

Holocaust Education Patch Program



Designed and written by Lily Sassani
Mentored by Emily Loeb and Julia Gaetano
of the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh
2025

History of the Patch

In 2023, Lily Sassani set out to earn her Gold Award, the highest honor in the Girl Scouts, which requires a Girl Scout to design and carry out an independent, sustainable project addressing a real-world issue. Lily focused her project on Holocaust education and, at the suggestion of the LIGHT Education Initiative, asked if the [Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh](#) (HCP)—both programs of The Tree of Life—would serve as her mentor. The result was this first-of-a-kind Holocaust education patch program that was developed in partnership with the HCP and Lily from Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania (GSWPA) as her Gold Award project.

For more than two years, Lily met weekly with HCP staff members Emily Loeb and Julia Gaetano to envision, design, and develop the Holocaust education patch program. This work followed a rigorous, iterative process that included consultation with subject-matter experts and ongoing guidance from GSWPA. Following this process, the curriculum and patch were approved. A sustainability plan was then developed to ensure the program's continuation beyond Lily's participation as a Girl Scout, and GSWPA recommended that HCP assume ownership and copyright of the curriculum and patch in order to manage the program moving forward.

The Jewish Women's Foundation of Greater Pittsburgh awarded funding to support the staff time and resources required for its development.



Table of Contents

- **Foreword** - pg. 3
- **Pre-program Prep**
 - Material Warning - pg. 4
 - Leader Guide - pg. 5
 - Leader & Parent Prep - pg. 6
 - Group Agreement Prep - pg. 7
- **Discover**
 - Videos + Script - pg. 8
 - Video Reflection - pg. 9
- **Connect**
 - Activity List + Code Cards - pg. 10
 - Field Trip Suggestions - pg. 11
 - Book and Movie Recommendations - pg. 12
- **Take Action**
 - Remembrance - pg. 13
 - Volunteering - pg. 14
 - Educate - pg. 14
- **Conclusion** - pg. 15
 - Citations - pg. 16
- **Resource Summary** - pg. 17

Click or tap a heading to jump ahead

Foreword

The mission of this patch program is to address the injustices of the Holocaust and antisemitism, as well as to empower individuals to build a more humane and respectful society. Girl Scouts are invited to partake in a patch program that will educate them about the Holocaust, its meaning, and the resistance efforts of Girl Guides (Girl Scouts outside of the US), which emphasize the importance of both individualism and unity between all girls and women, regardless of identity.

The patch program is defined by its connection between the Holocaust and the Girl Guides of history, with the goal of educating participants about the Holocaust and finding honor in the Girl Scouts program. By the end of the program, Girl Scouts will understand these core teachings and learn the importance of opposing discrimination, as well as gain the inspiration to channel these teachings into action.

The curriculum for the patch is framed by the Girl Scout's values of courage, inclusion, and truth. Girl Scouts Western Pennsylvania is not responsible if an unprepared troop chooses to pursue this program.

Both the patches and the curriculum adhere to specific copyright requirements and may not be altered, reproduced, copied, or modified in any way. These requirements ensure fidelity to the program's educational intent and compliance with Girl Scout and copyright standards.

The curriculum was developed and approved within a strict Girl Scout curricular format. While the curriculum itself may not be changed, troops may use locally available resources to fulfill required activities, provided the learning objectives and structure of the curriculum are maintained. To receive earned patches, troops must contact the HCP.

Material Warning

This patch program is appropriate for Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador Girl Scouts (6th-12th grade), but it is recommended that leaders consult with the troop and parents regarding their sensitivity with the subject. The materials enclosed are meant for mature audiences and contain graphic descriptions of historically accurate events.

Due to the sensitivity of the subject, it is suggested that troop leader(s) speak with the troop's parents ahead of time and/or share the curriculum with parents to determine whether or not they feel their troop member is ready to pursue this patch. Leaders should review the *Leader Preparation* page before starting the patch program.

