

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES PROGRAMS

6/2000

* **TUNE INTO WELL BEING, SAY NO TO DRUGS - SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

This program focuses on drug awareness and prevention activities and presents alternatives to drug experimentation and abuse.

* **STAYING SAFE - PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE**

This program focuses on preventive and personal safety activities that will help girls learn to protect themselves from abuse.

* **GIRLS ARE GREAT - GROWING UP FEMALE**

This program focuses on helping girls to see themselves in a positive way, to understand some of the forces that influence them as they develop, and to cope with the stresses they will inevitably encounter.

* **REACHING OUT - PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE**

This program focuses on the prevention of suicide attempts by recognizing and dealing with stresses in a non-threatening manner and by fostering a sense of belonging in a group.

* **CARING AND COPING - FACING FAMILY CRISIS**

This program focuses on helping girls to cope with family crises that include divorce, the death of a parent, and poverty.

* **PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY - DECISIONS FOR YOUR LIFE**

This program contains information and activities for avoiding early sexual involvement, building self-esteem, developing values, decision-making, and social skills.

* **EARTH MATTERS, CHALLENGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION**

This program contains information and ideas for action to safeguard and protect the natural environment and the quality of all life - activities on air, water, soil, energy , habitat loss, wildlife, recycling, health issues.

* **CONNECTIONS**

This program contains information on racism and prejudice, developing racial and ethnic awareness, prevention of racism, fostering pluralism - the diversity and richness of all human life.

* **READ TO LEAD**

This program contains activities for learning and sharing reading skills,

*** AIDS AWARENESS/Aids FOCUS**

These program contains information and facts about AIDS, safe and responsible behaviors, positive health values and habits, natural health values and habits, natural feelings, self esteem, troop activities.

*** DEVELOPING HEALTH AND FITNESS**

This program promotes good health and fitness habits which promote a higher level of self esteem. *

POWER OF PREVENTION

This program helps girls to address issues that deal with violent behavior and its consequences, conflict resolution, problem solving, personal safety.

*** GENDER EQUITY**

This program helps Is to become aware of reaching their potential, identifying societ^{al} barriers to gender equity; empowering themselves to expect the same opportunities that boys receive in school; and receiving support with their personal and professional goals.

Contemporary Issues Patch Program

FOR: Brownies, Juniors, Cadettes, Seniors, Ambassadors
PURPOSE: To encourage troops to explore the Contemporary Issues series available
RECOGNITION: at the Council office.

BROWNIES

Do a minimum of 4 activities

1. TUNE INTO WELL BEING, SAY NO TO DRUGS - SUBSTANCE ABUSE

With the help of an adult, poison proof your home to make it safe. Throw away all old medicines, label and properly store poisonous things, like certain cleaning fluids, paints, cosmetics, perfumes, alcohol, and tobacco, away from small children. Make sure all medicines have child-proof caps. Learn what to do if someone eats or drinks something poisonous. Post the Poison Control numbers in your homes.

2. STAYING SAFE - PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

With a group of friends or family members, talk about who strangers are and the safety rules to follow with them. Here are some examples:

- ▶ Never get into a car with a stranger.
- ▶ Yell if a stranger tries to grab you.
- ▶ Never believe a stranger until you have checked her or his information with someone else.
- ▶ Never give information to a stranger over the phone.
- ▶ Never tell a stranger you are alone.
- ▶ Never go into a stranger's house, even with a friend.

3. GIRLS ARE GREAT - GROWING UP FEMALE

Discuss the lands of things about people's bodies that are sometimes made fun of. Talk about the reasons why this is unfair and hurtful.

Complete the following statement: "I like myself because..." Think of things that you like about yourself things you do well, things you are proud of, things that make you special.

4. REACHING OUT - PREVENT YOUTH SUICIDE

Create personal posters on the theme "I Am Great." Include words and pictures. Share your posters with others in your troop.

5. INTO THE WORLD OF TODAY AND TOMORROW - LEADING GIRLS TO MATHEMATICS~ SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

HOURGLASS (SAND CLOCK) - You will need two dry glass jars of the same size, heavy paper, pencil, masking tape, scissors, a nail or pin, sand or salt, and a watch.

