

# PROGRAM EMPHASES

## A PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM



The American Heritage Girls (AHG) Program is balanced and progressive in nature. It offers girls of all ages a variety of opportunities and experiences.

The AHG Oath and Creed provide the cornerstone of values that personify the AHG experience. Girls use these attributes as a "litmus" test in fulfilling the American Heritage Girls Mission to become a **woman of integrity**.

This guide illustrates how the AHG Program progresses through each Program Level in each Program Emphasis.

# EMPHASES

## CITIZENSHIP

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

### *Honoring*

Cares for her community as an active citizen through service and patriotism

The service aspect of the AHG Program encourages girls to put “legs on their faith” and their values into action. Girls have an outward focus towards others, rather than an inward, self-seeking, focus.

The Citizenship Program Emphasis encourages patriotism in a variety of ways. The AHG Program was designed to provide girls opportunities to know what it means to be an active U.S. citizen. Girls are encouraged to honor those who have served our country, serve others, and learn more about the blessing of living in the United States.

*Below are examples of how girls can demonstrate citizenship at each Program Level.*

PATHFINDER	TENDERHEART	EXPLORER	PIONEER	PATRIOT
Pray for servicemen and women	Pray for servicemen and women	Pray for servicemen and women	Pray for servicemen and women	Pray for servicemen and women
Make cards to send to servicemen and women	Make cards to send to servicemen and women	Make cards to send to servicemen and women	Make cards to send to servicemen and women	Make cards to send to servicemen and women
Participate in a parade	Participate in a parade	Participate in a parade	Participate in a parade	Participate in a parade
	Send care packages to servicemen and women	Send care packages to servicemen and women	Send care packages to servicemen and women	Send care packages to servicemen and women
	Participate in a Veteran Ceremony	Participate in a Veteran Ceremony	Participate in a Veteran Ceremony	Participate in a Veteran Ceremony
	Write letters to servicemen and women	Write letters to servicemen and women	Write letters to servicemen and women	Write letters to servicemen and women
		Bake cookies for an Emergency Response Team, fire station or police station	Bake cookies for an Emergency Response Team, fire station or police station	Bake cookies for an Emergency Response Team, fire station or police station
		Place flags or wreaths on graves at a Veterans Cemetery	Place flags or wreaths on graves at a Veterans Cemetery	Place flags or wreaths on graves at a Veterans Cemetery
			Assist in coordinating a parade	Assist in coordinating a parade
				Plan a flag retiring for your community
				Volunteer for a Veterans Administration Hospital
				Organize flag placement for a Veterans Cemetery

# EMPHASIS

## GIRL LEADERSHIP

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

#### *Servant Leader*

Follow Jesus' model of leadership by putting others first

**Leadership opportunities exist at every Program Level.**

**Through many successful experiences, leadership becomes a lifestyle to AHG Members. The manner in which a Troop is governed can lend itself well to progressive girl leadership.**

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Having the girls run their own meetings is the ultimate goal of the AHG Program. Encourage each Girl Member to have an active role in the Troop meeting. Give them ownership of

their Troop! They won't want to miss a meeting if they feel they have an important role to play.

The following formats are progressive in nature. As the Troop and girls mature, your system of governing will also change.

**TRIBAL RING:** The Tribal Ring is a great form of Troop government for the younger girls. Tenderhearts and Explorers will enjoy having their voices heard. During a meeting of the Tribal Ring, the Unit Leader generates discussion, asking for input from girls. Girls are encouraged to participate and speak on the week's activities or a topic important to them at the time.

**TOWN MEETING:** The Town Meeting allows girls the opportunity to participate in topic-oriented discussions. The moderator can be the Leader of a girl designated as such. This form of government is great for Explorer, Pioneer, or Patriot Units that are small. It also provides the ability to have each voice heard. Some Troops/Units may decide to elect officers to help monitor the flow of Town Meetings.

**SQUAD METHOD:** The Squad Method works best for older Explorer, Pioneer, and Patriot Units with 12 or more girls. Squads can choose a name and elect Squad leadership. They're designed to carry out work and decision-making in a streamlined fashion. Each Squad will elect Squad Leaders. These Leaders will form a Squad Advisory Board. The Board will determine expectations and opportunities for each Unit.