Knowing that people have different understandings of what is "mature" or "graphic," please review the contents and required videos before introducing them to your troop. If there are contents you deem as inappropriate, you can eliminate them from the written transcript for your troop.

Please distribute the Permission Slip on the next page to your troop for parental consent to partake in the patch program.



Girl Scouts Mature Content Permission Slip

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As part of our commitment to providing well-rounded, meaningful experiences in earning patches, we have chosen to pursue the Holocaust Education patch. While the activities and information relate to the values of Girl Scouts, including showing how both individuals and groups make a difference, some of the materials included for earning the patch may include mature topics. This may involve literature, films, documentaries, or discussions that cover complex subjects inherent in discussing the Holocaust.

We recognize that every family has different perspectives on these topics, and we want to ensure that you are fully informed about the requirements for this patch. Please review the information below and provide your consent as appropriate. Details of Content:

- During the Nazi reign, millions of people were murdered due to religion, ethnicity, and/or beliefs.
- The activities of the Girl Guides as helpers in Europe and within the concentration camps highlights the courage of individuals and the power of groups working together.

The content was designed to inspire Girl Scouts to follow the values we hold dear, even in the darkest of times. Note: If you or your Girl Scout chooses to stop earning this patch in the middle (for any reason), they will be able to complete it at a later date (e.g., the following year) on their own (if they choose).

Parental Consent Form

Please indicate your preferences by selecting one of the following:

I give permission for my child, _____ [Girl Scout's name], to participate in activities involving mature content as outlined above.

I would like more information regarding the specific materials that the Girl Scouts will be using.

I do not give permission for my child to participate in activities involving mature content

Girl Scout Name: _____

Girl Scout's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

We appreciate your partnership and understanding as we strive to provide meaningful experiences for our Girl Scouts. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact _____ [Girl Scout Leader's Name] at _____ [Phone Number/Email].

Sincerely,

Leader Guide

The Holocaust Patch program contains numerous activities that Girl Scouts can partake in, and it is up to your discretion as a leader to choose the path you would like your troop to take. Girl Scouts have varying degrees of maturity, so it is important for troop leaders to evaluate the curriculum and activities to judge whether or not it is appropriate for their troop. There are a variety of activities to choose from in the Connect and Take Action phases of the program, allowing troop leaders to tailor the experience to their troop. If needed, meetings with parents about this program and what it could mean for their children is recommended.

This patch program's time frame is open to the leader's discretion. It may be earned in a day during a camping trip, as a "Patch in a Day" program, or it may be worked on over the course of multiple troop meetings, whether online or in person. The Take Action portion can be done as a troop or individually. For information on getting your patches and program resources offered by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, please visit the [their "For Troop Leaders" webpage.](#)

If you feel your troop is not prepared to pursue this project, it is okay to wait until they are older or until they have matured enough to process this topic.



Leader & Parent Preparation

- Discuss or evaluate with your members whether they are prepared to undergo the sensitivity of the topic.
- If personal stories or sensitive information is shared, respect the privacy of individuals and maintain confidentiality.
- Be clear that Holocaust denial, hate speech, or discriminatory remarks should be addressed immediately and with appropriate firmness among the group.
- OPTIONAL: Prepare yourself and your members for the program by looking over the lists of Holocaust media suggestions provided in the curriculum or the videos below.

Parent/Psychologist perspective about how to talk to kids about the Holocaust:

[Article: How Should You Talk to Your Child About the Holocaust?](#)

Other resources for teaching about the Holocaust:

[Guidelines for Teaching About the Holocaust](#)

Group Agreement

- Be open to new information and perspectives.
- Commit to understanding the topic.
- Discuss the feelings and emotions of fellow members when necessary.
- Practice active listening and give everyone an opportunity to speak when the time arises.
- Approach the topic with empathy and be mindful of others' emotional responses.