Trace the mouth of one jar on the heavy paper. Cut out the circle and punch a hole in its center using the nail or pin. Pour sand or salt into one jar, filling it almost to the top. Place the paper circle over the filled jar

Next, put the empty jar on top of the filled jar and cardboard circle. (Make sure the mouth of the jar is touching the cardboard.) Carefully tape the jars together to make a seal. You now have a clock. Turn the clock over and record the time it takes to empty the top jar. You can adjust your clock by making the hole in the cardboard larger or smaller and by changing the amount of sand or salt.

6. CARING AND COPING - FACING FAMILY CRISIS

Invite a social worker or family therapist to talk to your troop about sad things that may happen in families and how girls can deal with these problems.

Using dolls or puppets, put on skits about:

- ▶ a happy family experience
- . a sad family event
- a funny family experience

7. PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY - DECISIONS FOR YOUR LIFE

On a weekend day, observe parents with the babies or young children in several different situations (for example, in a grocery store, shopping mall, church, synagogue, parking lot, restaurant, or park). Pay special attention to positive and difficult behaviors of children. Note how parents act toward their youngsters. Discuss your findings at a troop meeting.

8. EARTH MATTERS, CHALLENGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Learn about what goes into a terrarium and create one. How is your terrarium like the planet Earth? How is it different? at do you think would happen if you introduced a toxic substance into your terrarium? (Please do not do this.)

9. PROMOTING PLURALISM, VALUING DIFFERENCES

Encourage the troop or group to explore the diversity of ethnic, cultural, and racial groups within the United States. Each girl can choose a particular group or her own ethnic, cultural, or racial group. She can learn about customs, foods, holidays, values, and the history and traditions of the group she picked and share this information with her troop or group. Girls might visit a museum, a library, an ethnic market, an international festival or speak with a representative from their chosen group to gather information.

10. PROMOTING LITERACY, TEIE RIGHT TO READ

For one month set up a "Troop Post Office" and exchange short notes that girls have written to each other about any subject.

11. AIDS AWARENESS

Conduct a discussion on what germs are and how they can cause illness. Ask girls if they know why they should wash their hands after playing outside and before eating. Help them learn the correct way to wash their hands by conducting the following experiment: girls should spread a little vegetable oil on their palms, then sprinkle some sand or salt (something grainy) and try to wash them clean with cold water. Then wash them with warm water and soap. Which technique works best? Why?

Then ask girls to name some diseases or injuries that make people feel sick. They may come up with colds,

chicken pox, flu, broken arm. If it hasn't come up, add "AIDS" to the list. Children will note that a broken arm is not contagious. Neither is a cut finger, but a cold is contagious and AIDS is also. (Option: Ask girls how a cold is passed from one person to another. Ask them if they know how AIDS is spread. Your group discussion can result in many questions which can in turn lead to future activities on health, communicable diseases, and AIDS.)

12. HEALTH AND FITNESS

Play the alphabet food game. Beginning with A and continuing through the alphabet, ask girls to name as many nutritious foods as they can that begin with each letter (let them know if they name a food that isn't nutritious). For letters for which they cannot name a food (perhaps Q, U, X, V), have them make up the name of a food and draw and color a picture of it. Ask them to tell why their new food is so good for them.

JUNIORS

Do a minimum of 5 activities

1. TUNE INTO WELL BEING, SAY NO TO DRUGS - SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Discuss the following situations and role-play what you would do if:

- ▶ your best friend asks you to try a cigarette
- ▶ your older cousin offers you a drink of beer
- ▶ the make from a stranger's cigarette is bothering you
- ▶ an older classmate offers you money to sell a joint

2. STAYING SAFE - PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

Discuss the following situations and role-play what you would do if:

- ▶ someone were following you home from school
- ▶ you were lost at a shopping mall
- ▶ you were on your way home one and saw your front door slightly open when no one was supposed to be home
- ▶ a friend's older brother started to touch you in ways that didn't feel right
- ▶ you received an obscene phone call
- ▶ you found out that your younger sister has been abused
- ▶ your babysitter asked you to take your clothes off so you could play a fun game that would be a secret

3. GIRLS ARE GREAT - GROWING UP FEMALE

Invite a health care professional to give a presentation on the physical changes during puberty. Plan enough time to have a question-and-answer session.

