



Teaching Philanthropy to Your Child  
p3

Holiday Shopping Safety Tips  
p2

Teens and Volunteering  
p4

# the GPS

girl & parent "stuff"



**Charting the direction you want her to go!**

**Welcome to the first edition of The GPS: Girl Parent Stuff, an e-newsletter created by Girl Scouts Heart of the South (GSHS)!**

*In order to better serve and understand our Girl Scout families – parents, grandparents, and caregivers throughout our Council – Girl Scouts Heart of the South (GSHS) has created **The GPS**. Through timely articles and calendars of local events, **The GPS** strives to connect families to the concepts and values that shape the Girl Scout mission.*

*A bi-monthly publication of GSHS, **The GPS** is an energetic, easy-to-follow resource aimed to help parents of girls of all ages find new opportunities for great family experiences and conversations. Articles in **The GPS** are color-coded by age group so you can quickly find the items most relevant to you and your child (see "Following The GPS" on page 3), but every article has been carefully curated to provide family enrichment now and into the future, so be sure to read them all!*

*Through GPS and other initiatives, Girl Scouts Heart of the South hopes to increase whole family engagement and support. GSHS wants to be your go-to resource for educational, experiential and community service opportunities! As parents, you are part of the Girl Scout family. We are committed to keeping you informed of all essential information concerning your daughter throughout the year. In addition to this new resource, GSHS encourages you to review the new Pathway (grade-specific) Postcards which your daughter(s) now receive in the mail each month. As a council, we strive to keep you up-to-date with all of the exciting things that are happening and all of the amazing opportunities available to your child through Girl Scouts!*



## Where Will Your Holiday Travels Take You?

As children grow, their circle of friends expands, and they begin to discover new foods, new celebrations, and new holiday traditions. As one family trims the Christmas tree, neighbors down the street may be getting ready for Hanukkah, while friends across town are fasting for Ramadan. It's winter holiday time, a time when many Americans end the year gathering with relatives, enjoying great food and giving gifts. It's also a great time of year to teach kids about the importance of having an open mind about different cultures and traditions.

Little ones can learn about the world as Santa makes his way around the globe. See how he delivers gifts across land and sea while following his journey with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) at <http://www.noradsanta.org>.

Even the most familiar holidays take on new traditions in

other parts of the world. Perhaps grandparents or great-grandparents grew up in another country. Family gatherings are an opportunity to share family history and stories from across the country or across the sea. Consider how differently holidays are celebrated from New York City to the beaches of Honolulu, Hawaii!

Hanukkah, Ramadan, Christmas and Kwanzaa are the most well-known winter holidays celebrated in this country, but that doesn't mean they are the only holidays. Winter Solstice, the first day of winter and the longest night of the year, is also celebrated in many places around the world with festivals, decorations and ancient ceremonies that honor nature.

Three Kings Day, also known as Epiphany, marks the day the three kings arrived to visit the newborn Christ child. Three Kings Day is most commonly marked with festivities in Hispanic countries and cultures. Epiphany is a Christian festival held on January 6 in the United States and many Western countries.





**Girl Scouts' World Thinking Day is just around the corner on February 22. Many troops participate in activities and projects with global themes to honor their sister Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in other countries. The theme for World Thinking Day 2015 is "We Can Create Peace Through Partnerships." Which country would your Girl Scout like to learn more about?**



*Here is a list of some other winter holidays from around the globe:*

**India:** Diwali is one of the biggest festival of Hindus, celebrated with great enthusiasm and happiness in India. The festival is celebrated for five continuous days. The third day is celebrated as the main Diwali festival or 'Festival of Lights'.

**China:** The Chinese New Year starts with the New Moon on the first day of the new year and ends on the full moon 15 days later. The 15th day of the new year is called the Lantern Festival, which is celebrated at night with lantern displays and children carrying lanterns in a parade.

**The Netherlands:** Children set out pairs of shoes on the eve of St. Nicholas Day, December 6. In the middle of the night, St. Nick pays a visit, filling the shoes with small treats such as chocolates, candies, and toys.