**PATROL SYSTEM:** The Patrol System is used within the Squad structure. This system is commonly employed for a specific purpose or project, such as an End of Year Ceremony or a special grouping at camp. This is a great way to break up the workload while allowing many girls to try their hand at leading.

The following chart features ways each Program Level can develop a girl's leadership skills.

PATHFINDER	TENDERHEART	EXPLORER	PIONEER	PATRIOT
Snack Helper	Snack Helper	Snack Provider	Girl Care Specialist*	Girl Care Specialist*
Craft Helper	Craft Helper	Craft Helper	Girl Shepherd*	Girl Shepherd*
Clean Up Helper	Clean Up Helper	Clean Up Helper	Historian*	Historian*
Flag Holder	Flag Holder	Flag Holder	Flag Holder	Flag Holder
Pathfinder Leader Helper*	Color Guard	Color Guard	Color Guard	Color Guard
	Flag Ceremony Caller	Flag Ceremony Caller	Flag Ceremony Caller	Flag Ceremony Caller
	Prayer Team Member*	Prayer Team Member*	Prayer Team Member*	Prayer Team Member*
	Unit Scribe*	Unit Scribe*	Unit Scribe*	Unit Scribe*
	Unit Reporter*	Girl Scribe*	Girl Scribe*	Girl Scribe*
	Song/Skit Team	Song/Skit Leader*	Song/Skit Leader*	Song/Skit Leader*
	Tenderheart Leader Helper*	Unit Reporter*	Unit Reporter*	Unit Reporter*
	Service Team Member*	Song/Skit Team	Song/Skit Team	Song/Skit Team
		Hostess*	Hostess*	Hostess*
		Explorer Squad/Unit Leader*	Pioneer Squad/Unit Leader*	Patriot Squad/Unit Leader*
		Videographer*	Newsletter Editor*	Newsletter Editor*
		Girl Service Lead*	Photographer*	Photographer*
		Service Team Member*	Girl Service Lead*	Girl Service Lead*
		Announcements Director*	Service Team Member*	Service Team Member*
	Steward	Flag Ceremony Coordinator*	Flag Ceremony Coordinator*	
		Announcements Director*	Announcements Director*	
		Steward	Steward	

# EMPHASES

## LEADERSHIP

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION SERVICE

#### *Servant Leader*

Follow Jesus' model of leadership by putting others first

The tradition of people helping people can be seen throughout the course of history. Service projects enable girls to learn about the people in their community, their needs, and what the girls can do to make improvements. For girls to be natural leaders, they need to be able to assess the needs of others and plan their role in meeting those needs.

Girls may earn Service Stars based on their Program Level and number of hours served. A girl's unused service hours for Service Star recognition may be carried over to the next Program Year. The Troop Advancement Manager should keep all service hour records per Program Year. Tracking service hours will help each girl and her Unit Leader know her standing to attain her Service Star.

Program Level	Total Hours of Service	Service Star Recognition
Tenderheart	5	Blue Star
Explorer	10	Red Star
Pioneer	15	White Star
Patriot	20	Yellow Star

*Note: Pathfinders are not eligible for Service Stars; however, any service hours accumulated during their Pathfinder Program Level will carry over to their next Program Level.*

Pathfinders may participate in age-appropriate service projects. They are not eligible to earn Service Stars until they become a Tenderheart. The Pathfinder Program Level is intended to be a fun introduction to the AHG Program. Pathfinders should focus on earning their Pathfinder beads. When Pathfinders wait to earn Service Stars, they build anticipation to earn Service Stars in the next Program Year. This also encourages girl retention within the Troop.