4. REACHING OUT - PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE

Invite a volunteer or staff member from a suicide prevention center, mental health agency, or crisis intervention center to talk to your troop or group about strategies that can be used to cope with crises and manage everyday stresses. Create a list of ten activities that can help you relax. Some should be quiet, others active; some can be done alone, others need to be done with other people. Remember the list when you're under stress. (Post a copy of it inside a locker or next to your bed.) At the end of the program, be sure to plan time for a question-and-answer period.

5. INTO THE WORLD OF TODAY AND TOMORROW - LEADING GIRLS TO MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

*ABCs - What letter of the alphabet is used most often?

Pick five sentences from a book and count how many times each letter is used. Based on your findings, try to predict the letter that will show up most often in any particular sentence. Test your prediction.

6. CARING AND COPING - FACING FAMILY CRISIS

Participate in planning or serving a holiday meal at a shelter or food kitchen. What else can your troop do to help?

7. PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY - DECISIONS FOR YOUR LIFE

As a group, brainstorm a list of lines people use to pressure others into doing something that they may not want to do -- for example, "Everybody's doing it" or "Don't you want to try it to see what it's like?" Role-play a number of positive responses to such lines.

8. EARTH MATTERS, CHALLENGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Adopt a park, stream, or neighborhood area and provide a service such as cleanup, planting frees, providing food or homes for birds and other wildlife.

9. PROMOTING PLURALISM, VALUING DIFFERENCES

Have girls complete the following survey in order to identify ways racism and prejudice affect their daily lives. This survey will also help girls to reflect on some of their own attitudes, beliefs, and opinions regarding race and ethnicity.

- What are the racial, ethnic, or cultural backgrounds of your closest friends?
- Would you feel embarrassed walling with a person who appears different from you?
 - ▶ Are you afraid of people from a particular racial, ethnic, or cultural group? Why?
- Are people of all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups welcome in your community? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is important to get to know someone who is different from you? Why or why not?

10. PROMOTING LITERACY, THE RIGHT TO READ

Learn three to five songs that can be acted out (like "The Itsy, Bitsy Spider," "The Ants Go Marching," or "The Farmer in the Dell") and teach to younger Girl Scouts or to younger sisters and brothers.

11. AIDS AWARENESS

Assuming girls know what AIDS is, write a Bill of Rights for AIDS patients. Consider how patients should be treated by teachers, fellow students, Girl Scout sisters, health care professionals, and the rest of society.

12. HEALTH AND FITNESS

Make a healthy food rainbow. With red, green, yellow, purple, orange, and brown construction paper, create a rainbow mural. Have girls use old magazines to cut out foods of each color and attach them to the matching color on the rainbow. Example: Red apples would be attached on the red section of the rainbow. The girls can draw and color foods that they don't find in magazines.

CADETTES

Do a minimum of 6 activities

1. TUNE INTO WELL BEING, SAY NO TO DRUGS - SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Volunteer to assist a leader with a troop of younger girls in educating them about drugs. Make a poster, mobile, or other item for display. Give a presentation on drug facts and the importance of saying no to drugs.

2. STAYING SAFE - PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

Role-play these situations: A family friend makes a sexual advance at you, a stranger tries to touch you, and a group of friends want you to hitchhike. Practice saying no.

3. GIRLS ARE GREAT - GROWING UP FEMALE

Make a "Me" montage. On a large sheet of paper, place pictures and words that would help someone understand you. Include your talents, hobbies, and interests. Throughout your montage, add clues to the inner you, the you that may not be widely known. (Some girls enjoy doing this on a T-shirt or hat.)