**Italy:** Kids write letters to their parents promising good behavior (and apologizing for recent misdeeds), as well as telling them how much they love them. The letters are then placed under Dad's plate on Christmas Eve; he reads them all aloud once the meal is through.

**Mexico:** December 28, Day of the Holy Innocents, is celebrated much in the same way as April Fool's Day. Children—and adults—play innocent pranks. If successful, the trickster gives his victim a candy treat.

**Sweden:** St. Lucia Day, December 13, is the beginning of the holiday season; one girl in each home dresses as Lucia, patron saint of light, in a white gown and a crown of leaves—and then wakes everyone by bringing a tray of breakfast treats.

**Korea:** Families celebrate January 1 by making Duk Gook—also spelled Ddeokguk—or rice-cake soup. According to tradition, enjoying a bowlful on New Year's Day allows everyone to advance a year in age.

Read more: <http://www.mnn.com/family/family-activities/blogs/multicultural-winter-holiday-celebrations#ixzz3JSoo04RY>



## Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

**T**he race is on! During the holiday season, child safety procedures are imperative because of the large crowds we see everywhere. Everyone is engaged in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season. Everyone. Not simply moms, dads, aunts and uncles looking for the perfect gifts, but child predators looking for their next victim as well. The large crowds present at shopping malls and department stores make their jobs much easier; there is more anonymity and more distractions for parents with children in tow. As a result, there are several safety precautions every shopping parent should take when accompanied by the children.

Older children have likely ventured out on their own before. If you allow them to do this while holiday shopping, make sure they have a friend with them. There is safety in numbers. Although you may let them go off on their own, they should regularly check in with you, in person, not via cellular telephone or text message. Plans for meeting each other should be clearly conveyed and adhered to by everyone.

There is no substitute for parental supervision while holiday shopping. If you can't adequately supervise your children without being distracted, stay at home or leave them with someone else while you do your shopping.

**Supervision!** When in a mall or other public facility, always supervise your children. Always accompany your child to the restroom. Many modern malls are installing restrooms/ changing areas made especially for families, which makes it easier for dad to take his daughter to the restroom without having to take her into the sparkling clean men's room that incidentally also contains men. Depending on the age and responsibility of the child, they may be allowed to have some time away from mom. If that is the case, make sure they check with you before they go and that they do not go to locations other than where they stated.

**Separation.** It is possible for a child to become separated from you while shopping. The possibility of that unfortunate event makes it imperative that children know what to do. Teach them to look for people who can help return him to her to you. They should be able to identify law-enforcement officers, security officers, store personnel or another mother with children as persons who can get them back to their parents. They should not leave the area where they first realize they are lost and never, ever leave the mall to look for your car.

**Practice.** Visit the mall with your children for the sole purpose of having them practice what they should do while in the mall. Here is where you can ensure they can use a public telephone, locate help within the mall or a store and, for older children, go to the restroom with a friend.

**Anonymity.** Never dress your children in clothing with their names on them. Such clothing allows a predatory person an avenue to convince the child they are not "strangers" and could lead to further unwanted behavior. No stranger should have such an invitation to talk to your child.

**Not for babysitting.** Parents or guardians should never leave children alone at video arcades, movie theaters, toy stores or playgrounds. In these places, there is no supervision, and the people staffing these areas are generally not much older than your children. Frankly, most are not watching for inappropriate behavior, and they don't care about your child. These places are also magnets for child predators.

An excellent source for all manner of information regarding child safety, preventing abduction, and identifying potentially dangerous circumstances is the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children ([www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)). Give them a visit and your children will be safer for it.

<http://safety.more4kids.info/186/shopping-with-kids/>



## Tips to Teach Philanthropy to Your Child

It's a big, rather challenging word to pronounce, and might seem like a complicated concept to instill in your child. Teaching the concept of giving in a thoughtful and informed manner does not have to stress out any parent wanting meaningful lives for their families.

