

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM LEADER'S Q's & A's

What is the Community Service Program?

In 2007 the Community Service Program was implemented in all schools. As part of this program, students contribute a minimum of 20 hours service to the community, typically during Years 10 and 11. Completion of the 20 hours service is required to achieve the WA Certificate of Education at the end of Year 12.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) recognises the value and educational benefits of programs that enable students to connect with and contribute to the community. The Community Service Program gives students opportunities to contribute to their school and the wider community as part of their school program.

The program aims to:

- develop a culture and ethos of service in secondary schools
- provide opportunities for students to exercise responsibility and develop leadership skills by solving real-life problems
- provide opportunities for students to learn through helping others
- recognise the contribution of students who already participate in service activities in their own time

Where does Girl Guides fit with the Community Service Program?

Girl Guides is a Department of Education and Training approved community organisation for whom a student can apply to do their community service activity.

These service activities are organised and managed by the students and their parents on the approval of the student's school principal. They are usually activities to which the student has an ongoing commitment that are undertaken from Year 10 onwards and carried out in the student's own time.

What is a Community Service Activity?

A service activity is an activity undertaken by students for the benefit of others but which does not attract any substantial material reward.

A service activity can be a single event or require a regular commitment over a period of time e.g. several weeks or months. It can be direct (attending a unit or event) or indirect (e.g. fundraising).

Service activities should:

- benefit others
- give service in an area of need
- provide opportunities for reflection and learning

How is the Community Service Program managed by the school?

All community service activities (including service to Girl Guides Western Australia) must be approved by the student's school principal or Community Service Program coordinator before being undertaken. Girl Guides Western Australia has produced a booklet that give schools background information on the Australian Guide Program and how it can be used by students as a community service activity.

The school management process addresses the role and the responsibilities of the parents of students undertaking their community service with community organisations such as Girl Guides Western Australia.

The Community Service Program coordinator:

- provides guidelines for parents and students regarding appropriate community service activities
- informs parents of their responsibilities and obligations including taking reasonable care to ensure their child's safety and welfare by considering the risks relevant to the:
 - transport arrangements
 - child's capacity in relation to planned service activities
 - service organisations that host their child
- informs parents and students of the public liability insurance requirements for service organisations that host students
- informs students of their rights and responsibilities when engaged in service activities as documented in the log book provided by the school
- collects information about the proposed service activity(s) as required
- gains parental consent for the child to participate
- recommends the proposed community service activity(s) be endorsed by the principal

How is the Community Service Program managed through Girl Guides Western Australia?

In addition to having their Community Service approved through their school principal, Community Service Students must also register through Guide House on the Student Community Service program Registration Form so that our insurance cover is validated. The form is available on the Guides WA Website under Membership, Forms and Stationary – Youth.

Once registered, the Community Service Student is appointed to a unit whose Leader has agreed to take part in the program. She receives a t-shirt (displaying the Girl Guide logo) to wear while undertaking her community service with Girl Guides Western Australia.

The unit Leader is responsible for signing off hours of service for Girl Guides Western Australia the student’s personal log book. An example of the log book follows.

RECORD OF SERVICE

Full name: _____
 Curriculum Council student number: _____

This is the official record of your community service. Each time you participate in a service activity or event, make sure you record it clearly here. The supervisor of the community service program in your school may monitor your record keeping. When you have completed 20 hours of service give the journal to the supervisor who will record that you have met the community service requirement for the WACE.

Date	Service activity and organisation	Validated by (full name)	Signature	Telephone contact	No. of hours
School supervisor’s full name: _____ Total hours: _____ Date: _____				Signature: _____ School contact number: _____	

What Public Liability Insurance does Girl Guides have for Community Service Students?

Where service activities are undertaken in or through a service organisation like Girl Guides Western Australia, the Community Service Program coordinator must ensure that the organisation:

- is suitable to host students
- has appropriate occupational health and safety policy and procedures
- has the required level of public liability insurance
- meets the requirements of the Department of Education's *Criminal Screening policy* and the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*

The documentation provided by Girl Guides Western Australia to the Department of Education and Training for approval, includes all the required information and states that all Leaders with Girl Guides Western Australia have a current Working With Children Check card and a Police Clearance.

The Department of Education and Training requires service organisations that accept Community Service Program students to have Public Liability Insurance. Girl Guides Western Australia has the required minimum of \$10 million Public Liability Insurance.

What is the responsibility of the Leader for the Community Service Student?

Supervision must ensure that the safety and well being of student is maintained at all times. This is exactly the same as it is for all youth members of Girl Guides Western Australia in accordance with *Guide Lines*.

When asking a Community Service Student to undertake any task, consideration should be given to the:

- age of the student
- experience and ability of the students
- student's medical conditions or disabilities
- type of activity to be undertaken
- nature of the environment
- location of the activity
- weather (if relevant)

Community Service Students should never be left in charge of Guides without adult supervision and must be in clear view of the Leader at all times.

Does the Community Service Student need to have parent approval to work with Girl Guides Western Australia?

Parental consent is required for all service activities, as is approval by the student's school principal.

Do Leaders need to get consent from parents for activities and outings the Community Service Student does with the Unit?

Parents must be given the same information as would be given to any member's parent about any proposed activity or outing and well in advance of the date of the activity.

This information must include full details of:

- date
- activities to be undertaken
- duration of activity
- location of activity
- student contact arrangements during the activity
- transport arrangements
- supervision to be provided
- special clothing or other items required

Community Service Students must not be permitted to engage in additional or alternative activities for which parental approval has not been gained.

Parents must be reminded to provide information about any changes to their daughter's health or fitness prior to the activity or outing being undertaken.

Who is responsible for recording the Community Service Student's hours?

Students are responsible for keeping their own records; it is not the responsibility of Girl Guides Western Australia or the unit Leader. The record of their service activities and the number of hours completed is documented in the log book provided by their school. The Leader signs off the hours as they are completed. The school must keep a copy of the completed record of service as specified in the Curriculum Councils Community Service Guidelines.

What happens next???

On completion of the 20 hours community service, the Unit Leader is required to notify YPC Administrative Assistant at Guide House. Guide House will contact the student in regard to evaluation of her experience and offer the opportunity to join Girl Guides WA