

# Girl Membership Packet



*Welcomes you and invites you to join!*

## **AHG Oath**

I promise to love God,  
Cherish my family,  
Honor my country, and  
Serve in my community.

## **Mission Statement**

*“Building women of integrity through service to God, family, community, and country.”*

## **Vision Statement**

*American Heritage Girls is the premier national scouting organization for young women that embraces Christian values and encourages family involvement.*

## **AHG Creed**

*As an American Heritage Girl, I promise to be:*

**Compassionate** – Understanding others in fellowship, empathy, kindness, and caring. Respect others’ opinions and emotions.

**Helpful** – Willingly serve others.

**Honest** – Always tell the truth and keep my promise.

**Loyal** – True to God, family, friends, community and country.

**Perseverant** – Continuing to strive toward a goal despite obstacles.

**Pure** – Keep my mind and body pure.

**Resourceful** – Wisely use my time, materials and talents.

**Respectful** – Honor my country; be obedient to those in authority and courteous to all.

**Responsible** – Accountable for my own actions. Reliable in all situations.

**Reverent** – Faithful and honoring to God. Respectful to the beliefs of others.

## **Levels of American Heritage Girls**

**Pathfinder** Ages 5-6  
**Tenderfoot** Ages 6-9  
**Explorers** Ages 9-12

**Pioneers** Ages 12-14  
**Patriots** Ages 14-18

## The AHG program is implemented through Volunteers

Adult volunteers help facilitate a program of wholesome activities which: enhances life skills, offers character development through community service, supports girl leadership opportunities, provides citizenship training and encourages the spiritual development of their troop members.

Volunteers provide leadership at all levels of AHG including unit, troop, geographic areas, council and National Board. Many are parents of American Heritage Girls; some are concerned adults who agree with the mission of AHG. Each charter organization establishes a Troop Board, which operates the chartered troop, selecting leadership and providing support to the volunteers. Troops depend on parents for assistance and encourage each to fulfill a Parent Service Pledge.

Each Unit Leader must be a good role model to children as they are in a unique position of influence within your daughter's life. It is important to get to know your daughter's Unit Leader and be involved in the Troop's activities so you can help direct that influence and assist in **"building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country."** In addition, your help with encouraging perfect attendance, attending parents' meetings, assisting with car pools and helping with you daughter's advancement is necessary.

### Policies of the American Heritage Girls

Charter Organizations have the authority to use the AHG program in accordance with their own policies as well as those of the American Heritage Girls. The AHG program allows for flexibility in the integration of the AHG Troop into the mission/ministry goals for youth established by the Charter Organization. Major departures from AHG methods are not permitted. As a parent, it is important for you to know:

- ♥ AHG is a Christ-centered scouting organization that recognizes the importance of religious faith yet leaves religious instruction to the member's family and religious leaders. Members who do not belong to a Troop's religious Charter Organization are not required to participate in religious activities.
- ♥ All adult Leadership is approved by the Charter Organization, and have been subjected to reference and background checks. They must also subscribe to the AHG Oath, Creed, Mission Statement and Statement of Faith.
- ♥ In the interest of the safety of our members, AHG requires two-deep leadership at all times. Therefore one-on-one activities are strictly forbidden. Personal conferences must be in plain view of others.
- ♥ All AHG activities are open to parental involvement and visitation. Two registered adult leaders or one registered leader and one registered adult volunteer are required on all outings and trips.
- ♥ Parents and Troop Leadership should work together to solve discipline problems. AHG advocates constructive discipline efforts that do not include corporal punishment.

### Statement of Faith

*American Heritage Girls is a Christ centered scouting organization. The following Statement of Faith applies to all American Heritage Girls Charter Organizations, Adult Members and Adult Leaders.*

We believe that there is One Triune God – Father, Jesus Christ His one and only Son, and the Holy Spirit – Creator of the universe and eternally existent. We believe the Holy Scriptures (Old/New Testament) to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe each person is created in His image for the purpose of communing with and worshipping God. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit who enables us to live a Godly life. We believe that each individual is called to love the Lord their God with all their heart, mind, soul and strength; and to love their neighbors as themselves. We believe that each individual is called to live a life of purity, service, stewardship and integrity.

Clarity is further provided to the following terms:

**Purity** – An AHG member is called to live a life of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word and deed, reserving sexual activity for the sanctity of marriage; marriage being a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

**Service** – An AHG member is called to become a responsible member of their community and the world through selfless acts, which contribute to the welfare of others.

**Stewardship** – An AHG member is called to use their God given time, talents and money wisely.

**Integrity** – An AHG member is called to live a moral life, demonstrating the inward motivation to do what is right, regardless of the cost.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

Girl membership in the organization shall be made available to all without regard to race, color, creed or national origin, under such rules and regulations, not in conflict with the provisions of the AHG Oath: "I promise to love God, cherish my family, honor my country and serve in my community," and the Purpose and the Basic Policies of AHG.

## **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

This policy should be shared with parents, and parents are encouraged to share these procedures with their daughters. Parents must sign off on receipt of Child Abuse Prevention Policy on Girl Registration Form.

### **Mission**

To provide a healthy and safe environment for members of American Heritage Girls, through a program of education and prevention of emotional, physical and sexual child abuse and in compliance with state laws and federal regulations, and our guiding principals.

### **Issue**

The emotional, physical and sexual abuse of children by adults and others is a widespread problem.