During the holiday season, our mailboxes and inboxes are bombarded with charitable appeals. The bell ringers outside our local store, and schools conduct food drives, coat drives, and gift drives for those less fortunate. All of these are worthy causes. But how to choose? Can we help them all?

Take a moment to talk with your children about the charitable gifts you make and why you make them. Encourage them to examine their own values and take action for positive change. Here are 10 great tips to encouraging the spirit of giving this holiday season:

### Find their spark.

Help your child find the cause that really gets them going through discussions, articles, books, music, movies, etc. Be prepared and supportive for the possibility of your child does not share your own philanthropic interest areas.

**Research before you give.** Once your child has chosen a cause, help them research different organizations that address the related issue. You are not just looking for ways to help, you are teaching your child to check out the legitimacy of the organization(s) they are interested in supporting.

**The 3 Ss: spend, save, share.** Discuss with your child how they'll divvy up their monthly allowance, birthday, or holiday

money into spending, savings, and sharing jars.

**Make a virtual or in person visit.** Contact an organization you're interested in for a tour. You may become even more passionate, or decide that organization is not for you. If site visits are not available, ask about virtual tours. If that is not an option, find a way to concretely represent the charity of choice in your home. It could be a drawing, photos, collage, sign, etc.

**Research root causes.** Being a philanthropist means researching the deeper causes of a problem and trying to find solutions. For instance, if your child has a classmate with cancer, research the treatments and development of possible cures.

**Look for the biggest impact.** When you find an organization where giving time or money will make the biggest impact, your child will want to do more!

**You set the example.** Kids learn by example so share your own experiences with philanthropy. Talk to your child about where and why you give, and take them with you to volunteer, if possible.

**Do you give to Girl Scouts? This is a great time to tell your daughter how proud you are of the choices she makes, the way she manages her time and money, and her many Girl Scout accomplishments. Go to [www.girlscoutshs.org/donate](http://www.girlscoutshs.org/donate) and make a gift in her honor – a gift that celebrates her character and demonstrates the value of Girl Scouting in your family's life.**

**The 3 Ts: time, talent, treasure.** Talk about the ways kids can give their time, (helping a neighbor, volunteering), their talent (a student great with computers helping his teachers), or their treasure, (money, gently loved stuffed animal donations, used clothing, etc.).

**Engage your friends.** Sharing is caring, especially when it's sharing information about a cause with friends and getting them interested in supporting your charity of choice!

**Have fun! Keep it positive!** Acknowledge and celebrate your child's commitment to reinforce the good feeling of giving. Finding the right cause and way to give results in your child is important to it being a positive experience. A young philanthropist having fun while giving back will keep on giving for years to come.

<http://www.childrenscoloradofoundation.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=jflLKS0BJsG&b=5063095&ct=12494609>

Items for or girls ages 5 - 7 (Daisies)

Items for or girls ages 7 - 10 (Brownies)

Items for or girls ages 10 - 13 (Juniors)

Items for or girls ages 12 - 14 (Cadettes)

Items for or girls ages 14 - 16 (Seniors)

Items for older girls ages 15 - 18 (Ambassadors)

## Nothing is more important within Girl Scouting than ensuring the health and safety of girls.

Health and safety extend to developing safety consciousness in girls and adults, as well as training staff, volunteers, and girls to ensure proper supervision, prevention of accidents and incidents, and maintenance of program resources.

Daisies through Ambassadors can learn about safety and well-being when they earn the Safety Award. And, Brownies through Ambassadors can earn the First Aid Legacy badge. Find descriptions in The Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting for each grade level.

Safety depends on our volunteers. If you are not already a Girl Scout volunteer, we have an opportunity that's right for you. We have the training and the resources, whether you want to help out for a day, a week, or a year!

You'll be their cheerleader, guide, and mentor, helping them develop skills and confidence that will last long after the meeting is over

Imagine the smiles, the excitement, the memories made--those are the moments you'll share at Girl Scouts. Be the role model she'll always remember. Volunteer today! Go to <http://girlscoutshs.org/leaders> today.