#### BELOW ARE SUGGESTED WAYS EACH PROGRAM LEVEL CAN SERVE

Pathfinder	Tenderheart	Explorer	Pioneer	Patriot
Participate in pre-planned project	Choose a project	Choose a project	Choose a project	Choose a project
On-site projects	On-site projects (at the Charter Organization)	On-site projects (at the Charter Organization)	On-site projects (at the Charter Organization)	On-site projects (at the Charter Organization)
In-home projects	In-home projects	In-home projects	In-home projects	In-home projects
	On-site collections (at the Charter Organization)	On-site collections (at the Charter Organization)	On-site collections (at the Charter Organization)	On-site collections (at the Charter Organization)
	On-site group events (at the Charter Organization)	On-site group events (at the Charter Organization)	On-site group events (at the Charter Organization)	On-site group events (at the Charter Organization)
		Domestic mission trip	Domestic mission trip	Domestic mission trip
				International mission trip

# SERVICE

## COMMUNITY SERVICE IDEAS

The concept of “Circles of Charity” is a useful way to identify different types of service. The following graphic and chart can be helpful in planning service opportunities for your Troop. Troops should strive to provide a variety of service opportunities and include options from different circles. As you move from the outer circle to the inner circle, the service becomes more hands-on, where girls are working directly with those in need.

### TYPES OF CHARITY

#### **HANDS-ON** CHARITY

*This is an experience that would put a Girl Member in direct contact with the recipients of their efforts and allow them to directly touch a human need. This is the most desirable experience for girls.*

#### **WITNESS** CHARITY

*An experience that allows Girl Members to see the people they are helping, but not have interaction with them.*

#### **VICARIOUS** CHARITY

*An experience that is dependent on others to carry it out.*

#### **ABSTRACT** CHARITY

*An experience where it is difficult to determine who is directly impacted.*





# CHARITY

## HANDS-ON-CHARITY

Become a "Big Buddy" for a child at a homeless shelter

Tutor younger children

Teach after-school classes for kids

Volunteer at a Special Olympics Event

Serve meals in a soup kitchen

Volunteer at a rehabilitation center

Volunteer at a church or other organization that provides activities for children

Prepare dinner for a family at a local Ronald McDonald House

Volunteer at a Humane Society or animal shelter

Host a "Storytime" for younger children at your local library

Present on bike safety at a local library

Host a Vacation Bible School for your community

Participate in a mission trip

Sponsor and decorate a children's party at a group home, shelter or hospital

Provide birthday cakes for senior citizens who do not have near-by relatives

Host a meal for firefighters, other public helpers or the homeless

Plan an intergenerational cultural exchange

Visit a nursing home to sing, read, tell stories, play games, fix hair, paint nails, etc.

Adopt a "Grand friend"

## ABSTRACT CHARITY

Help build a playground or park benches

Paint a homeless shelter

Clean up a cemetery

Organize a neighborhood beautification project

Clean a local park or vacant lot

Plant a tree or flowers at your Charter Organization, library or senior citizen center

Organize a recycling drive to raise money to plant trees at a local park

Build a bookshelf and stock it with books for a homeless shelter or day care

Make birdhouses for a nursing home, shelter, park or walking trail

Make cards for patients in a Veterans Administration Hospital

## WITNESS CHARITY

Prepare sacked lunches for homeless shelters or other nonprofit service organizations

Help with housecleaning for a senior citizen or veteran

Help a senior citizen center with lawn care needs

Promote Vacation Bible School via flyer distribution

Write to a child from an international sponsorship organization

Make a meal for a family after the birth of a new baby or hospitalization

## VICARIOUS CHARITY

Make simple math or reading flash cards for younger kids

Set up a buddy system at your school or church for kids with special needs

Collect items for the HUGS Duffle Bag Project

Send care packages to soldiers, prisoners, children, refugees, etc.

Participate in a local food drive

Support an international child sponsorship organization

Collect items for an Operation Christmas Child Shoebox

Assemble "Survival Kits" for new students at your school

Organize a "Mitten Tree" for families in need during the Christmas season

Donate teddy bears to police stations to give to children who have been involved in accidents

Collect baby supplies and clothes for a local pregnancy center

Organize a food drive to support a local food pantry

Collect stuffed animals and toys to donate to children in a homeless shelter

Make lap quilts for nursing home residents or abuse centers

Bake cookies for a homeless shelter

Participate in the Cookies for Kairos Ministry

Send greetings or tray cars to veterans at a local Veterans Administration Hospital

