



World Association
of Girl Guides
and Girl Scouts

Association mondiale
des Guides et des
Eclaireuses

Asociación
Mundial de las
Guía Scouts

Learning to Thrive

WAGGGS Approach to Youth Learning
in Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting

Educational Programme is the total learning experience of youth members (under 30) in WAGGGS. It brings together what they do (activities), how they do it (methods) and why they do it (purpose).

"WAGGGS is a **non-formal education** organisation that uses the **WAGGGS Educational Method** to develop **values** and **skills for life** that empower girls to reach their **fullest potential** and take action to **change the world.**"

This statement captures WAGGGS' approach to youth learning. It has been broken down into six areas (shown in bold). Read on to learn more about each area and explore how they can be applied to create higher quality Girl Guide/Girl Scout educational programmes.

WAGGGS is a **non-formal education** organisation...

Like many youth organisations, WAGGGS uses non-formal educational methods to achieve its mission; *to enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world.*

“by encouraging a child in its natural desires, instead of instructing it in what you think it ought to do, you can educate it on a far more solid and far-reaching basis. It is only tradition and custom that ordain that education should be a labour.”
Baden Powell, circa 1913-14

Non-formal education is a planned programme of personal and social education designed to improve a range of skills and competencies, outside formal educational structures. Girl Guide/Girl Scout non-formal educational programmes should:

1. Have identified learning objectives
2. Engage the learner through a varied range of non-formal activities
3. Be accessible and inclusive
4. Promote voluntary, learner centred, participation
5. Support each individual’s learning pathway and learning styles
6. Be implemented by trained leaders
7. Have a process for monitoring and evaluation

“...that uses the **WAGGGS Educational Method**”

WAGGGS uses a unique model of non-formal education to support the development of girls and young women. This is called the WAGGGS Educational Method, and it has **five** essential qualities:

Learning in small groups

Peer groups have a big impact on our values and decisions. Working positively in small groups creates a sense of belonging. We learn to support each other, to negotiate and make democratic decisions, to assert our needs and opinions, and to solve problems. Learning to work effectively with others, and to be empowered in a group situation, helps us to reach our potential.

My path, my pace

We all learn in different ways and find inspiration in different places. Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting values each individual within a group by giving choice around what, and how, they learn. Youth members take the lead in choosing and planning activities, and leaders facilitate a wide range of activities to engage different learning styles. Individuals aren't pressured to reach a set standard; programmes encourage them to celebrate their personal development over time and set their own, age appropriate goals, leaving them free to take risks, make mistakes, and explore their own learning journey at their own pace.



Learning by doing

At the heart of non-formal education is learning through real experiences. Girl Guides/Girl Scouts learn in a hands-on way, actively engaging with learning through challenges, experiences, games, projects and experiments. Humans are natural learners when they are motivated. Learning by doing enables Girl Guides/Girl Scouts to connect their experiences to their own lives, empowering them to self-direct their learning and keep it relevant.

Connecting with others

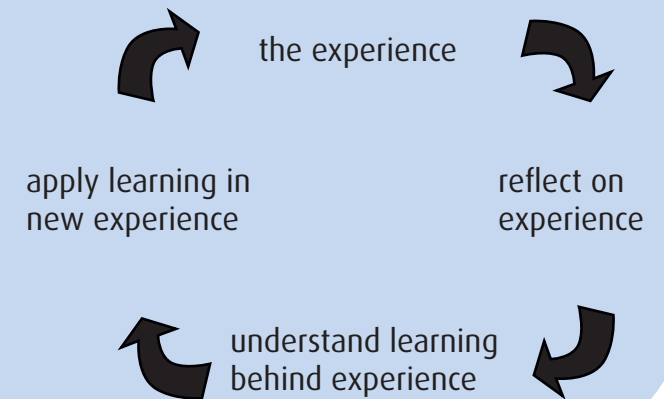
Learning doesn't happen in a vacuum. Youth members learn to trust and respect the adult volunteers who support them by role modelling empowering leadership and facilitating their decision making. Girl Guides/Girl Scouts are challenged to connect with people of different ages, genders, cultural and social backgrounds as part of their Girl Guide/Girl Scout programme.

Connecting with my environment

We learn most from the world around us, and Girl Guides/Girl Scouts programmes take advantage of the diverse learning spaces on offer. Girl Guides/Girl Scouts reflect on what it means to be a global citizen by undertaking community projects, and speaking out on issues they care about. To understand how to protect their environment, Girl Guides/Girl Scouts need to form a deep and lasting connection to it, and outdoor adventures are an essential component of all great programmes. Girl Guides/Girl Scouts are challenged to adapt their learning so they can thrive in different environments, and to nurture the communities and environments they care about.

Beyond Games...

