



Community Connections

Here are some challenge suggestions that other Rangers have done.

Host a themed scavenger hunt for younger children in your community. Use the event-planning resources and the following event-specific tips to create an exciting event:

1. Decide on the age group. This will determine the size and location of the play area and the types of clues you can write. Remember to consider adaptations or supports for children with disabilities.
2. Use your chosen theme on invites and posters.
3. Create a kit list so that the children will be able to play and have fun in all types of weather.
4. Choose an appropriate starting and ending point. For younger children (Sparks and Brownies) everything will be likely in one location such as a park, with different “stations” set up throughout. Older children (Guides and Pathfinders) will start and finish at a park or other location, but will travel around the community. Get Guiders involved as supervisors.
5. Choose the places you would like to highlight in your community. If the participants will have to travel across private property, get the owner’s permission before you plan that segment of the course.
6. Write clues carefully. While they should require some thought, they shouldn’t be impossible for participants to figure out.
7. Come up with challenges at each station that teach the girls about their local culture.
8. Use a points system instead of elimination so that the winning team is the one that does the best on the challenges within the time frame.
9. Have special awards for teams in first and second place, but ensure that there are prizes for everyone, especially the younger children.
10. Always keep safety in mind.

Joining a student organization is great for making friends, developing new skills, advocating for change and building your resumé (both for work and post-secondary education). Before signing up, answer the following:

- What am I looking for in an organization (new friends, something I believe in, learning something new)?
- Should I find something related to my future career/post-secondary goals?
- Do I want to be of service to the school or community?
- Do I want to be active and do things?
- How much time do I have to spend?
- Am I willing to pay membership fees to support the organization?
- How do I like to spend my free time?

Talk to current and former members of groups that interest you about what you can expect to get out of them. Find out what they do exactly and what types of events they



hold. Do they put on the same events every year or will you be able to introduce new and exciting ideas? Find out whether you would be able to take on a leadership role.

After narrowing down the field, attend a couple of meetings of potential organizations and write down your answers to the following questions:

- Is this the right cause for me?
- Do I value the type of work the organization does and the people it serves?
- What can I really contribute to this organization?
- What can this organization do for me?

Based on your research, find the right student organization for you. If can't find one, start your own!

When you are working with younger girls in other branches, you will often see that they are focusing on program areas that are similar to yours. This doesn't mean that you are doing the same thing. It means that you are investigating the same topic, but on different levels.

In the Guide program, the You in Guiding, Be Involved in Your Community area encourages Guides to support their community through a service project. You can help them do this and work on your program at the same time. Here's how:

Guides are going to need some help thinking up community service projects. Lead a brainstorming session. Bring flipchart paper and markers or use a chalkboard. Ask the girls to talk about the people in their community who need support. Ask them how they can help. Remember that the point of brainstorming is to generate lots of ideas—good or bad! Use the “How to Facilitate a Brainstorming Session” resource found online at www.girlguides.ca to help you with this.

Ideas include gathering and/or sorting food for the food bank, putting together back-to-school kits for children in need, doing a toiletry drive for women in the local shelter and reading with the elderly.

You and the Guides can also come up with your own project. Start looking into the resources available and then narrow the possibilities down to one. Make sure you let the Guides make the final decision, but you can help them to understand what is possible by telling them about some of the research you did—is the women's shelter too small to store a great amount of food, clothing or toiletries from a drive? Perhaps they have a greater need for educational toys for the children?

Now it's up to you to ensure that it happens. Contact the necessary people, set up a date, follow the *Safe Guide* by getting out the necessary permission forms with Guide Leaders and ensure you have everything for the project. Remember that the Guides have to be *doing* something, while you, as coordinator may not be as directly involved. Use the Event Planning resource found online at www.girlguides.ca to help you. And don't forget to evaluate the project with the Guides after it is over!