



GSME Leader Guide to Going Bronze





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7 Steps to Bronze

Step 1



Build your Girl Scout Junior team

Your team is you and other Girl Scout Juniors who are on this adventure together, plus your troop/group volunteers.

Step 2



Explore your community

Take a close look at what's going on right around you. Start by exploring your community: your block, your neighborhood, or your school. Keep your eyes open for ways you can make a positive change.

Step 3



Choose your Bronze Award project

Research your team's top community issues, discover root causes, and decide which issue interests you the most.

Step 4



Make a plan

Now that you've chosen an idea, it's time to make a plan. Work out your budget, goals, and who else you might need to help with your project.

Step 5



Put your plan in motion

Now that you have an overall plan, it's time to make a list of tasks and figure out who will be doing what. Remember, you're a team, so one or more girls can volunteer for each task.

Step 6



Spread the word

Think about what you did, why it mattered, and what you learned. Put your story together so that you can share it with others!

Step 7



Celebrate

Be sure to celebrate what you've done. Not only have you had a great adventure, but you've helped create a better world!

Girl Scouts of Maine

For more information about the Bronze Award, please visit www.girlscoutsofmaine.org/bronzeaward.



Thank you for helping girls earn their Bronze Award!

The Girl Scout Bronze Award is the highest honor a Girl Scout Junior can earn. With your support girls:



Discover

- Who they are
- What they care about
- Their talents
- The world



Connect

- With each other
- With others in their community and around the world



Take Action

- To make the world a better place

We call this the Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE). It's a special opportunity that gives girls real-world skills that they'll use for a lifetime. Thank you for making the Bronze Award experience possible for girls!



How to use this guide

The guide is designed to help you feel comfortable with the Bronze Award Take Action project so that you'll know what the project is – and what it isn't. You'll also learn about Bronze Award requirements, the seven steps girls take to earn the Bronze Award, and tips to help you guide girls each step of the way. Use the checklist on page 19 to keep track of actions the Bronze Award team has completed and to ensure that the team meets award requirements.



Resources

For additional Highest Award Resources be sure to visit the GSME Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award webpages. Or, if you'd like to discuss a Take Action project idea before girls start please email, customercare@gsmaine.org



Your role in the Bronze Award project

Your role in the Bronze Award Take Action project is primarily as a guide. This is true whether you're a troop leader, assistant leader, a project volunteer, or a parent. When you think about your role, keep the Girl Scouts Leadership Experience (GSLE) in mind. The girls should:



Lead project activities
(Girl-led)



Learn by doing



Work together
(Cooperative Learning)

Though you won't be directly participating in their project, you can make suggestions and help keep the Bronze Award team on track. You can also help girls find the resources they need, like helping them connect with and visit community experts. You can encourage girls and ensure their safety by following Girl Scout safety guidelines. And, of course, have fun! It's amazing to watch what girls can do. When the girls wrap up, plan to celebrate!

You know girls are getting the Girl Scout Leadership Experience if you can check these boxes as they work on their Bronze Award Take Action project:

Girl-Led

- Making decisions
- Running activities and meetings *(as appropriate for their age)*

Learn By Doing

- Being active
- Going places

Cooperative Learning

- Working together and having fun
- Being part of a group



About the Bronze Award Project

The Bronze Award Take Action project may be different from other projects you’ve done with your troop or girl. For example, lots of Girl Scouts community projects, like collecting coats for the homeless, or pet food for a shelter. These projects are great, but they are community projects. The Bronze Award project is a Take Action project.

Before your girls begin, it’s helpful to understand the difference between a community project and a take action project. Girls are often familiar with service projects and might suggest one for their Bronze Award. You can help them understand the difference:



Community Service vs. Take Action projects

Community Service Projects	Take Action Projects
Are done for the community	Are done with the community
Solve a problem “right now” like collecting food for food bank. The food feeds the hungry “right now”, but collecting and donating food doesn’t solve or reduce the root cause of why people go hungry.	Look at what causes the issue (root causes) and work to eliminate or reduce the cause.
Are a one-time deal.	Have the potential for making a lasting impact.

Often a community project idea can be developed into a Take Action project. For example, girls may want to collect items for a crowded pet shelter; that’s a community project. But if girls partner with the shelter to understand the root causes of overcrowded shelters and come up with a solution, like workshops to educate others about spaying and neutering, that’s a Take Action project.