DISCOVER

“The old camp life was only a memory, but the longing for scouting ideas gave rise to the awareness of the scouting community even in this nightmare world, in a concentration camp.” -Wladyslawa Sikora

To introduce you to the Holocaust, this patch program provides a video-based curriculum, where the information is accessible in the videos below. **The curriculum video is mandatory.** The interviews are optional but recommended to expand your learning. These videos will be your resources and tools for the next phases of the patch program.

Holocaust Education Patch Curriculum Video

<https://youtu.be/inaLWgLnKxE>

[Holocaust Education Patch Curriculum Video Transcript](#)

Janie Hampton Virtual Interview

<https://youtu.be/LTsfouNnkec>

Edith Leuchter & Debbie Leuchter-Stueber Virtual Interview

<https://youtu.be/5-m3JYKE4Js>

Name: _____

Date: _____

VIDEO REFLECTION

Answer the following questions about the video and discuss with your group when necessary.

1 What was your knowledge about the Holocaust before you watched the video and what have you learned from it?

2 What were your emotions while learning about the material? Was there a story that was especially impactful to you?

3 Choose a story from the video that stood out to you. Which traits from the Girl Scout Law did the people in this story embody? (You will expand on this through the Code Cards.)

4 How do the actions of Girl Guides in the Holocaust compare to today's expectations of the Girl Scout program?

Essential Question: How does the Girl Scout/Guide Law encourage positive change and social justice?

CONNECT

“It was World War II that brought the philosophy of the Guides to the fore and released their skills and training to the benefit of everyone around them.” -Janie Hampton

Now that you have discovered what the Holocaust was and talked about the experiences of the Girl Guides, you are going to connect what you've learned to your own experiences as a Girl Scout today. By completing this phase in the program, you will become more well-versed in the topic and will have listened to the experiences of others to gain a better understanding of the Holocaust.

Cadettes: Code Card activity

Seniors: Code Card activity, one other activity

Ambassadors: Code Card activity, one other activity

Activities:

- **Code Cards:** Participants use cards to write about a Girl Guide/troop/story and a value from the Girl Scout Law. They must use the card to correlate the chosen Girl Guide/troop/story to that law value and share when finished. ([Cards are available here](#); if unable to print, blank paper also works.) For reference, you can find [pages with photos and summaries of the stories here](#).
- Visit a local Holocaust museum/memorial or go on a virtual tour. Field trip suggestions are listed on the next page.
- Watch a [Holocaust Survivor testimony video](#).
- Organize a [Generations Speaker](#) to speak with your troop (in-person or virtually).
- Read one or more volumes of [CHUTZ-POW!](#).
- [Read Janie's book](#) or another book on the suggested booklist in the next page.
- Watch one of the movies suggested in the next page.

These are just a few suggestions for field trips and/or resources for your Connect phase:

Field Trip Suggestions

- Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh's [Revolving Doors Exhibit](#) at Chatham University in Pittsburgh
- [Gary and Nancy Tuckfelt Keeping Tabs: A Holocaust Sculpture](#) on the campus of Community Day School in Pittsburgh
- [Horwitz-Wasserman Holocaust Memorial Plaza](#) in Philadelphia
- [Holocaust Monument](#) in Harrisburg
- [Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center](#) in Elkins Park, suburb of Philadelphia
- [Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center](#), virtual exhibit
- [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) (USHMM) in Washington, D.C.
- [USHMM Virtual Field Trip](#)
- [Holocaust Museum LA](#), virtual 360 Tour

Testimonies, Informational videos/websites

- [Interview with Edith Leuchter & Debbie Leuchter Stueber](#)
- [The Holocaust Testimony Project](#)
- [Testimony Playlist](#)
- [In Celebration of Life Compilation](#)
- [History of the Girl Scout Sash](#)
- [RememberWomen.Org](#)

Book/Movie Suggestions

Books:

[Maus](#) Art Spiegelman (13+)

[All the Light We Cannot See](#) by Anthony Doerr (13+)

[Survivor's Club](#) by Michael Bornstein and Debbie Bornstein Hollinstat

[Night](#) by Elie Wiesel (13+)