Collect shoes, eyeglasses, etc. for children in an impoverished country

Organize a program to collect produce or groceries from restaurants and stores that would otherwise be discarded; donate your collection to a soup kitchen, food bank or homeless shelter

# EMPHASES

## SOCIAL

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

#### Relational

Invests in positive and loving relationships with others

Girls love to have fun and rate “time with their friends” as the main reason they love the AHG Program. Providing girls a secure environment supervised by trained, Adult Members fosters life-long friendships. Social development occurs through many avenues, including special events and Troop community.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:** Special events are activities that occur outside of Troop Meetings and are social in nature. These events may be limited to Troop

Members and might include families, community members or other AHG Troops. These fun events can create wonderful memories for girls.

Social activities do require an additional amount of planning and resources. The Troop Board and/or Leadership Team may assist with this planning. As girls progress in the Program, they should have the opportunity to plan and implement these social activities and events. Creating fun, social activities help girl retention, ownership, and provides valuable learning experiences.

**CREATING COMMUNITY:** A sense of community within the Troop is important. Girls need to feel a sense of belonging and safety. Be sure to create an environment in which all girls feel welcomed, valued, and part of the group.

It is vital to bring new Girl Members into the Troop quickly so they do not feel like an outsider. Establishing a consistent meeting structure and Troop/Unit goals/guidelines will help give Troop Members a sense of ownership. Such measures also strengthens the sense of community.

This guide is meant to assist Leaders in planning their Troop’s social activities. Age recommendations, are simply that, recommendations. AHG Health and Safety Guidelines, located in AHGsource, should be consulted before planning a social activity. A girl’s age, abilities, experience, interests and maturity should be taken into consideration.

The following chart highlights events and activities that foster a girl’s social development at each Program Level.

Pathfinder	Tenderheart	Explorer	Pioneer	Patriot
Games and sharing time at Unit Meetings	Games and sharing time at Unit Meetings	Games and sharing time at Unit Meetings	Games and sharing time at Unit Meetings	Games and sharing time at Unit Meetings
Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips
Mother/Daughter event	Mother/Daughter event	Mother/Daughter event	Mother/Daughter event	Mother/Daughter event
Father/Daughter event	Father/Daughter event	Father/Daughter event	Father/Daughter event	Father/Daughter event
Senior Citizen event	Senior Citizen event	Senior Citizen event	Senior Citizen event	Senior Citizen event
Bring-a-Friend Day	Bring-a-Friend Day	Bring-a-Friend Day	Bring-a-Friend Day	Bring-a-Friend Day
Parade/community event	Parade/community event	Parade/community event	Parade/community event	Parade/community event
Roller skating event	Roller skating event	Roller skating event	Roller skating event	Roller skating event
Bowling event	Bowling event	Bowling event	Bowling event	Bowling event
Local park day	Local park day	Local park day	Local park day	Local park day
Family event	Family event	Family event	Family event	Family event
Charter-sponsored event	Charter-sponsored event	Charter-sponsored event	Charter-sponsored event	Charter-sponsored event
Day Camp	Troop Lock-In	Troop Lock-In	Troop Lock-In	Troop Lock-In
	Day Camp	Troop overnights	Troop overnights	Troop overnights
		Troop Campout	High-adventure day trips	High-adventure day trips
			Multi-Troop camping	Multi-Troop camping



# EMPHASES

## LIFE SKILLS

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

#### *Competent*

Enjoys mastering new skills and applying them in her life

Girls can acquire life skills through Badge work. Badge work covers the six Frontiers: Heritage, Family Life, Arts, Outdoor Skills, Personal Well-Being, and Science and Technology. The Badge Program is age-appropriate and multi-level, allowing girls of all ages to work together at an appropriate pace.

Leaders should plan ahead, consider girl input, and determine which Badges to earn during the Program Year. Leaders and parents should remember that Badge achievements are a small part of the AHG Program. Earning too many Badges can lead to girl burnout and neglect of the other Six Program Emphases.