Know that you can always contact the [Highest Awards & Teen Experience Program Specialist](#) to discuss a project idea to ensure that girls are on the right track before they begin.



Elements of a Take Action project

Take action projects have up to five elements. Bronze Award requires two, the Silver Award requires three, and the Gold Award requires all five elements. In this way, girls learn something new and have opportunities to be challenged in different ways as they earn the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

Girl Scout Highest Awards Take Action Project Required Elements

	Leadership	Root Cause	Sustainable	Measurable	Global Link
Bronze Juniors					
Silver Cadettes					
Gold Seniors/ Ambassadors					



= Required element



= Introduce concept to girls

To earn a Bronze Award, girls need to:



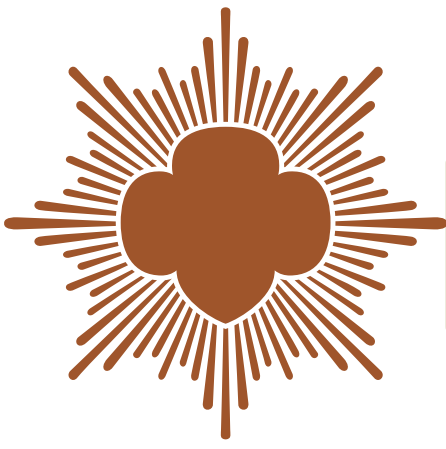
Show leadership. Girl Scout Juniors show leadership by working together as a team and by working with community members. They also show leadership by taking action to make a positive change in their community.



Research and address a root cause of an issue in their community. Girl Scout Juniors observe their community for issues that interest them. They research these issues and talk with community members to understand the root cause. Learn about root causes on page 9.



Understand sustainability. A sustainable project isn't required for the Bronze Award, but we recommend introducing the concept to help girls prepare for other Highest Awards. Learn about sustainability on page 14 and help girls brainstorm how they could make their project sustainable.



How You Can Help

You can make the prospect of the Bronze Award come alive by sharing stories or videos about what other Bronze Award teams have done (search “Girl Scout Bronze Award video” online). Remember, that’s just for inspiration. Girls should explore their community, become excited about making a change, and take action in a way that’s meaningful to them.



What you need to know about Root Cause

The concept of “root cause” may be new to you. The following scenario might help:

Imagine that you’ve agreed to take care of a neighbor’s garden while she is on vacation. You drop by after dinner and notice that all the plants are drooping. You quickly grab the hose and water the plants. Whew! You solved the problem.

The next day, the plants look worse. Why? Well, you assumed that the cause of the wilted plants was lack of water. But the plants seem to be drooping for another reason. Maybe they have pests. Maybe they’ve had too much water. Maybe they aren’t the kind of plants that last. As you can see, it’s important to know the real root cause before taking action.

You find the real root cause **by researching and talking to experts in the community**. In this case, you could research the type of plant to understand its needs. You could visit a plant nursery and ask an expert. When you ask “why”, you find real root cause. For the Bronze Award project, guide girls to research, connect with the community experts, and ask why (sometimes more than once) to find root causes. Then help them design a Take Action project that reduces or eliminates a root cause.

Sample

Bronze Award Take Action project | Safer School Zone

Girl Scout Troop 1912 was excited to earn their Bronze Award. They agreed to be extra observant at school and in their neighborhood to discover potential issues that could be the focus of a Take Action project. They came together as a team to share ideas, and they chose three ideas to explore. Their leader helped them connect with community members who could help them learn more. As a troop, they decided to focus on an unsafe street near their school.

They discovered root causes: they had seen cars speeding on the street, the crossing guard told them about several “close calls” caused by drivers who didn’t slow down, and the news had reported several accidents nearby.

The troop asked the leader to help them find out how citizens request a stop sign. The girls visited the traffic division at a police station and a local government office. They showed **leadership** by partnering with their community to find a solution. They applied what they learned to write a letter requesting a stop sign. And they did a petition drive to collect signatures at school and in the neighborhood.

