



# Welcoming Girls with Wheelchairs into Your Troop

There are many different disabilities and medical conditions which may result in the use of a wheelchair, either short-term or long-term. People who use wheelchairs may or may not be able to walk independently or with assistance. Their wheelchair may be manually used or electronically run.

## **Some suggestions and strategies for preparing for and including girls with wheelchairs in your troop:**

1. Ask before offering help with transportation (pushing the wheelchair)
2. Adapt activities as needed for those with special mobility needs
3. Include her in all activities as much as possible so she doesn't feel singled out—most of our GSEP camps offer some facilities and activities for those with to stay and participate
4. Keep the girl's line-of-vision and reachability in mind— she is a shorter stature in the wheelchair and may not be able to see as well as those standing, and she may not be able to reach for something inconveniently located
5. Before travelling to a new location, be sure to check for wheelchair accessible entryways and exits as well as restrooms
6. Unless the girl and her parent/guardian prefer confidentiality within the troop, have the girl share about her differing abilities and special needs with the troop and allow the other girls to ask questions in a sensitive and caring manner. This will promote better understanding and allow everyone to work together as a troop to ensure that everyone's needs are met
7. Always consult with the parent/guardian beforehand to be sure you're providing for the girl's needs to the best of your ability- -they will know the best methods and strategies to help their child

**For more resources on wheelchair etiquette and safety please visit WheelchairNet:**  
[http://www.wheelchairnet.org/wcn\\_townhall/docs/etiquette.html](http://www.wheelchairnet.org/wcn_townhall/docs/etiquette.html)

**If you have other questions or concerns you may contact GSEP via email at [memberservices@gsep.org](mailto:memberservices@gsep.org) or via phone at 215-564-2030**

*This document is not intended to replace or supersede any doctor's instructions nor should it in any way be taken as medical advice or directions. This resource is a suggestion for GSEP volunteers to use while welcoming girls with special needs to their troops and is for informational and educational purposes only. Please follow a parent/guardian's instructions in the medical care of their child and make sure you always have the appropriate medical and troop permission forms completed and available for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel.*