On the other hand, not earning any Badges can decrease girl interest and retention. Typically a Troop earns three to four Badges per year. A merit Badge requires careful balance. Leaders find the most success when considering a girl's age, ability, maturity, and interests when setting Badge goals. The Troop Board should establish guidelines for managing individual achievement and the costs incurred.

Badges can be earned as an individual and at a Troop Level. Some Badges lend themselves toward individual achievement and vice versa. The chart below provides suggestions on Badges that work well in a Troop setting. It also includes Badges that may be better suited for individual achievement. These are simply suggestions. Remember to plan according to each girl's interests and abilities. You may find success with other Badges, dependent on her abilities, maturity, and interests.

## TROOP

Bible Basics

Cake Decorating

Cooking

Creative Crafts

Cycling

Dance

Daughter of the King

Emergency Preparedness

Fire Building and Safety

Hiking

Home Care & Repair

Kitchen Scientist

Nature & Wildlife

Our Flag

Our Heritage

Physical Fitness

Puppetry

Social Skills & Etiquette

Textile Arts

Theater

Toys & Games

World Heritage

Zoology

Citizenship & Government

## INDIVIDUAL

Ancestor Detector

Book Adventurer

Creative Writing

Family Helper

Home Decorating

Internet Adventure

Money Management

Music Appreciation

Music Performance

Needle Arts

Pet Care

Together as a Family

Travel

# EMPHASIS

## LIFE SKILLS

### DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE

#### Competent

Enjoys mastering new skills and applying them in her life

Successful Troops include opportunities to master new skills. Outdoor experiences are a great way to grow life skills and provide for unique experiences. Since the outdoors is an integral part of the AHG Program, it is crucial that girls have the opportunity to experience the wilderness. These experiences empower girls, grow their confidence, and teach them survival skills. This experience also helps them remove the fear that often surrounds the outdoors. The outdoors helps

to educate them about their natural world and the beauty God has bestowed upon them.

Outdoor opportunities should be progressive in nature. Outdoor experiences can range from a 15-minute hike to a 10-day canoe/tent trip. A Pathfinder or Tenderheart Unit can be introduced to the outdoors through a Troop picnic or hike. An Explorer Unit may be ready for an overnight camping trip in cabins.

These experiences build excitement for Pathfinders and Tenderhearts. They also gain excitement from watching the Pioneer and Patriot Units plan adventurous experiences. These progressive, outdoor opportunities help with girl retention due to the fun factor.

Below you will find a chart suggesting how a girl should progress through outdoor experiences. This model is based on a girl who enters the AHG Program as a Pathfinder with little to no outdoor experience. Adjustments to this model may be needed based on a girl's age when entering the AHG Program. You may want to consider her outdoor experience. Leaders and parents are urged to not push younger girls ahead in this progression chart. Girls will increase their responsibility to plan and implement outdoor activities as they move up each Program Level.

This progression chart is designed to assist Leaders in planning Troop outdoor activities. The AHG Health and Safety Guideline, found on AHGsource, should be consulted prior to planning an outdoor adventure. Consider each girl's age, abilities, experience, interests, and maturity.

Pathfinder	Tenderheart	Tenderheart (2nd-3rd year)	Explorer	Pioneer	Patriot
Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips	Meeting time trips
Multi-Troop Day Camps	Multi-Troop Day Camps	Multi-Troop Day Camps	Multi-Troop Day Camps	Multi-Troop Day Camps	Multi-Troop Day Camps
	Day trips	Day trips	Day trips	Day trips	Day trips
		Multi-Troop Resident Camp	Multi-Troop Resident Camp	Multi-Troop Resident Camp	Multi-Troop Resident Camp
		One-night Troop trips (cabins/bunkhouse)	Simple Troop overnight trips	Simple Troop overnight trips	Simple Troop overnight trips
			Multi-Night Troop camping (tents/cabins)	Multi-Night Troop camping (tents/cabins)	Multi-Night Troop camping (tents/cabins)
				3 night or more camping trips	3 night or more camping trips
				High-adventure day trips	High-adventure day trips

# EMPHASES

## FAITH

### FAITH DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

*Christ follower*

Submits to Christ  
and seeks God's  
will for her life

The Lord is the reason that the AHG Ministry exists. It is encouraged that Girl Members know Him better, serve Him with great love, and seek His will. Each girl is encouraged to grow in her faith and relationship with God.