## Young People and Volunteering

In the teen years, peer influence is at its greatest. Simultaneously teens become more self-conscious and more aware of the thoughts and feelings of others. Teens start to align their social concerns with groups in their community that serve those needs. They learn to donate their time, talent, and money in the most effective ways they can to make a real difference. They can also begin to learn about careers in social services and nonprofit management.

Does your teen volunteer? What motivates her or him? Is it a cause they are passionate about? Maybe a friend got involved or it will look good on the college resume? One of the largest organizations for young people and social change is [dosomething.org](http://dosomething.org). They polled over 4,300 young people across the country to learn what “makes them tick.” What are the driving forces causing them to take action? Check out our top 11 results from *The DoSomething.org Index on Young People and Volunteering* below!



- Having friends that volunteer regularly is the primary factor influencing a teen’s volunteering habits.
- 40 percent of young people who volunteered in 2011 did it with clubs, friends, family, or on their own. They didn’t go through a traditional “organization.”
- Teens want volunteering to feel like a party – activities should be social.
- Over 70 percent of young people with friends who regularly volunteer also volunteer.
- The number one concern for students is paying for college. After that, it’s getting in.
- Young people want to volunteer with people their age, but not the same gender.
- Lack of time is the number one reason teens give for not volunteering.
- Many young people want to remain anonymous or help from a distance.
- For religious youth, volunteering habits aren’t determined by the importance of religion in their life. Rather, by how frequently they attend religious events, including youth groups.
- Young people want volunteer opportunities that are close to home, but not at home.
- Short activities that allow for different levels of engagement are best (5 min vs. an hour vs. half a day).



**During the holiday season,** many churches and community groups have

volunteer activities for the family to share. If your family is looking for ways to volunteer, these websites offer a few places to start: Volunteer Mid-South, local homeless shelters, and the Mid-South Food Bank.

[http://www.volunteermidsouth.org/HOC\\_\\_Volunteer\\_Opportunity\\_Search\\_Page](http://www.volunteermidsouth.org/HOC__Volunteer_Opportunity_Search_Page)

<http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/cgi-bin/id/city.cgi?city=Memphis&state=TN>

<http://www.midsouthfoodbank.org/volunteer>



If Memphis, Jackson, Oxford or Tupelo are too far for your sleigh to fly, you can also treat the family to a holiday show at your nearby high school or college. While some may charge admission, most are very reasonably priced. With concerts, musicals, and plays, and movies, there is sure to be something for everyone in the family! Follow-up the performance by looking for the book or story that may have inspired the show, and read it together.

Want an easy way to get yourself into the Christmas spirit? Whether you're looking for a Mid-South Christmas parade, holiday-themed performance, Santa visit, or lights display, there's a cornucopia of holiday events this year. Santa has already arrived in the Mid South and has filled his schedule with many of the events below!