4. REACHING OUT - PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE

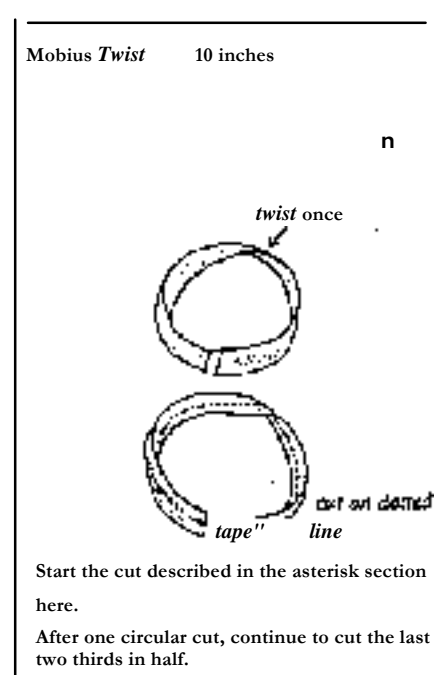
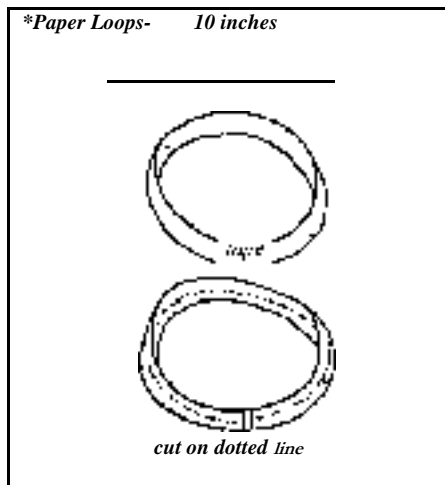
Invite a mental health professional to come to a troop or group meeting to discuss warning signs of suicide. Find out about suicide statistics in your community and state. Ask the speaker to include role-playing situations in her presentation (Example: having to say things that are difficult to express like telling a parent you failed a test or telling a boyfriend you don't want to date him any longer). Encourage participants to ask questions and express their concerns.

5. INTO THE WORLD OF TODAY AND TOMORROW - LEADING GIRLS TO MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

MOBIUS TWISTS - Every piece of paper has two flat surfaces. A mobius twist has only one continuous flat surface. To make a mobius twist, cut a strip of paper one inch wide and at least 10 inches long and follow the directions in the drawings.

You can show the two separate sides of the loop by placing a pen in the inside center of the simple loop and drawing a line on the surface. Only the inside will have a line. Now try this with the mobius twist. You should end up with one continuous line on all surfaces.

Cut the two paper loops in half lengthwise. When you cut the simple loop, you get two thinner loops. at happens when you cut the mobius twist?



*Ready for more mobius magic? Start with a fresh mobius twist. Cut in 1/3 of the way from the edge and continue cutting. at do you get?

6. **CARING AND COPING - FACING FAMILY CRISIS**

Adopt a homeless shelter or a shelter for battered women. Find out what the residents need. Decorate a room or see what you can do to help such as collecting books and toys for the children. Provide a program for the residents.

7. **- PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY - DECISIONS FOR YOUR Life**

Design a television commercial or magazine advertisement to combat teen pregnancy.

8. **EARTH MATTERS, CHALLENGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION**

Find out what it means when an animal or plant is labeled "endangered." Select one endangered plant and one endangered animal. Find out why their existence is threatened and how humans fit into the picture. Discuss whether or not we should try to save these species from being lost forever. If you are concerned about saving them, find out how you can help and then do it.

9. **PROMOTING PLURALISM, VALUING DIFFERENCES**

Have girls look in a newspaper or magazine to find an article that reports a lawsuit or protest against discrimination at work, in housing, or in education. Have girls share and discuss the articles with the troop or groups of friends outside Girl Scouting. at do girls think will happen? at do girls think should happen?

10. **PROMOTING LITERACY, THE RIGHT TO READ**

Interview a professional writer, such as a newspaper reporter, copywriter for an advertising agency, a local author, or a public relations specialist. Find out how they trained for their work, ask about the books they read now, and where they get their ideas from.

11. AIDS AWARENESS

Prepare for this activity by having on hand several articles on AIDS from magazines, newspapers, and other resources. Be sure that the articles include the name and date of the publication. Ask the group to brainstorm everything they know or think they know about AIDS while two of you quickly jot down their responses. You will probably fill up a large sheet of butcher block paper.

Divide them into smaller groups and allow them to look through the articles, books, and other resources in an attempt to separate fact from myth among their statements. When they find the appropriate evidence, they should identify each statement on the butcher block paper that is incorrect, write a corrected version next to it, and note the source of their information. A final group discussion should dispel some of the girls' myths about S.