Each Troop has a Troop Shepherd who seeks to know and pray for each Girl Member. The Troop Shepherd is a key encourager for girls to grow their faith. Whether through Troop Meeting prayer, Unit Bible studies, or modeling Christ-like behavior, Adult

Volunteers can have an eternal impact on the lives of girls.

The AHG Program offers a variety of options for girls. Faith and Religious Programs are important throughout all Program Levels and are integral to earning AHG's highest award, the Stars and Stripes Award. Recognized Faith and Religious Programs can be found on AHGsource.

*Below is a chart that highlights additional tasks that girls can do to strengthen their faith.*

Pathfinder	Tenderheart	Explorer	Pioneer	Patriot
Prayer during Troop Opening Time	Prayer during Troop Opening Time	Lead prayer during Troop Opening Time	Lead prayer during Troop Opening Time	Lead prayer during Troop Opening Time
Songs	Songs	Songs	Lead songs	Lead songs
Opening devotion by older girl or Leader	Opening devotion by older girl or Leader	Opening devotion by older girl or Leader	Lead or participate in opening devotion	Lead or participate in opening devotion
Refer to memory verse	Memory verse to take home	Memory verse to take home	Choose and explain applicable memory verse/ passage	Choose and explain applicable memory verse/ passage
Participate in prayer circle	Participate in prayer circle	Participate in prayer circle	Lead prayer circle	Lead prayer circle
Prayer at Troop Closing Time	Prayer at Troop Closing Time	Prayer at Troop Closing Time	Prayer at Troop Closing Time	Prayer at Troop Closing Time
	Participate in age-appropriate Faith and Religious Program	Participate in age-appropriate Faith and Religious Program	Participate in age-appropriate Faith and Religious Programs	Participate in age-appropriate Faith and Religious Programs
		Off-site or off-night Bible study	Lead younger girls in a Bible study or mentor during Faith and Religious Program	Lead younger girls in a Bible study or mentor during Faith and Religious Program
		Service project	Off-site or off-night Bible study with Unit	Off-site or off-night Bible study with Unit
			Service project	Service project
			Weekend mission trip	Weekend mission trip
			Multi-night mission trip	Multi-night mission trip

# EMPHASIS

## EMOTIONAL

### EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRESSION

#### Anchored

Clings to Christ even when emotions try to take control

Girls are encouraged to be the best version of themselves each day. Girls will learn strategies to foster healthy, emotional intelligence and problem-solving skills. It is integral for girls to learn how to navigate conflict. They are provided with programs that teach them how to be adaptive and resilient. Girls can learn to regulate their emotions in the face of daily challenges with the help of the AHG Program.

Girls will also gain an understanding of who they are in Christ. They will learn to anchor their emotions in Christ. Emotional purity is encouraged and displayed within the Troop. A girl that is emotionally healthy will cling to Christ when her emotions may try to take control of her behavior.

*Below is a chart that identifies skills and activities to enhance Emotional Development.*

Pathfinder	Tenderheart	Explorer	Pioneer	Patriot
Identify emotions	Identify and manage emotions	Identify and manage emotions	Identify and manage emotions	Identify and manage emotions
Learn how to problem solve	Learn how to problem solve	Learn how to problem solve	Learn how to problem solve	Learn how to problem solve
Learn how to manage stress	Learn how to manage stress	Learn how to manage stress	Learn how to manage stress	Learn how to manage stress
Learn conflict-resolution skills	Learn conflict-resolution skills	Learn conflict-resolution skills	Learn conflict-resolution skills	Learn conflict-resolution skills
	Beauty Mentor Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program
	Inner Beauty Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program	Beauty Mentor Patch Program
		Recognize other's emotions	Recognize other's emotions	Recognize other's emotions
		Learn and practice good listening skills	Learn and practice good listening skills	Learn and practice good listening skills
			Passport2Purity Program	Passport2Purity Program
				Passport2Identity Program