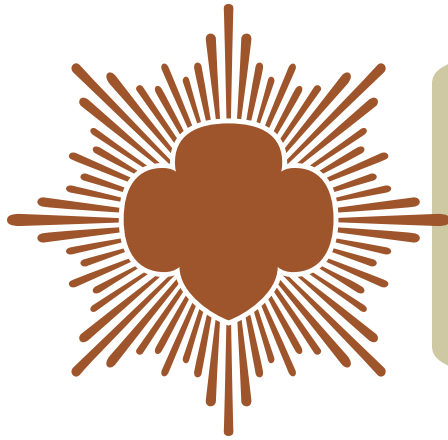
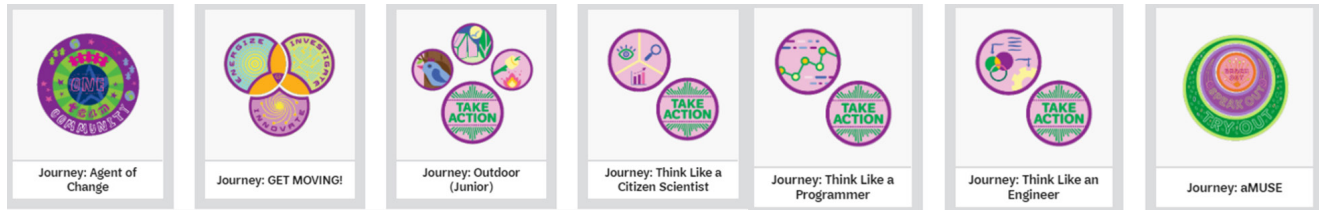
They felt proud when the stop sign was approved and installed. The crossing guard confirmed that the flow of traffic was much safer. To prepare them for future Highest Awards, **their troop leader introduced the concept of sustainability**. The girls were pleased that their stop sign was a permanent solution that would impact the traffic even though their project was done.

When the girls asked if they could celebrate earning their award with a party, their leader said YES!



Go on a Junior Journey

Why do a Journey? Junior Journeys help girls build skills like how to plan and work with a team. And Journeys provide girls with new experiences, like meeting people in their community. Girls need these skills and experiences to succeed on their Bronze Award Take Action project. They'll also earn new leadership awards (see the Journey for details).



How You Can Help

Share Junior Journey options with girls. Visit the [Award and Badge Explorer](#). Select Junior as the grade level and Journeys as the topic. Print a PDF to share with the girls, who can then choose one Journey that they'll work on together. Classic Junior Journeys are available in book format at the Girl Scout shop. Digital Junior Journeys are available in the Volunteer Toolkit.

Once girls have completed their Journey, have them reflect on the questions in their Guide to Going Bronze, page 8, and give them time to discuss the answers to these questions together.





Getting started

Before you begin, confirm that the girls interested in earning the Bronze Award:

- ✓ Are in grades four or five.
- ✓ Are Girl Scout Juniors.
- ✓ Have each completed a Girl Scout Junior Journey (including the Journey Take Action project).

STEP 1: Build your team

The Bronze Award Take Action project is a team project. Girl Scout Juniors will go on this adventure together. A whole troop or a group of girls from a troop can be a team.

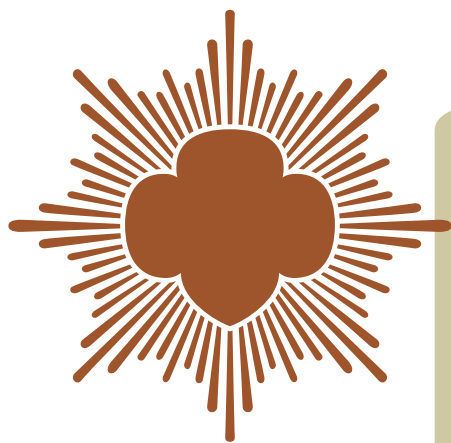
What about Girl Scouts who aren't in a troop? Independently registered girls (IRGs or Juliettes) can absolutely complete Highest Awards, including the Girl Scout Bronze Award. Ask at your service unit about other girls who might be looking to team up. Girls may also invite fourth and fifth grade friends to be on their team.

Note: Friends who aren't Girl Scouts must be covered by non-member Girl Scout accident insurance during Bronze Award activities.

A girl who cannot find a team of peers can team up with experts in her community to complete a Bronze Award project.

After girls have formed their team, they'll meet for their first Bronze Award meeting.

The focus of the meeting should be to encourage team bonding—even if the girls have been in a troop together for years, discussing expectations and group agreements for this process.



How You Can Help

Activity 1: Help girls choose and plan games and activities for this meeting that will help them discover something they didn't know about one another. The girls will find one activity in their Guide to Going Bronze, page 9.