HEALTH AND FITNESS

In place of the traditional pajama party, hold a "looking your best retreat." Give each other manicures and pedicures, set each other's hair, try on makeup, and create natural beauty treatments. Try soaking fingernails in warm olive oil for 10 minutes before your manicure. Massage feet and hands with baby oil. Put on cotton socks and gloves for an overnight beauty treatment. For refreshments prepare a simple meal of natural foods such as pasta, salad, and fruit.

SENIORS/AMBASSADORS

Do a minimum of 6 activities

1. TUNE INTO WELL BEING, SAY NO TO DRUGS - SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Visit an alcohol or drug rehabilitation facility. Find out what services this facility provides for drug abusers. Visit an open AA meeting or a hotline agency for teens with drug problems.

2. STAYING SAFE - PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

Discuss "Date Rape" with a trained counselor or consultant: what to do to avoid it, how to handle a bad situation, self-defense, medical and legal supports available.

3. GIRLS ARE GREAT - GROWING UP FEMALE

With a trained consultant, discuss chronic dieting problems that teens have to include anorexia nervosa and bulimia. How has nutritional information changed over the years (grains, fat and cholesterol free foods, sugar substitutes, vegetarian, etc.) to convince us that we need to take better care of our bodies? Has the media helped or hurt our self-image?

4. REACHING OUT - PREVENTING YOUTH SUICIDE

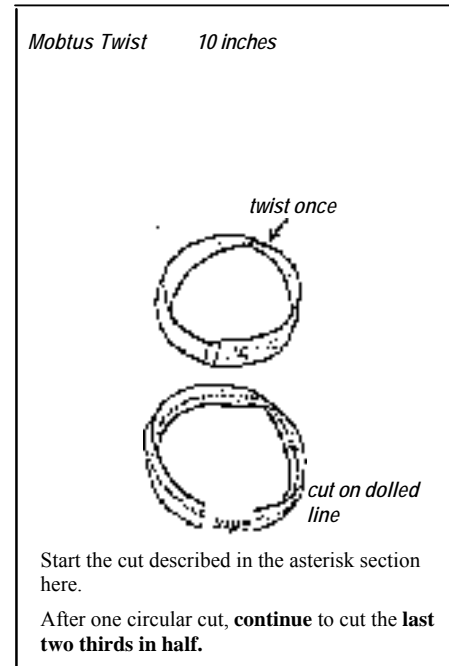
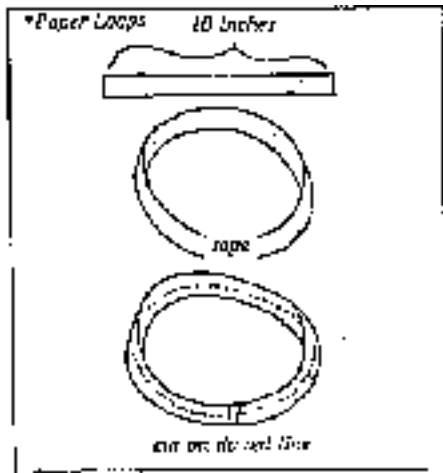
With a consultant (school counselor, management consultant, study skills trainer), work to create a list of your current goals. Define "Time Management" techniques that can help you to attain them. Your schedule should include planned time for relation. Try at least one time management strategy for a month and keep track of what you've tried. Share with the troop.

5. INTO THE WORLD OF TODAY AND TOMORROW - LEADING GIRLS TO MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

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6. CARING AND COPING - FACING FAMILY CRISIS

Read newspaper articles about the homeless. How are homeless people portrayed? What are some of the reasons that people are homeless? Create a role-play, skit, or drama using the information you have gathered with homeless people as your characters. Option: Visit a homeless shelter in your area to see what services are provided for individuals and families. Offer to provide service.

7. PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY - DECISIONS FOR YOUR LIFE

For a week, keep a record of how male/female interactions are portrayed on television. For example, how often are the relationships shown as stable and loving? How often as temporary and manipulative? Do programs encourage teenagers to make responsible decisions about sexual involvement? What values are represented in these programs and which are missing? What changes would you make in the programs? Discuss the findings with your troop,

8. EARTH MATTERS, CHALLENGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Learn more about the impact of acid rain in your community by talking to a person who works for a wildlife or public health agency, science teacher, an agent with the Agricultural/Cooperative Extension Services. If you can, visit an area that has been affected by Acid R .

