**Involving parents & other family members in unit guiding**

This pack aims to help unit leaders involve parents and family members in unit-level guiding. It explains why involving family members is a good idea and contains practical advice and tools to approach parents and welcome them into your unit.

**Contents**

1. Why involve parents & other family members?

2. How to ask parents & family members for help?

3. How to welcome parents & family members into your unit

4. Involving parents and family members in unit meetings

**Templates and resources in this pack**

A. Help us give your daughter a great guiding experience

*Template form to help you get to know parents & families of girls in your unit*

B. For unit leaders – detailed list of task to share

*This sheet is to help you think about the tasks you could share around parents & family members. It’s for inspiration rather than sharing with parents.*

C. Get involved! Sample advert sheet

*Examples of how you can bring tasks to life in adverts for use in newsletters, your meeting place, etc.*

D. Unit leader welcome checklist

*This covers everything a unit leader should consider before, during and after welcoming a new volunteer in the unit meeting place for the first time*

**Involving parents & other family members in unit guiding**

**1. Why involve parents & other family members?**

Involving parents and other family members in unit-level guiding will help unit leaders in many ways. It will spread the workload and help deliver a great programme. Using the skills and expertise of family members will broaden the opportunities you can offer. Parents and family members also benefit. They will gain skills and confidence, make new friends and see first-hand what a great experience you are giving girls.

**2. How to ask parents & family members for help?**

**2.1 Make a personal ask**

1. Start by identifying the specific tasks you need help with e.g. needing a craft expert to come up with new craft ideas.

2. Next, identify the parents who have helped out at unit trips or on a night when you were short of adults. You’ll also want to think about which parents are interested in and engaged with the unit and what is happening in the meetings.

3. Make a personal approach to one of the adults you have identified, make a specific ask - ‘I need help on x night with y,’ ‘I know you are very skilled in x would you consider taking on x for the unit?’ Make it time-limited for x week/s.

4. A face to face conversation is the most effective way to get a positive response. If that is not possible then a telephone call is second best.

5. Emphasise that their support will help the unit offer a better programme to girls, that they clearly share the values of Girlguiding and have the skills that you need.

**2.2 Get to know new families**

While a personal ask is often the most successful way to recruit, there may be parents and family members that you’ve not yet had a chance to get to know. We’ve created a template (see page 5-6) to help you reach out to new contacts in a way that showcases the wide variety of ways that family members can support units. Once you see the activities that adults are willing to help with, you can follow up with a personal invitation to chat further.

If you issue this template, remember that you’ll need to keep any info collected safe in line with Girlguiding’s data protection policies.

**2.3 Be creative**

Asking people to come forward as unit helpers doesn’t really describe what that person will actually do when they join. The template task sheet includes lots of tasks that you could share out among parents and family members. We’ve created a more detailed list of tasks for leaders to help you think through exactly how you can use parent support within your unit (see page 7-9).

We’ve also put together some sample adverts (see page 10) to highlight the ways that you could bring tasks to life for parents and family members. While a personal ask is ideal, it’s also true that people are more likely to act if they see a message multiple times. Why not underline that you need support by putting up an advert in your meeting place or including an opportunity sheet within your next unit newsletter.

**3. How to welcome parents & family members into your unit**

When a parent or family member offers to help, the first thing to do is let your commissioner know. Discuss with your commissioner who will cover which parts of the welcome and induction process with the new helper.

Agree who will:

Help the new helper register on the Girlguiding website, explain how to complete the online form and help them through the process.

Discuss the code of conduct for volunteers and send a link to the code by email for reference.

Discuss the Safeguarding policy and their role in following it and send the link to A Safe Space training.

Talk about how they will manage working in the unit with their own child/ family member.

**4. Involving parents and family members in unit meetings**

Our brand new leaders’ checklist for welcoming new volunteers (see page 11-12) covers everything you need to consider when involving a new volunteer in a unit meeting. We’ve picked out some of the key points when a new volunteer is also a parent or family member of a girl in the unit:

1. Before the meeting, work out which tasks you are going to give to the new helper. Make sure these involve interaction with the girls and not just setting out and clearing up the crafts or washing up.

2. Remember to take a step back and delegate.

3. Introduce the new helper to the other members of the team and the girls and make sure they are welcomed.

4. Before the girls arrive, show the new helper where everything is, toilets, kitchen, craft cupboard, etc. Explain the protocol around girls going to the toilet.