Taking part in activities isn't enough to really be learning by doing. Leaders need to support GG/GS through a learning process to be sure that the game or activity has really achieved its learning goal:



“to develop values...”

As a values-based organisation, WAGGGS believes that the development of an individual's value system is fundamental to their personal growth.

Girl Guides/Girl Scouts make a commitment to a shared standard represented by their Promise and Law. Each National Association uses their promise and law to bring the WAGGGS values to life for their members, and these values are used as a context for all programme activities.

WAGGGS programmes apply these values by focusing on issues that are relevant to girls and young women, encouraging them to look beyond their own lives to develop an understanding of the wider world and how they, as global citizens, can make a difference.

WAGGGS' core values are:

Respect. An active and inclusive ethos of respect for self and others

Integrity. Taking responsibility for your own actions and reactions

Citizenship. working with others and making a difference to the wider community

Spirituality. Acknowledgement and development of an individual's beliefs

“...and skills for life”

WAGGGS aims to prepare its members to thrive in a rapidly changing world, and empower them to live the life they want to lead. To achieve this, WAGGGS programmes go beyond formal educational topics.

Girl Guides/Girl Scouts learn life skills that are valuable whatever path they choose to follow; leadership, communication and confidence, self-esteem, creativity, problem solving, resilience, adaptability, self-sufficiency, understanding diversity, dealing with emergencies, risk taking, teamwork, financial literacy, independent living – and many more.

5 'C' skills for the 21st Century...

Character – self-aware and confident, we take initiative to set and achieve goals, both individually and by leading others.

Creativity – We are creative thinkers and resilient problem solvers who can access, understand and use information to find innovative solutions.

Citizenship – We are active in our local communities, and connected to the wider world. We want to take action to make the world a better place.

Communication – We express our ideas confidently to different audiences, are good listeners and respond empathically to others.

Collaboration – We are true team players, who understand how to work positively with people and care about diversity.

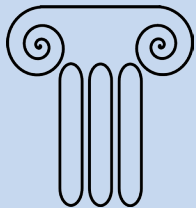
“that empower girls to reach their **fullest potential...**”

Girl Guide/Girl Scout programmes create a safe space for the whole girl to grow. She will develop **intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally, morally** and **spiritually** through age appropriate activities. She will be challenged to see herself as a leader, and develop the skills and confidence to take the lead in the wider world.

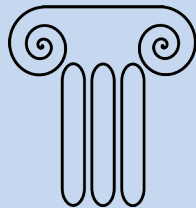
The Four Pillars of Learning

Since 1996, UNESCO has used the four pillars of learning to describe the whole person, lifelong learning society should promote. Girl Guides/Girl Scouts learn...

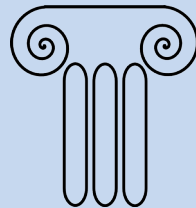
to know



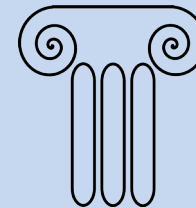
to do



to be



to live together



“...and take action to **change the world.**”

Girl Guides and Girl Scouts learn about their communities and develop an interest in global issues. They build the confidence to take the lead and speak out. They develop the values that motivate them to put their learning into action.

Making a difference has been a core value of WAGGGS' education for over 100 years. Today, WAGGGS believes that empowered girls can go even further; they can change the world.

WAGGGS programmes challenge Girl Guides/Girl Scouts to be active global citizens and harness their awareness, skills and passion to set up community projects, advocate for change and share their skills with others.

WAGGGS' Global Programmes...

...explore issues that are important to girls and young women, and can be integrated into national programmes.

They include:

- *Be The Change* community action kit
- *Voices against Violence*
- *Surf Smart* internet safety pack
- *Together We Can Change Our World* pack on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- World Thinking Day packs, covering different MDGs each year
- Packs on climate change, biodiversity and other environmental topics

Visit www.waggggs.org to download these, and other global programmes.

Does your National Educational Programme take this approach to youth learning?

- Are your leaders trained in non-formal educational methods?
- Does your programme give learning objectives for activities?
- Have you tested your activities to check they are age appropriate?
- Do girls think your programme is adventurous and exciting?

- Do you research the needs and interests of young people in your country?
- Do you update your programme to reflect youth trends?
- Is your programme accessible to young people from all cultural and religious backgrounds in your country?
- Are there any barriers preventing young people from joining your Association?

- Do girls get to choose what they do in your programme?
- Does your programme promote working in small groups?
- Do your leaders try to empower girls to make decisions during meetings?
- Does your programme give girls the opportunity to take action in their communities?

If you want to learn more about the WAGGGS approach to youth learning, contact your Regional Director or email WAGGGS' Educational Programme Development Manager, Andii Verhoeven (andii@waggs.org)

“Every child deserves a champion — an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.”

Rita Pierson