9. PROMOTING PLURALISM, VALUING DIFFERENCES

What is an American? Have girls brainstorm a list of "American" characteristics. Ask them to look at the list. Are these characteristics shared by all the racial, ethnic, and cultural groups living in America? Do they share common values? Are all of these values important to girls or their families? Is it necessary for all members of a society to possess the same characteristics and the same values? Are there certain values that girls believe are essential? What are they?

10. PROMOTING LITERACY, THE RIGHT TO READ

Write a shopping guide to a local shopping area. Draw a map that locates the best places to shop and eat. The guide should include notes and descriptions on these places - kinds of foods like Italian/Chinese, formal attire or casual and sporty clothes, etc. Describe what makes each place special or why you'd recommend avoiding it.

11. AIDS AWARENESS

Invite a local AIDS expert or health care worker to make a short presentation to the girls. Consider whether or not the girls are mature and sensitive enough to meet with an AIDS infected person. If so, invite someone to meet with the girls by contacting a local agency which provides services to AIDS patients such as the Triad Health Project.

12. HEALTH AND FITNESS

Have an "experiment with color and accessories" party! Collect sizable pieces of fabric in different colors, and have everybody bring in their used but good accessories (belts, jewelry, hats, scarves, headbands, and other hair accessories) that they would like to trade in. Take turns holding the fabric up to your face. Decide which color family looks best on you: the cool family {lavenders and plums), the warm family (corals, pinks, and reds), or the neutral family (beiges and peaches). Then, experiment with items from the accessory pool. How many different looks can you create? Have an accessory exchange to recycle pieces.

GUIDELINES ON SENSITIVE ISSUES FOR LEADERS

INTRODUCTION:

It is the responsibility of the Tarheel Triad Girl Scout Council to ensure the health, safety, and well being of girls when planning activities that deal with sensitive or controversial issues such as AIDS, child abuse, human sexuality, substance abuse, suicide, and teenage pregnancy.

When Girl Scout program activities focus on or include sensitive or controversial issues, the leader's role is to be a caring adult who can help gals acquire their own skills and knowledge in a supportive atmosphere rather than one who presents any particular position of advocacy.

The Tarheel Triad Girl Scout Council recognizes that the family is the primary educational unit, and that the family has the primary responsibility to communicate its values to its children.

Because Girl Scout programming includes five (5) age levels, the content of any sensitive issues programs must be appropriate to the age and emotional and educational maturity of the girl participants.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT / PERMISSION:

Leaders should involve parents when planning activities, since most sensitive topics are rooted in values, parental support and understanding are crucial. An outline of sensitive subjects to be covered in the planned activity should be furnished to parents ahead of time. Girls who attend these activities must have written parental approval for participating in the activity. Attendance should be optional for all or part of the activities. Parents should be invited to participate in any programs that deal with sensitive issues.

RESOURCES:

When discussing value-related topics, the leaders should encourage girls to talk with resource people, such as family members, religious leaders, and experts in a particular field. Giving girls factual information in terms they can understand can help to counteract myths and misinformation they may hear. It is important for a girl to hear all sides of a question and to be guided by her own parents and the teachings of her religious group before she tries to make a decision. Girls should be encouraged to see that each family has its own way of doing things based on family customs, cultural background, life-styles, and so on. Girls should also be encouraged to try to understand parental decisions by examining the parent's point of view. Consultants should be utilized who have expertise in specific content areas - who will share factual information only, and not advocacy positions, judgments, or personal values.

Depending upon the particular sensitive issue, social workers, clergy, psychologists, psychiatrists and other physicians, health educator, attorneys, or nurses may be called upon to act as consultants in planning a project or carrying out activities.

Program consultants and special resource consultants should be furnished with and be willing to adhere to the Girl Scout national policies and the Girl Scout position on human sexuality.

CONTENTS OF PROGRAM:

The leader should help girls to consider the possible consequences of an action they are considering. This need to see the importance of weighing future implications of an action against the immediate result.