5. During the meeting make sure the new helper is involved throughout and interacts with the girls.

6. At the end of the meeting, take time to have a chat about how the meeting went, did she/he enjoy it? Any questions?

7. Finally say a big thank you for helping and let them know you are looking forward to seeing them next week.

**Parental help at virtual/online meetings**

Parents can still help at meetings whilst we are not meeting face to face. Examples of ways in which they can help include:

* helping to run the technology whilst in the meetings
* managing the splitting up of the group into rooms for group activities
* preparing and demonstrating crafts
* making up and delivering crafts/information to the girls.

You just need to make sure any parent involved in online guiding has completed the appropriate level of safe space training and any other necessary checks.

**Additional templates and resources follow**

A. Help us give your daughter a great guiding experience

*Template form to help you get to know parents & families of girls in your unit*

B. For unit leaders – detailed list of tasks to share

*This sheet is to help you think about the tasks you could share around parents & family members. It’s for inspiration rather than sharing with parents.*

C. Get involved! Sample advert sheet

*Examples of how you can bring tasks to life in adverts for use in newsletters, your meeting place, etc.*

D. Unit leader welcome checklist

*This covers everything a unit leader should consider before, during and after welcoming a new volunteer in the unit meeting place for the first time*

**Help us give your daughter a**

**great guiding experience**

**Did you know that everyone involved in delivering guiding in our unit is a volunteer? We all contribute whatever time we can to make guiding happen.**

**We’re appealing for help to ensure we’re able to deliver great experiences in the coming year. There are lots of ways to lend your support. We know that some of you would prefer to stay behind the scenes or can’t give much time but there really is an opportunity for everyone.**

**If you can support us in some way, let us know by returning the below form. We’ll then contact you if a specific opportunity arises.**