### Memphis Metro Area

- **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, Peabody Hotel, Nov. 28, 11 a.m., free, all ages/kid-friendly** The Peabody kicks off the holiday season with the arrival of Santa Claus and the lighting of the Christmas tree. Local choirs perform holiday classics throughout the day, and the Peabody Pastry Team unveils their Christmas Village.
- **Red Carpet Christmas/Visits With Santa, Children's Museum of Memphis, Dec. 6, Dec. 13, Dec. 20, prices vary, all ages/kid-friendly** First, go to the Red Carpet Christmas on Dec. 6 where Santa will arrive, see mini performances of Peter Pan and Nutcracker, face painting, crafts, and a photo booth (\$12 nonmembers/free for members). Bring your own camera for photos and vistas with Santa again on the 13th and 20th – price included in museum admission.
- **Zoo Lights, Memphis Zoo, select nights Nov. 21 – Dec. 30, 5:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., \$6 members / \$8 non-members** Go to the Zoo after hours to check out LED lighting displays, magic shows, "snow", reindeer, Polar Express train, and Santa. You can see it all from a 90 ft. tall Ferris wheel (\$5); take a camel ride (\$4) or ice skate (\$6) on select nights.
- **Starry Nights, Shelby Farms, every night Nov. 21 – Dec. 28, Sun – Thu: 6 p.m. – 9 p.m., Fri – Sat: 6 p.m. – 10 p.m., \$20 per car/\$50 per van/limo, all ages/kid-friendly** Load up the car and drive slowly through Shelby Farms' ginormous annual holiday light display (Starry Nights features more than 2.5 million LED lights). This year's new displays pay homage to Memphis landmarks like Graceland, Beale Street, Sun Studio, the Grizzlies, and more. After you drive through Starry Nights, visit Mistletoe Village where you can meet Santa, ride a camel, and enjoy some s'mores.
- **Enchanted Forest Festival of Trees, Pink Palace Museum, Nov. 15 – Dec. 31, Mon. – Sat. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sundays noon – 5 p.m., \$6 adults / \$5 kids** Check out specially decorated Christmas trees and watch animatronic animals frolic in a retro-fabulous winter wonderland. The festival kicks off on Saturday, Nov. 15 at 9 a.m. when Santa helicopters onto the Pink Palace lawn. Enchanted Forest is open for nighttime viewing until 9 p.m. on Dec. 5, 12, and 19.
- **Snowy Nights in My Big Backyard, Memphis Botanic Garden, Fridays and Saturdays Nov. 28 – Dec. 14, nightly Dec. 15 – 30, 5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m., \$7 MBG Members / \$10 Non-Members / free for kids under 2, all ages/kid-friendly** Don't let geography get in the way of having a white Christmas. The Memphis Botanic Garden is having a month-long snow day in My Big Backyard with "snow," hot cocoa or spiced tea, winter crafts, and a giant Snow Globe.
- **Polar Express in 3D, CTI 3D Giant Theater at the Pink Palace, Nov. 15 – Dec. 31, \$9.50 – \$13.50, all ages/kid-friendly** Magical trains, the North Pole, Tom Hanks' voice combine for this new holiday classic, all in CGI 3D magic at the Pink Palace. Tickets are \$11 for adults and \$9.50 for kids/seniors, except on Enchanted Forest Friday nights 7 p.m. showing, when adult tickets are \$13.50.
- **A Christmas Carol, Theatre Memphis, Dec. 5 – 23, \$10 – \$30, all ages/kid-friendly** It's a Memphis holiday tradition: Theatre Memphis' annual run of the classic "A Christmas Carol" is just like Dickens intended it.
- **Ballet Memphis' The Nutcracker, The Orpheum Theatre, Dec. 12 – 14, \$9.50 – \$74.50, all ages/kid-friendly** More than 100 dancers with magical sets and costumes make up Ballet Memphis' production of The Nutcracker. There are special preview events and chances for kids to meet the characters; go here to see that schedule.
- **Holiday Pops, Cannon Center, Dec. 20 at 2:30 p.m. or 7:30 p.m., \$15 – \$85, all ages/kid-friendly** Memphis Symphony Orchestra performs their annual "Home for the Holidays" concert of Christmas favorites.

*Holiday light displays are a delight for even the youngest family member. As Christmas approaches, encourage your children to look for homes that are putting up special decorations. Keep a list of addresses or locations and then plan your holiday evening drive (looking at a community map and planning the drive is a bonus learning opportunity!) to enjoy the glow!*