The leader should also assure girls of her trust in them and her confidence in their ability to make decisions that are correct for them.

Since Girl Scout projects on sensitive issues generally take a broad educational and preventive approach, activities must be comprehensive. They should help develop self-esteem; problem-solving, assertiveness, and coping skills; and the ability to relate to and communicate with others effectively. Activities should enable girls to make informed, responsible decisions about their well being. Activities that foster the idea of peer support-girls helping and learning from each other - should be stressed. A person's ability to express thoughts and feelings in a positive way is important when dealing with sensitive issues. Being able to listen seriously to what girls have to say and to respond appropriately is essential.

Leaders should not fear or ignore those issues that are important to girls. If questions come up that leaders can not answer or are uncomfortable with at the moment, they should use that happening as an opportunity to alert parents of the girls' concerns, and to get the parents support and involvement in planning a future workshop on the topic using professional consultants who are in the community.

Approved by the Tarheel Triad Baud of Directors - April 25, 1989

1. The adoption of the GSUSA Human Sexuality and sex education resolution.
2. The approval of the guidelines for providing programs to girls on sensitive issues that include Aids, child abuse, human sexuality, substance abuse, suicide, teen pregnancy.

RATIONALE:

GSUSA advises Councils to secure Board approval and guidance prior to offering programs on sensitive issues. GSUSA provides Contemporary Issues booklets for troops to use and will continue to provide additional booklets in the future. By providing Board approved guidelines, the Council can set the direction that should be taken in providing sensitive issues programs to girls.

GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Human Sexuality/Sex Education and Girl Scouting

On January 18, 1983, the National Board of Directors adopted the following resolution:

"WHEREAS,

In 1967 Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. accepted responsibility for a supplementary role in sex education for its girl members;

WHEREAS,

In 1978 "points to consider" were developed as a supplement to the 1973 educational guidelines and adopted to be observed by Girl Scout councils determining to include sex education and/or human sexuality as components of the Girl Scout program; and

WHEREAS,

There have been requests from local Girl Scout councils for a further statement of the position of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. on this very important subject; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED,

That Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. hereby reaffirms that sex education and human sexuality programming developed in collaboration with the family, religious groups, school and community are components of the Girl Scout program".

This resolution followed careful consideration of the need for a reconfirmation of the appropriateness of human sexuality and sex education within the Girl Scout program. During the past triennium and over the past fifteen months, two standing committees of the National Board have considered the needs of Girl Scout councils for a statement confirming the national organization's support of council development of supplemental educational materials and activities tailored to local community needs.

Most recently, the topic was discussed by 96 participants in the "Strategies for Handling Sensitive Issues" briefing session at the November 1982 National Meeting of Presidents and Executive Directors. Following consideration of a case study and group discussion, a general consensus emerged that the appropriate kind of statement from the national organization would be one that was broad and inclusive, providing flexibility at the local level.

In adopting the new resolution, the National Board supports the supplementary educational role of Girl Scouting, in collaboration with families, religious and educational institutions, and communities with respect to human sexuality/sex education.

When a council has identified a community need for such a supplementary educational role, the present resolution of the National Board provides a supportive statement.

FROM:

Resources for President's and Executive Director's in Girl Scouting - Pages 22-23, Points to Consider if Including Human Sexuality in the Girl Scout Program.

Girl Scout Councils are chartered by GSUSA and are held responsible to provide and safeguard the Girl Scout program. They must accept accountability under this charter for all Girl Scout activities conducted within their jurisdictions whatever the topic. They must comply with national policies and standards in providing program locally, under the terms of the charter.

Advocacy positions related to human sexuality are the prerogative of the family and religious institutions. The role of Girl Scouting continues to be a supplemental and informational one on this subject, as indicated in the 1967 statement of the National Board of Directors on sex education: THAT the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS,

We interpret sex education to mean developing understanding of sex as an integral part of a girl's growth as it relates to personal values, emotional and social maturity.

WHEREAS,

We are in accord with the recommendation from the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth that:

"The family as the basic unit of our society has primary responsibility for developing values, freedom, initiative, and self-discipline in children"; and further recommendation:

"That schools, religious institutions, youth-serving agencies, and all other community agencies cooperate to create a favorable atmosphere for understanding the dignity and sanctity of the role of sex in human relationships";

WHEREAS,

The Girl Scouts, as an organization for informal education, supplements the home, the church, and the school in many aspects of a girl's life; be it, therefore,

RESOLVED,

That the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. accepts responsibility for a supplementary role in sex education for its girl members.

