

Girls in Glacier (GiG) Hiking Helpers

Hiking in a group is different from hiking with one or two others. To help maintain everyone's safety, it is important to know some basic group-hiking protocols. No matter where we are in the group line-up, we **all** must take responsibility for safety of the group. Everyone must be willing to go to the pace of the slowest hiker and support one other.

Definitions and responsibilities to the group:

Organizer/Leader

1. This person organizes the trip itinerary.
 - Manages the sign-up system.
 - Communicates with attendees.
 - Decides on drivers, where to eat, expenses.
 - Decides on who will go on the trip, if too many are signed up or not enough drivers.
 - Has a map, first aid kit, whistle, safety gear, Spot messenger or other emergency system if in wilderness where help is not readily available.
 - Talks to the group and sets the protocols, decide lead, sweep, etc.
 - In short, this person organizes the details of the trip.
 - Plans for the hike should be explained to everyone before leaving the parking lot.
 - Asks the person riding in the front to collect gas money for the driver

Lead (the person in front)

1. Should be a strong hiker who can go ahead to scout trail and who won't get over tired. Someone who is not alert may make poor decisions, not recognize dangers or turns.
2. Needs to be bear/mountain lion and obstacle aware. This person needs to look up, down, side to side every few minutes to check for dangers: mountain lions in trees and overhangs, call out and look for bears around curves and in bushy areas, decide the best crossings of creeks, etc.
3. Doesn't let anyone pass her.
4. Knows how to use bear spray and has it in a place easy to grab.
5. This person is responsible for keeping the group together:
 - She knows the way
 - She must **always** keep an eye on the Sweep. If she cannot see the sweep, she stops and waits for the sweep and asks the sweep if she and the hikers near her need a break. If the sweep does not show up within 5-10 minutes, she backtracks. Someone near the end could be sick or injured or the lead got too far ahead and the group missed a turn, etc.
 - She stops and waits at all obstacles until all members of the group clear the obstacle, such as a stream crossing.
 - She leads over tricky parts showing the way.
 - She stops at every turning point to make sure everyone makes the correct turn.
 - She checks on hydration, reminding people to drink water and ensure enough breaks to do so.
 - Greets other hikers on the trail and reminds her group of trail etiquette: uphill traffic has right of way. Please take this right so as not to confuse other hikers.
 - Counts the group after lunch break before heading out.

Middle of the pack

1. Keeps an eye out for the person behind. If the person is lagging quite a bit or can't be seen, she should call out to the Lead to say something.
2. Let the person behind know of any loose rocks or other obstacles she sees.
3. Keep enough distance between herself and the person in front so as not to be hit by brush or hit the person in front with a pole, step on a shoe, etc.
(The person in front doesn't need to hold brush, etc., back from the person behind. This can throw a hiker off balance as she bushwhacks. The bushwhacker needs to keep an eye on her feet and obstacles and not worry about the person behind her).
4. Should pass along any shouts from the Sweep to the Lead to make sure the lead hears.
5. Know how to use bear spray and have it in a place easy to grab.

Sweep

1. Should be a strong hiker, who can hike quickly to catch the Lead if needed and stay alert to help the Lead make decisions.
2. Should keep in shouting or whistle distance of the Lead. Should shout ahead if the hikers near her need a break.
3. Should not let anyone get behind her.
4. Know how to use bear spray and have it in a place easy to grab.
5. Stands and waits for anyone needing to use the bathroom. Should stand or mark the place where the person left the trail so if anything happens, the group knows where to look for the hiker.
6. Keep an eye on the pace. Let the lead know if it is too fast or too slow.
7. Watch for dropped trash or gear that falls on the trail.

Driver

1. On hikes that are far from home and/or without cell service: Bring two sets of keys - giving the spare to a strong hiker.
2. Shotgun (person riding in front) collects the gas money for the driver.
3. Let Katie know if something was left behind in the car and she will send out an email.
4. Cars should stay together in case an incident occurs and a car needs assistance.

Safety Page

- ✓ On GIG website under Helpers tab - lists hiking protocols as well as how to search for a lost hiker and what to do if you are lost (from the U. S. Forest Service).
- ✓ Please read it. <http://www.girlsinglacier.com/safety.html>
- ✓ The basics are to remember the acronym **STOP**:
First you stop, then **S**tay calm, **T**hink, **O**bserve, **P**lan

The Forest Service site has an excellent saying that fits a group perfectly:

Remember: 'You are responsible for your own safety and for the safety of those around you.'

<http://www.girlsinglacier.com>

- ✓ See more on our site for details on the STOP method for both rescue efforts and if you do become lost.
We do have the **Spot Messenger** for real emergencies.
It is our safety net, but we can't talk to anyone or let them know the situation when we push the button.
The SAR command center will deploy emergency services to our GPS location.

GEOS Search and Rescue Insurance

If you want it -- check your own insurance policies first (be sure to read the exclusions, including preexisting conditions). Anyone who has it will be reimbursed \$50,000 for up to two times per year when using our Spot Messenger (or other approved device) in an emergency for a qualifying incident after any medical insurance has paid, even in most foreign countries, so it would cover our Canada hiking for Search and Rescue, for example. It only costs **\$17.95 per year**.

<http://www.geostravelsafety.com/assets/pdf/GEOS-SAR-BENEFIT-TERMS-AND-CONDITIONS.pdf>

Enroll here <http://www.geostravelsafety.com/>

Eventbrite

Q. How do I fix my email if I mistyped it? Alternatively, how do I change my driving information, etc. if my car is broken and can no longer drive?

A. You can change any of your info by going to eventbrite.com (log in), and pulling down by your name in the Upper Right and pulling down to Tickets. Choose the one you want to edit. You also cancel "tickets" in this spot. See below video for a tutorial.

Q. How do I drop an event?

A. See above and tutorial at end of this email.

Q. There is more than one person with my name, so gals looking at who is going don't know which one. How can I indicate who I am?

A. You can put a nickname or a last initial on the "First Name" line. To protect privacy, only the info on the first name line shows. Therefore, instead of just putting Katie on the First Name, I could put Katie K for First Name, for example. Alternatively, Krazy Katie or whatever I would like to indicate it is I and not another Katie.

Q. Can I check things from my phone?

A. Yes, Eventbrite has two apps, one for users and one for "organizers," those leading a hike. Download one to see the "tickets" for events you have signed up for and use the other to see a list of your attendees. You can also just use the browser on your device and log in that way.

Q. Can I add my events to my calendar so I don't forget them?

A. Yes and it is easy to do. Before you click on Register, you will see an Add to Calendar in blue underneath the Register button (see attached). Click on it and you will have the event on your calendar. You can put all of our events on your calendar, even those you are not attending. In addition, when you get the confirmation information, you can click on the date and add it then too.

How to drop (or change) a ticket for an event—visit the website under Helpers for more help with eventbrite: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VgyJifaBqbo>

GIG Annual Dues

Due to the expenses listed below a \$20.00 annual fee will be collected by the Treasurer from all active GIG members. At this time a waiver will be signed by the member.

Web Site	\$55/year
Spot Finder	\$200+/year, depends on how often we use the temporary device
First Aid Kit	supplies
Mile Awards	Mug/Print
Epipen	2-3 yr Exp.
T-shirts	