**Building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.**

## Jackson/West TN Area

- The official start of the Holiday Season begins with The Jackson Symphony's first Pops concert of the 2014-2015 Season, **Saturday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the Carl Perkins Civic Center.** This family friendly concert will feature two sensational guest artists, Sabrina Laney Warren and Dr. Stanley Warren, singing festive Holiday favorites!
- **2014 Jackson Christmas Parade - Downtown Jackson Mon., Dec 8th (Rain date Tues, Dec 9th) 6:30pm** Welcome the Christmas season and Santa Claus to Jackson with the historic annual Christmas Parade through downtown Jackson.
- **Ballet Arts, Inc., Local Pre-professional Ballet Company, performing its annual production of The Nutcracker on December 12-14, at the Carl Perkins Civic Center.** Jackson is home to the longest, consecutively running Nutcracker production in the State of Tennessee. Children of all ages enjoy the magnificent interpretation of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite. Friday and Saturday evening performances are at 7:00 p.m. and a Sunday matinée at 2:00 p.m.
- **Holly Jolly Electric Christmas Parade - This electrifying Christmas parade kicks off at 5:00 pm following the Downtown Christmas Festival.** The parade is filled with entries all lit up for Christmas. Entries may range from decorated and lighted golf carts to floats and cars and trucks with Christmas lights galore. Winners are chosen from several categories of the parade. For more information send inquires to Downtown Paris Association c/o Kathy Ray – P.O. Box 95 – Paris, TN. 38242 (731) 653-7274.

## Tupelo/North MS Area

- The 66th Annual Reed's Tupelo Christmas Parade will be **Monday, December 8th on the streets of downtown Tupelo.** The parade will begin at 6:30 p.m at the intersection of Main Street and Front Street. People viewing the parade should line up along the sidewalks starting at Front Street and heading west towards Robins Street. The parade will continue north on Robins and east on Jefferson. The 2014 theme for the Christmas Parade will be "Season of Hope".
- **'Twas the Night Before Christmas" December 4 - 6, 2014 • December 4, 5 & 6 at 7:30 p.m. December 6, at 2:00 p.m. Tupelo Community Theatre, 201 North Broadway, Tupelo, MS.** This new play from one of our favorite playwrights Ken Ludwig is sure to be a delight for the entire family. On Christmas Eve Uncle Brierly treats the children by reciting the poem 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. He doesn't get very far, however, before he's interrupted by a mouse named Amos, who has his own version of the poem because he insists Santa skipped their house the previous year. What follows is a grand Christmas adventure, filled with schemes, confrontations, mistaken identities, bravery, and all things naughty and nice.
- **Letters to Santa Saturday! December 20, 2014 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm** 219 S. Industrial Road, Tupelo, MS 38801 Write and decorate letters to Santa Claus or your favorite elf! Price: \$5 per person between the ages of 2 - 102! Free to members! Phone: 662-377-5437. Web: [www.healthworkskidsms.org](http://www.healthworkskidsms.org)

For more information about holiday events in your area including local parade schedules check out these links:

- **Memphis** <http://www.ilovememphisblog.com/2014/11/memphis-holiday-events-guide-2014/>
- **Jackson** [http://orig.jacksonsun.com/recreation/annual\\_events.shtml](http://orig.jacksonsun.com/recreation/annual_events.shtml)
- **Oxford** <http://oxfordeagle.com>
- **Tupelo** [http://www.msmainstreet.com/index.php/events\\_news/calendar](http://www.msmainstreet.com/index.php/events_news/calendar)

Choosing your Christmas tree is one of the greatest family activities of the holiday season! Tree farms often have free or low-cost fun for kids in addition to the tree cutting. Seek out tree farms that may have hayrides, living nativity scenes, local crafts, and seasonal foods. Check out <http://www.pickyourownchristmastree.org>

***Holiday celebrations make special memories and create family traditions that will be handed down from generation to generation. Whatever you do, you can give the greatest gift of all – time with loved ones worth more than silver or gold!***

### November/December 2014 GPS Photos:

- GPS Screen, Masthead: *Fitness expert Sherika Norris- Holmes worked with Cadette troop 10266 to help them complete their Eating for Beauty badge.*
- page 3, bottom right: *Safety Day for GS Troop 43242 in Madison County*
- page 4, top left: *Collierville Brownies visit the Collierville food pantry.*
- page 4, bottom left: *Members of Alcorn Co. Daisy Troop 23196 march in the 2014 Veterans Day Parade.*

**girl scouts**   
heart of the south