SENSITIVE ISSUES READINESS

Before starting a sensitive issues program, answer these questions:

Will the materials and presentation be appropriate for the age of the girls?

Yes No

1. Have quality instructors been secured to present the program?

2. Have I secured parent permissions for involvement in the program?

3. Is attendance at the program optional for all girls? Do they know this?

4. Are girls interested in and ready for this program?

5. Am I ready to discuss and/or present this program to the girls?

6. Have I received and included the materials from GSUSA relating to sensitive issues?

7. Am I aware of other programs offered in the community on this issue?
Do I feel assured that there will not be a negative reaction in the community to this program?

8. Have I read Safety-Wise standards regarding sensitive issues? (page 13)

9. If you have checked YES to all of these questions, you are now ready to turn the page and
 10. proceed to read the Council approved guidelines for offering programs to your girls dealing
with sensitive issues.

Tarheel Triad Girl Scout Council, Inc.
SENSITIVE ISSUES READINESS

Before starting a sensitive issues program, answer these questions:

Yes No

- 1. Will the materials and presentation be appropriate for the age of the girls?
- 2. Have quality instructors been secured to present the program?
- 3. Have I secured parent permissions for involvement in the program?
- 4. Is attendance at the program optional for all girls? Do they know this?
- 5. Are girls interested in and ready for this program?
- 6. Am I ready to discuss and/or present this program to the girls?
- 7. Have I received and included the materials from GSUSA relating to sensitive issues?
- 8. Am I aware of other programs offered in the community on this issue?
- 9. Do I feel assured that there will not be a negative reaction in the community to this program?
- 10. Have I read Safety-Wise standards regarding sensitive issues?

If you have checked YES to all of these questions, you are now ready to turn the page and proceed to read the Council approved guidelines for offering programs to your girls dealing with sensitive issues.

TIPS WITH WORKING WITH GIRLS ON SENSITIVE ISSUES

- Utilize community consultants/resources to present troop programs-Don't try to do it all yourself!
- Provide atmosphere of openness, freedom, trust.
- Listen seriously.
- Encourage girls to listen to each other and accept one another.
- Be sensitive to the differences in girls' ethnic and cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, family traditions.
- Be in touch with your own attitudes and behaviors. Clarify personal hang-ups.
- Be a positive role model.
- Use creative methods like games, role playing to learn what is on girls' minds.
- Help girls feel positive about themselves.
- Help girls become assertive.
- Give factual information in correct terms that girls can understand.
- Foster the idea of peer support.
- Inform girls to tell a trusted friend/adult if they themselves or someone they know is in distress.
- Report any unusual situation or behavior to Council.
- Don't: impose your own values or opinions, promise to keep girls' confidentiality if it might affect the girl's safety and health, leave a girl alone if the situation is life threatening, act judgmental, be afraid to seek help from others when you feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics.
- Inform and get permission from parents in advance of program activities related to contemporary or sensitive issues. Include topic, date(s), duration, location, purpose, audience and names of community resources/consultants.

**SENSITIVE ISSUES PROGRAM
PARENT PERMISSION FORM**

Dear Parent:

Troop _____ is going to be working on a Sensitive Issues Program covering these subjects (be specific):

The consultants presenting this information are:

Your daughter's participation in this program is optional. To participate she must have your permission.

The troop will begin this program on (*date*) _____ at (*time*) _____.

Other meetings are scheduled for (*dates*) _____ at (*times*) _____.

You are welcome to make arrangements to visit these programs if you wish.

Please call (*name*) _____ at (*phone*) _____ to make these arrangements and to ask any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Troop Leader

Date

DETACH HERE - RETURN BOTTOM HALF TO TROOP LEADER: KEEP TOP HALF FOR YOUR INFORMATION

My daughter _____ has my permission to attend the Sensitive Issues Programs on (*topic*) _____ scheduled on (*date*) _____ at (*place*) _____

During the meeting I can be reached by phone at _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date