[How the Girl Guides Won the War](#) by Janie Hampton (13+)

[Yellow Star](#) by Jennifer Roy

[Mapping the Bones](#) by Jane Yolen

[CHUTZ-POW! Superheroes of the Holocaust](#)

[Number the Stars](#) by Lois Lowry

[Irena's Children: A true story of courage](#) by Tillar Mazzeo

[When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit](#) by Judith Kerr

[Diary of Anne Frank](#) by Anne Frank

[Black Radishes](#) by Susan Lynn Meyer

[Heroines, Rescuers, Rabbis, Spies: Unsung Women of the Holocaust](#) by Sarah Silberstein Swartz (13+)

[America and the Holocaust](#) by Barbara Burstin

For more book suggestions, [click here](#)

Movies:

[Irena's Vow](#) (17+)

[Schindler's List](#) (15+)

[Life is Beautiful](#) (13+)

[One Life](#)

For more movie suggestions, [click here](#)

TAKE ACTION

“Someone could say that we did it out of pity. That’s not true. ... It was us working together, cooperating, fighting together to survive. Friendship has an amazing value. Believe me.” -Stanisława Śledziejowska-Osyczko

The final phase of the program is where you will implement all you have learned into a program that will benefit you, your peers, and your community through Holocaust Education.

The options for Take Action projects are organized by their focus: Remembrance, Volunteering, and Education.



REMEMBRANCE

- Clover project: Create clover buttons for yourself and to give to other Girl Scouts in your area. Share what you've learned and recognize other Girl Scouts with the clover! ([Clover Template](#))
- Plant flowers inspired by [Holocaust survivor Marga Silbermann Randall's Memorial Garden](#) somewhere in your community, ideally with an educational component (example: educational signs in the garden). Troops local to the Pittsburgh area can apply to participate in the [Holocaust Center's Crocus Project](#).

VOLUNTEERING

- Connect with the [Holocaust Center](#) or a local Holocaust memorial/center in your area to see how you can support their work
- Collect food/items for refugees or other individuals in need (Examples: [Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank](#), [JFCS Immigrant and Refugee Services](#), [JFCS Food Pantry](#)).
- Volunteer/collect for an organization helping women and/or children (Examples: [National Women's Shelter Network](#), [Ronald McDonald House Charities](#), [Eden's Farm](#), [Women's Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh](#), [Beverly's Birthdays](#))

EDUCATE

- Make and share your own comic book or poster about the Girl Guides during WWII and share with others in your community (Inspired by [CHUTZ-POW!](#))
- Organize for a [Generations Speaker](#) (or a Holocaust speaker local to your area) or survivor to speak at your school, community center, or other local gathering place (in-person or virtually).
- Create an educational display in your school, community center, or other local gathering place

Please use the hashtag **#GSHolocaustEducation** and tag **@hcofpgh** and **@girlscoutswpa** if you post pictures of your Take Action project(s) on Facebook, Instagram, or other social media sites! We would love to see your projects!

Conclusion

Thank you for pursuing the Holocaust Education Patch Program. Your hard work and dedication toward learning about the Holocaust and respecting its significance is deeply appreciated and will provide you with the tools to grow not just as Girl Scout but also as a person. By earning this patch, you will come to understand the teachings of the Girl Scout Law, value the legacies and stories of the women of the past, and be inspired to stand up to injustice like the women who came before you.

[To receive your patches, please fill out this form.](#)



Citations/Sources

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Resource Summary

[Holocaust Education Patch Curriculum Video](#)

[Holocaust Education Patch Curriculum Video Transcript](#)

[Janie Hampton Virtual Interview](#)

[Edith Leuchter & Debbie Leuchter-Stueber Virtual Interview](#)

[Permission Slip](#)

[Video Reflection Paper](#)

[Code Cards](#)

[Holocaust Education Cards](#)

[Clover Template](#)

[Program activities offered by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh](#)

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