facing the same issue? Can you create a plan other people could replicate in their own communities?

Take One Last Look

By this point, you are probably anxious to get started. But before you get going, take a step back and look at your project one more time. You may need to narrow your focus a bit more or shift your approach slightly in order to make the project work. That is okay! Taking some time to fine-tune your project now will make it easier to actually get it done.

Ask other people for feedback, especially your troop/group volunteer. She or he will make sure your project idea is complete and meets all the requirements for a Girl Scout Silver Award Take Action project. Even though you have done a lot of work already, remember to be open to new ideas and suggestions. You may need to rethink certain parts of your project idea, but this will help you refine your project and make it better. Once your project idea meets the requirements, you will be ready to get started!

Step 7: Make a Plan and Put It Into Motion

It is time to get started! Your project needs to involve action by you and your Silver Award Team (if you have one), from the planning stages all the way to earning the Girl Scout Silver Award. Build a list of what you need to do and how it can be done, and then figure out who will be doing what. Remember that you are a team, so one or more girls can volunteer for each task. Also decide when each task needs to be finished. Write all the information in a Make a Plan chart like the one that follows.

Make a Plan

What Is the Task?	Who Will Do It?	How will the Task Be Done?	When will It Be Done?
<i>Research how a petition is presented to the city council.</i>	<i>Monique</i>	<i>Talk to a council member or the mayor</i>	<i>September 7</i>

When your steps are identified and your plan is set . . . do it! Keep a record as you go by taking photos, shooting video, or making a scrapbook. Not only will it make it easier to share your story when you are finished, but it is lots of fun!

Step 8: Create a Timeline

Document your progress. Outline specific tasks as they are completed, how much time did you spend on each task, and the number of volunteers needed for each. This is a good way to determine if your project will take 50 hours. Here is a sample timeline for you. A blank timeline is included in the final paperwork on page 16.

The timeline needs to be included in your final paperwork.

Task (use additional paper if necessary)	# of Volunteers needed	Date	Time spent on activity	Subtotal of time	How leadership demonstrated
<i>Example: By Aug 1 hold meeting with GS troop to plan work day.</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Aug 1</i>	<i>1 hr. 25 min</i>	<i>1 hr. 25 min</i>	<i>Scheduled meeting, ran meeting, & assigned tasks</i>
<i>Example: By the second Friday of August, I will turn in my project plan and schedule my initial interview on the third Sat. of August.</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>Aug 15</i>	<i>40 mins</i>	<i>2 hrs. 5 min</i>	<i>None to report.</i>

Step 9: Reflect, Share Your Story, and Celebrate

Congratulations, you have completed a project that makes a difference! Take some time to reflect and share what you have accomplished. Here are some ideas for how you can share your story:

- Create a Web site or blog about what you learned and how your project helped your community.
- Log on to some Web sites where you can share your story:
 - World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts: www.waggggs.org/en/take_action
 - Taking it Global: www.tigweb.org
 - Global Youth Service Day: www.globalyouthserviceday.org
- At a workshop for community members, present what you have learned and what your project did for the community, or do a presentation for a group of younger Girl Scouts—you will definitely inspire them!
- Make a video about your project and post it online. Invite friends, community leaders, and people from organizations that are tackling a similar issue to watch and share your video with others.
- Write an essay or an article for your local or school newspaper.

As you wind down your project, remember to thank all the people who helped you along the way, from the people you interviewed to those who drove you around town! Not only is this good manners, but also an inspiration to people when they hear what you have done—and they will be proud to know they helped make it happen.

Now celebrate your accomplishment!

You took the challenge and made a difference in your world.

Girl Scout Silver Award Take Action Project

Final Report

Instructions: Please print legibly or use electronic copy. Make a copy for your advisor and for yourself. Submit completed Final Report, Project Information and Timeline to Jennifer Barker, Grand Island Service Center, 2512 North Webb Road, Grand Island, NE 68803 or email to jbarker@girlscoutsnebraska.org.

Your Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ Phone (Cell) _____

Email _____

School _____ Grade _____

5-Digit Troop Number (if applicable) _____ Number of years in Girl Scouting _____

Troop Leader _____ Phone _____

Troop Leader email _____

Girl Scout Silver Award Project Advisor _____

Project Advisor Phone _____

Project Advisor Email _____

Which Journey did you complete? _____ Date completed _____

Project Advisor Signature _____

Girl Scout Silver Award

Project Information

Project Title _____

Start date _____ Completion date _____

On a separate piece(s) of paper please answer the following questions and include entire document with your paperwork.

1. What did you discover about yourself?
2. How did you connect with your local and global communities? Who do you know now that you did not know before?
3. How did those connections help make your project better?
4. What skills did you gain (such as public speaking, team building, advocacy, blogging, and so on) that helped you as a leader?
5. What impact did your Take Action project have on your community? How will it go on past your involvement?
6. How did you live the Girl Scout Promise and Law?

Please attach Project Timeline showing time spent on project (50 hours minimum) and listing completed tasks.

Include pictures of your project that we can share or publish.

Girl Scout signature _____ Date _____

Project Advisor signature _____ Date _____

Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska

Silver Award Information Bio

Name _____ Troop Number _____

Email _____

School _____ Grade _____

Number of years in Girl Scouting _____

Parent Names _____

Troop Leader _____

Project Advisor _____

Title of Silver Award Project _____

Project Description _____

Spirit of Nebraska

2012 Ceremony Intent Form Silver Award

Congratulations! By earning a Silver Award, you may attend a Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska Award Ceremony or you may have your own ceremony to honor your accomplishment. Please indicate below how you plan to celebrate your accomplishments.

_____ We plan to hold our own ceremony

_____ We plan to attend a council ceremony, please check which one

_____ Guiding Star Service Center

_____ Prairie Hills Service Center

_____ Great Plains Service Center

_____ Goldenrod Service Center

_____ Homestead Service Center

Girls

Girl Name _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Email _____

Leader Name _____

Troop Number _____

Leader Email _____

**Please return this form with your final report by March 31st.
Mail to Jennifer Barker at 2512 N. Webb Rd., Grand Island, NE 68803
or email to jbarker@girlscoutsnebraska.org.**