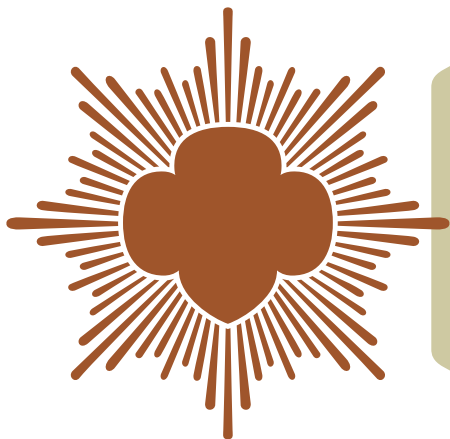
Activity 2: Have fun with the girls by working with them to come up with a Bronze Award team name, slogan, or mascot.

Activity 3: Encourage girls to write down and share the things they love to do on page 10 of their guide. Some of these interests may be useful to know when the girls divide up Bronze Award Take Action project tasks.

Activity 4: Guide girls to create team rules that help the team work together. Jump start the list by talking about the values of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Examples include being on time or listening to each other without interrupting. Post the rules at each team meeting, and refer to them as a reminder if needed.

STEP 2: Explore your community

Asking girls to explore the community around them helps them to connect to their community and expand their view of the world.



How You Can Help

Stress safety. Girls may decide to explore their community on their own, with their families, or together with their team.

Follow supervision and safety guidelines in [Chapter 5 of Volunteer Essentials](#).

Encourage girls to complete the Observation List on page 12 of their Guide to Going Bronze.

Suggest the “If You’re Stuck” activity of page 11 of the girl’s Guide to Going Bronze for any girl who needs help with ideas.



STEP 3: Choose your Bronze Award project

In this step, girls will share their observations and brainstorm ways to learn more. They'll gather to discuss their findings and narrow their ideas down to three and then one.



How You Can Help

Start by having the girls put together their Team Observation List on page 13 of their Guide (top observations from each girl).

Suggest that they brainstorm these observations to come up with ways they might address an issue.

Give girls time to select the group's top three topics/issues—ensure that everyone has a say. Have them write their top three topics/issues on page 14 of their Guide.

Once the team has settled on its top three topics/issues, the girls will need to research to learn about root causes. This may be done online, in the library, or by talking to others in the community. Plan to:

- **Discuss Internet safety** and have girls sign the [Internet Safety Pledge](#) (find it at [girlscoutsofmaine.org](#) under “Girl Scouts at Home”).
- **Help girls become comfortable talking to adults**, like the librarian or an expert in the community. Help the girls practice interviewing skills to help them feel confident when they speak about project ideas.
- **Ensure that every girl has a role to play** in learning more about the team's chosen topics.
- **Suggest that girls write down what they learn** while researching on pages 16-18 of their Guide
- **Help girls finalize their choice.** When the team is ready to choose a topic for their Bronze Award Take Action project, they may have trouble making a decision. Ask them these questions to help them decide:
 - Why does this idea matter?
 - Who will this idea help?
 - What can we do to make a difference? Is that realistic?

The girls may want to take a vote. However, note that while voting works for some teams, it has the potential for causing a “winners vs. losers” situation. Depending on the team, you may want to suggest coming to a consensus. Ask the girls if there is a decision everyone can accept even if it isn't their first choice. Have them write down their choice on page 19 of their Guide.

Wrap up by having the girls summarize their project so that all team members are on the same page and have a concise way of talking about their project with others. Have them complete this statement on page 23 of their Guide: We will know we have made a difference when...

STEP 4: Make a plan

By now, the Bronze Award team has chosen a project and is ready to make a plan to get it done.



How You Can Help

Help girls plan by directing them to think about and answer the planning questions on pages 20-21 of their Guide. Ask them if their plan is realistic and suggest that they brainstorm new directions, if needed. Keep in mind that girls will each need to spend a minimum of 20 hours on their Bronze Award Take Action project.

Introduce the girls to sustainability before they start to put their plan in motion. Sustainability is making a project last, even after the team is done. Discuss the example on page 22 of the girl's Guide. Then, ask the team about how they might make their project sustainable. Here are some examples:

- Partner with someone who can continue the work (i.e., a club at school)
- Hold a workshop that teaches others (what they learn makes a lasting impression)

Though sustainability is not a requirement for the Bronze Award, it's a good idea to talk about sustainability so that the girls become familiar with it. Sustainability is a requirement for the Girl Scout Silver and Gold Award. But, if the team is able to make their Bronze Award Take Action project sustainable, that's great! Go for it!