**Thank you!**

**Your name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

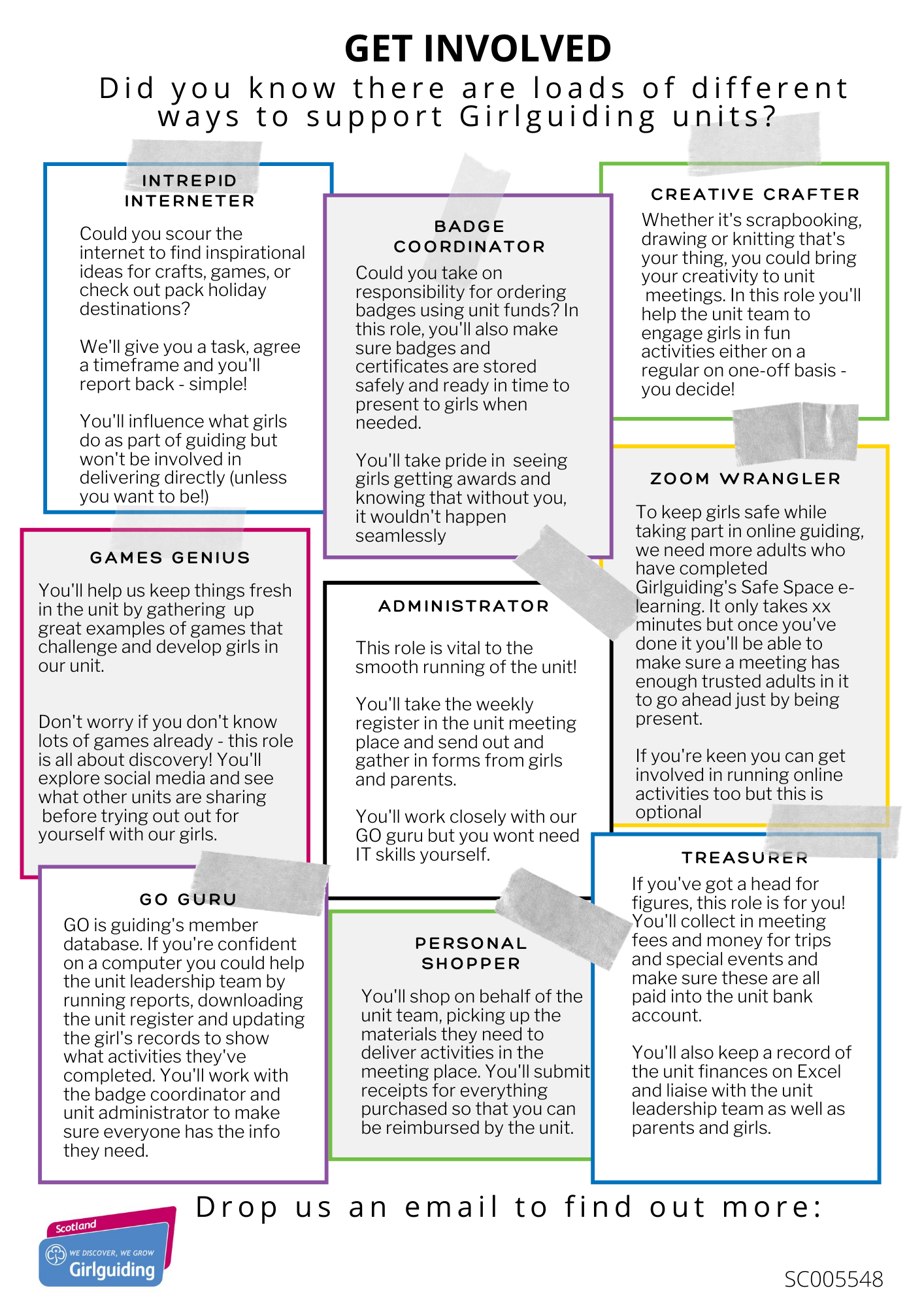
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tasks** | **I can help!** |
| **Working directly with girls** | |
| **Help out at Rainbows (5-7 years)** |  |
| **Help out at Brownies (7-10 years)** |  |
| **Help out at Guides (10-14 years)** |  |
| **Help out at Rangers (14-18 years)** |  |
| **Helping run activities online** |  |
| **Helping run activities outdoors** |  |
| **Helping run activities in the meeting place** |  |
| **Helping on occasional weekend trips or outings** |  |
| **First aid** |  |
| **Taking photos** |  |
| **Helping with cooking activities** |  |
| **Helping with craft activities** |  |
| **Helping at camp** |  |
| **Assisting with badge work** |  |
| **Behind the scenes** | |
| **Ordering badges (can be done online or by telephone)** |  |
| **Updating girl records to show badge work completed** |  |
| **Help preparing letters and other admin** |  |
| **Help with budgeting and account-keeping** |  |
| **Help with Gift Aid claims** |  |
| **Coordinating the parent helper rota** |  |
| **Help plan events or trips** |  |
| **Help transport equipment to events or camps** |  |
| **Help set up/clear down after camp** |  |
| **Help plan fundraising activities** |  |
| **Update our social media** |  |
| **Collecting shopping on behalf of the unit** |  |
| **Carry out risk assessments** |  |
| **If you’re able to support the unit in another way, please let us know here…** | |
|  | |
| **How we'll look after your data** | |
| **What will you do with my data?**  It’s simple. We need the information you share with us to manage these opportunities and to satisfy our legal responsibilities. We’ll keep it safe for as long as long as your daughter is a member of our unit.  We promise we’ll only share your information if:  – you ask us to  – the law requires us  – in order to comply with our policies so your daughter can enjoy an activity safely  – we carry out market research  – it’s in the public interest  Don’t worry – we’ll never sell your data or share it for any other reason.  Girlguiding Scotland is the registered data controller (the organisation that manages and looks after your data) for all our members’ personal information, both in the UK and around the world.  Want to find out more about how we use your information – and your rights? You can view our [privacy notice](https://www.girlguidingscotland.org.uk/privacy/). | |

