

Basic Information about Ceremonies

Ceremonies are important part of Girl Scouting but they also can seem overwhelming and confusing.

Here are three main points to keep in mind:

- 1) girls should help plan each ceremony to make it girl led and meaningful,
- 2) girls, even Brownies, can remember and perform ceremonies very well,
- 3) make sure each girl has a role in the ceremony.

An **investiture ceremony** is held to welcome girls and adults into Girl Scouting for the first time. A rededication ceremony is held for returning Girl Scouts to renew their Girl Scout Promise and Law. Many times, these two ceremonies are held at the same time and take place after 4 meetings. Like all ceremonies in Girl Scouting, this ceremony can be as simple or elaborate as the troop likes. The ceremony often includes the Girl Scouts' families in a potluck type event.

One way to do the **investiture/rededication ceremony** is to have a table set up in the front of the room with candle holders and 10 candles placed on it. (Holders and candles can be borrowed from the council.) The girls start with a flag ceremony. Then, the girls take turns walking up to the table, lighting the candle, and saying a part of the GS Law. Then, the troop leader (or parent) pins each girl with her GS pin. Older Girl Scouts can welcome younger Girls Scouts as part of the investiture. The girls can do the GS handshake. After all the girls have been pinned, the flags should be retreated. Then, everyone could enjoy a song and potluck.

It is nice to have parents play a role in the **Daisy GS investiture**. One idea was to have the girls stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the parents behind them. After each girl recites the GS Promise, she could turn around and have her parent/guardian pin on her GS pin. Brownies are often pinned upside down. Their Brownie pin won't be turned up until they do one good deed.

Bridging ceremonies are usually held in May when girls are about to move up a level. The girls often cross a bridge to symbolize moving from one level to another. If no bridge is available, it is possible to get creative. For instance, you can write each girl's name on a large rock and create stepping stones for the girls to cross. Leaders may also borrow a bridge from the council. It is also nice to have an older troop at the other end of the bridge to welcome the girls into the next level.

A **flag ceremony** is a good way to start and end all meetings. For instructions on how to perform one and to learn about all GS ceremonies visit: http://www.girlscouts.org/program/gc_central/ceremonies/ For more ideas on how to make a ceremony special, contact the council or search online for some new ideas. The council also has a copy of the Farthest North Girl Scout Council's ceremony training available to check out.