Ask girls what supplies they think they'll need. They can list these and make a project budget on page 21 of their Guide. When they're done, have them decide how they'll fund their project. Here are some options:

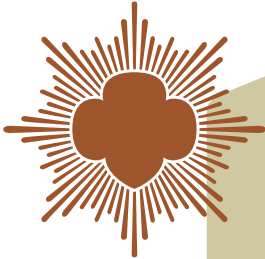
- **Use troop funds.** Troop funds may be used for Bronze Award Take Action projects. Have the troop create and sign a letter agreeing to use the funds in this way. The whole troop must agree, even if only part of the troop is earning the award. Keep the letter with other troop financial records.
- **Plan a money-earning project** to fund the Bronze Award Take Action project. Refer to Volunteer Essentials, Chapter 5: Troop Finances for guidelines. Be sure to submit a [Bronze Award Money Earning Request Form](#) before doing any money earning activities.
- **Let girls know that they cannot raise funds to give to another organization** as part of their Bronze Award Take Action project. It's against Girl Scout policy. In any case, donating money to an organization rarely addresses the root cause of an issue—which is a Bronze Award requirement. When the money is spent, the root cause often still remains unaddressed.

Bronze Award Take Action project requirements are often met using education and advocacy— not by spending large amounts. If the girls have designed a project with a large budget, suggest that they re-evaluate. Ask: Is the project truly a Take Action project?

Girls may be able to get some needed items donated. See [Volunteer Essentials, Chapter 5: Troop Finances for donation guidelines](#).

STEP 5: Put your plan into motion

Help girls work together to figure out the steps they can take to accomplish their project. Keep in mind that girls should each spend 20 hours on their Bronze Award Take Action project.



How You Can Help

Guide girls to find experts in the community who can help them understand the root cause of the project issue.

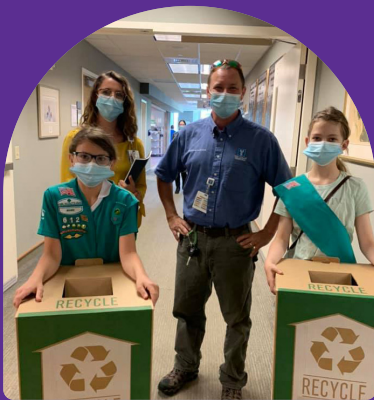
Help girls organize field trips in the community that will help them learn or carry out their project.

Remind girls to wear their uniform when meeting with community members or engaging with others during their Bronze Award Take Action project.

Encourage girls to record the time they spend on the project in their time log on page 25. Time spent researching, planning, and executing the project should be included.

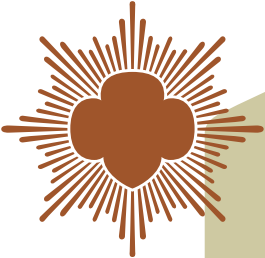
Encourage girls to take photos or shoot video of their project along the way. They'll use these items to tell their Bronze Award story in Step 6: Spread the Word. They submit these with their final report.

IMPORTANT: Keep the focus on what girls are learning as they work on their project. Are they working as a team and making decisions? Are they learning about themselves and their community? Are they building confidence? These are the important outcomes of the project. If their project goal doesn't work out quite like they planned—that's okay!



STEP 6: Spread the word

Each Bronze Award project is a story of inspiration, teamwork, and change for the better. When the girls share it, encourage them to be creative and have fun. Telling their story is one of the best ways to celebrate all that they have accomplished!



How You Can Help

Have girls reflect on their Bronze Award Take Action project experience by discussing and answering the questions on page 26 of their Guide. This activity helps girls learn by reflecting on the experience in new ways. Encourage them to use what they learn when they tell their Bronze Award story. Ensure that each girl has a chance to talk about her answers.

Ask girls how they'd like to share their story. There are lots of possibilities! They can give a presentation to another Girl Scout troop, their service unit, or students at their school. They can even create a display for a local library or community center. Suggest the following sites if girls are interested in sharing online:

- [World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts](#)
- [Taking IT Global](#)
- [Global Youth Service Day](#)

Remember to review the online [Internet Safety Pledge](#) with girls and have them sign it.