**FOR UNIT LEADERS – Detailed list of tasks to share**

Many of the below tasks can be completed by someone in the role of either unit helper, unit occasional helper or unit residential helper. For unit-based roles, the choice you make will be determined by how often they are helping out and whether it involves residential activity. Other tasks are more specialist and would fall under the administrator or treasurer role. You can find out the requirements attached to different roles here**:** <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/membership-administration/access-levels/unit_roles.pdf>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tasks included within the parent support appeal form (above)** | **What could you actually ask the parent to do?** |
| **Working directly with girls** | |
| **Help out at Rainbows (5-7 years)** | These are more general categories within the template form to help identify any parents that might be interested in working with a different age group to the unit their daughter attends. If a parent chooses this option but doesn’t fill out any of the below, have a chat to them about what they’d be interested in – you might have some potential leaders on your hands!  Be sure to pass their details to your commissioner if they’re interested in trying another section. |
| **Help out at Brownies (7-10 years)** |
| **Help out at Guides (10-14 years)** |
| **Help out at Rangers (14-18 years)** |
| **Helping run activities online** | You could ask the parent to help manage the groups in breakout rooms for example or get them to lead icebreaker games while you get ready to run the next activity. This person will need to have the appropriate level of safe space and recruitment check for the role they are asked to play. |
| **Helping run activities outdoors** | You could ask the parent to research activities that would work well outdoors, linking in with social media groups or other unit teams to gain ideas and keep things fresh. They’d then run them within the meeting. |
| **Helping run activities in the meeting place** | You could ask a parent to run a Unit Meeting Activity using one of the cards as a one off. Or you ask them to lead games or share a skill. |
| **Helping on occasional weekend trips or outings** | This is a great way to really showcase the benefits of guiding. Give parents defined tasks to support while joining the unit on a trip or outing so they feel like they’re making a meaningful contribution rather than simply being an extra body. |
| **First aid** | This is another task that a parent could help with. They’d need the appropriate training of course but it could give you a lot more flexibility in the unit if you know you can call on some parent first aiders. |
| **Taking photos** | You could ask a parent helper to visit the unit meeting place or come along to an event or trip as photographer. This will make it easy to showcase the fun you’ve offered girls on social media, in your newsletters, etc. The same parent might also be involved in gathering photo consent or they might work with another parent who is taking on this task for you. |
| **Helping with cooking activities** | You might have a gifted baker or budding chef among your parent group. Use their skills to free up your time to focus on other activities. |
| **Helping with craft activities** | There are lots of options here. You could have someone scan the internet or books to find new activities or have someone generate shopping lists, cost out activities, etc as part of the planning process and/or deliver the activity directly to girls. A parent could also be asked to manage your craft cupboard or box and keep it topped up with essential supplies. |
| **Helping at camp** | There are loads of tasks associated with camp. Whether it is to do with setting up tents, collecting firewood, running activities, providing first aid, etc, there really could be something for everyone. |
| **Assisting with badge work** | You might find that parents have jobs or skills that connect directly with our programme themes. You could ask them to talk to girls, lead a programme activity or help assess badge work. |
| **Behind the scenes** | |
| **Ordering badges (can be done online or by telephone)** | Ask a parent to liaise with leaders to make sure any badges needed are ordered in advance and that there’s a bank of spares. As well as ordering badges, they could make sure they are stored neatly and that any certificates are ready for presentation. |
| **Updating girl records to show badge work completed** | A parent could be asked to take on admin roles to ensure GO is kept up to date. They’d take information supplied by the unit leader and update girls’ records after completing the appropriate afe space training and other recruitment checks needed. |
| **Help preparing letters and other admin** | A parent could be asked to prepare letters about trips, the term’s programme, etc. They could also be asked to collect in consent forms, etc, and keep a log of who hasn’t returned them. |
| **Help with budgeting and account-keeping** | If parents have financial expertise they could be asked to put those skills to use by budgeting for large events/ international trips or by maintaining the weekly accounts of the unit using the accounts package. |
| **Help with Gift Aid claims** | Gift Aid can be a huge benefit to the unit so don’t miss out simply because no one in the unit team has time to complete the claim. You may have parents who already have experience of claiming Gift Aid who could take this on for you. |
| **Coordinating the parent helper rota** | If someone has a flair for managing information, they could be tasked with coordinating a parent rota to make sure you always have enough support to run meetings and that that people are asked to support the meetings that best suit their skills and interests. |
| **Help plan events or trips** | Parents could be asked to suggest venues or activities based on experience or engaged in researching particular transport providers. They might have connections that could help you obtain a discount or access a special service. |
| **Help transport equipment to events or camps** | If parents are travelling to events or camps with their children anyway they may be happy to transport items for you. |
| **Help set up/clear down after camp** | Parents could be asked to arrive early or stay late to help spreading the load of setting up or clearing away camp |
| **Help plan fundraising activities** | You might have someone who fundraises as part of their work role within your parent group. They could take the lead in arranging fundraising activities such as bag packing. |
| **Update our social media** | You could ask a parent to be in charge of running a unit Facebook page or Twitter account for example in line with our social media policies and procedures. |
| **Collecting shopping on behalf of the unit** | You could ask a parent pick up and drop off any items needed to run the meeting. Make sure you explain the process for claiming expenses at the same time. This person could double as a party planner, working out exactly what’s needed for unit celebrations, costing up items within a budget and then ordering/ collecting them in time for your event. |
| **Carry out risk assessments** | Getting a fresh perspective on a risk assessment can be really valuable as they may spot things you’ve missed. A parent could do an initial draft or they could look over one someone else has completed. |

Here’s an example of different ways you could bring tasks to life for parents. There’s room to be creative and flexible when advertising. If anyone expresses interest just make sure you’re upfront about requirements in terms of PVG, Safe Space and recruitment checks.

****