Bonus: Help girls look beyond the issue they've chosen and make even broader connections by thinking about how their issue might be addressed in other communities or even in other countries. This is called making a "global link."

Global link is one of the five Take Action project elements. It's not required for the Bronze Award but helping girls begin to think about a global link now opens up their world and helps prepare them for future Highest Awards.

STEP 7: Celebrate

Celebrate, Girl Scout-style! Help girls plan a celebration with their team for all they've accomplished. Troops or Service Units may hold local pinning ceremonies. Girls and their families are encouraged to invite mentors, volunteers, community partners, local dignitaries, and many others to celebrate in the successful completion of their project and the ways in which it helped a community. This celebration can happen any time after a girl has successfully completed her Bronze Award.

To purchase the Bronze Award and Bronze Award memorabilia, visit or call either of our shops. The bronze pin is purchased for the girl by the girl's troop. If the girl is a Juliette, her parent/guardian may purchase the pin.



What comes next?

Final Report - Each troop or group of girls can submit a final report about their Bronze Award Take Action project to Girl Scouts of Maine. Leaders and parents/guardians can access an online or PDF fillable form via the GSME website on the [Bronze Award webpage](#). Typed reports are preferred and are accepted via email to the [Highest Awards & Teen Experience Program Specialist](#) a confirmation email will be sent to the parent and leader within 5 business days.



How You Can Help

Sign off on the final reports. Troop leaders, parents, or any other adult volunteer responsible for guiding girls through the Bronze Award project must digitally sign off on the final report. Approval from you indicates that girls have met award requirements.

Assist girls with submitting the final report. This online form allows girls to upload photos taken during their Bronze Award Take Action project. Help girls who need assistance with this process.

Track final reports. If you don't receive a confirmation email from the [Highest Awards & Teen Experience Program Specialist](#) follow-up with an email to confirm receipt. Encourage girls to make and keep a copy of their final report.

Note: Girl Scouts of Maine does not approve Bronze Award final reports. However, we do review them to learn about and share all the great work girls are doing in their community.

Suggest giving thanks. Encourage girls to thank everyone who has helped along the way. A hand-written note or an email with a project photo means a lot.

Encourage girls to set their sights on the Silver and Gold Awards! Ask them to imagine all they can do by continuing to make positive, sustainable changes in their community and the world.

Girl Scouts Silver Award:



- ✔ Earned by a Girl Scout Cadette (grades 6-8)
- ✔ Girls complete a Cadette Journey before they begin.
- ✔ Girls complete the Going for the Silver training.

Girl Scout Gold Award:



- ✔ Earned by Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors (grades 9-12)
- ✔ Girls complete two Senior or Ambassador Journeys (or just one Journey if they've earned the Silver Award) before they begin.
- ✔ Girls complete the Going for the Gold training before they begin.

Learn more about each of the awards by visiting the [Girl Scouts of Maine Highest Awards webpage](#).



How You Can Help

Gold Award Girl Scouts are widely recognized as leaders who make the world a better place! Let girls know that the Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement in Girl Scouting. The top-tier credential enables girls to distinguish themselves in the college admissions process and earn college scholarships.



Girl Scout Bronze Award checklist

Check these items off to ensure that girls meet Girl Scout Bronze Award requirements.

- Girls are registered Girl Scout Juniors.
- Girls have completed a Junior Journey, including the Take Action project.
- Girls have formed a Bronze Award Team.
- Girls have explored their community to identify issues.
- Girls have researched their topics to understand root causes of community issues.
- Girls have selected a Bronze Award Take Action project based on their interests and passions.
- Girls have discussed the project budget (and unanimously voted to use troop funds, when applicable).
- Girls have worked with community members to understand and accomplish their project (i.e. Teachers, school or public administrators, business leaders, etc.).
- Girls have tracked and recorded the time they have spent on their Bronze Award Take Action project.
- Girls have addressed a real root cause of an issue.
- You and/or the girls have documented the Bronze Award Take Action project by taking photos and/or video.
- You have discussed sustainability with the girls and helped them brainstorm ways to make their project have a lasting impact.
- Girls have spread the word about their project by sharing it with their Service Unit, school, other Girl Scouts, the community or online.
- Girls have submitted a final report (not required but recommended).
- You, the girls, and their families have celebrated.