Abuse may be emotional, physical, and/or violent. Incidents may occur just once or be repeated many times.

Child abuse affects everyone - the victim, family/friends, all of us! We can prevent child abuse by giving children accurate information about physical and sexual abuse, teaching children how to protect themselves, encouraging children to communicate incidents, education adult members in prevention techniques and reporting incidents or suspected incidents to proper authorities.

A child abuser can be anyone - male or female, young or old, familiar or unfamiliar, or a former victim.

Child abuse can happen in familiar areas, public places, in unfamiliar or deserted areas. The abuser usually tries to control the victim by coercion, manipulation, or bribery.

Bullying can be another form of abuse and can result from adult and/or youth behaviors. Bullying can be physical, emotional or mental. Female bullying is becoming increasingly common and typically is in the form of verbal and emotional harassment. Cyber bullying (bullying via internet, email, text messaging, etc.) is also increasingly common and equally destructive.

### **AHG Policy**

If an adult member learns or suspects that a youth member has been emotionally, physically or sexually abused, we can help by not questioning the validity of the incident, help is needed no matter the validity of the incident. Control emotions, give support, get information about the incident, get medical assistance, and immediately contact the appropriate social service agency and police in compliance with state and local laws and regulations, parents/guardians and the designated AHG Unit Leader. You are not required to know for certain that a child has been abused. All that the law requires is that you have a reasonable suspicion and are reporting in "good faith". It is the responsibility of the AHG Unit Leader to file an incident report with the Local/National Office.

### **Guidelines for Youth Members**

To help prevent child abuse, our members should learn and follow these common-sense rules:

Be alert of other's behavior, don't believe strangers, avoid being alone with anyone who wants to touch a child in a sexual way, and don't be overly trusting.

- Avoid dangerous situations including playing alone in deserted or public areas, not opening doors or answering phones at home. Discuss problem encounters with parents, guardians, and AHG Unit Leaders. In the event of an incident, the member should not obey the abuser unless physically threatened, try to turn away, say no if someone tries to abuse them, tell abuser they'll tell someone, seek help as soon as possible, be told not to feel guilty, "it wasn't their fault."

### **AHG Standards for Maintaining a Healthy and Safe Environment**

AHG has developed a plan to prevent child abuse and improve the environment in which our young members live. The key elements include:

1. Establish Unit Leader selection procedures to prevent individuals with a history of abuse from joining our adult membership or volunteering through effective screening of applicants. The AHG Leader Selection Process includes the following steps:
  - *Unit Leaders have been interviewed by the Troop Coordinator and Charter Representative.*
  - *Adult Volunteers must submit a completed adult volunteer application, three character references and a background check.*
  - *References should be contacted and verified by the Troop Coordinator.*"Being a registered leader is a privilege, not a right." The quality of our program and safety of our youth members require selection of leaders to be taken seriously.
2. Educate leaders, volunteers, parents/guardians, and young members to aid in detection and prevention of child abuse.
3. Encourage girls to report improper behavior and to identify incidents and offenders promptly. The following procedures have been established to provide additional security of members from situations in which they may be vulnerable to abuse, and to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.

1. Two-deep leadership: No less than two registered adult Leaders are required on all trips and activities. The Troop is responsible for ensuring sufficient leadership is provided for all activities.
2. No one-on-one contact: One-on-one contact between adults and youth members is not permitted. Any meeting or discussion on private matters or sensitive issues, must be conducted in view of other adults and /or members.
3. Respect privacy: Respect the privacy of youth members at all times, except to the extent of health and safety concerns.
4. Separate accommodations: At outdoor and overnight activities, youth members are not permitted to sleep with an adult other than parent or guardian unless adult and youth membership join as a group with two-deep leadership. Use of separate restrooms and shower facilities are encouraged or scheduled times arranged for use of facilities for youth members and adult members. If this is not possible, two-deep leadership must be maintained in restroom and shower facilities.
5. No secret organizations: AHG does not permit secret organizations. All programs and activities are open to observation by parents and adult members. Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited.
6. Appropriate attire: Proper, modest attire for all activities is required.
7. Constructive discipline: Discipline used in AHG should be constructive, positive, and reflect our values. Corporal punishment is not permitted.
8. Adult supervision: Adult Leaders must monitor and guide leadership techniques used by youth leaders.

To enhance the health and safety of all members of AHG, the following safety standards are to be followed:

- ❖ Controlled Substances: Persons under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol or in possession of same are prohibited from participation in any AHG activity or program.
- ❖ Firearms/Fireworks: Persons using or possessing firearms or fireworks are prohibited from participation in any AHG activity or program.
- ❖ Smoking: The use of tobacco products where members are present is not permitted at AHG programs or activities.

#### **Procedures In the Event of Suspected Abuse**

In the event an act of child abuse is witnessed, reported, or suspected the following procedures are to be followed:

- ◆ Remove youth member from immediate danger and provide medical attention if needed.
- ◆ In the event child abuse is witnessed, promptly remove and report offenders to the local social services department and/or police immediately in accordance with state, local, and federal laws and regulations. (Refer to your county website for reporting abuse in your area.)
- ◆ If the suspected abuser is NOT the parent/guardian, notification should be made to Parents/Guardians and designated AHG officials as soon as possible advising them of situation and action taken.
- ◆ Leaders, having reason to believe a youth member(s) has suffered abuse, should report or cause reports to be made to the local social services department and police as soon as possible. The report should include: name and address of youth member(s), age, parent's/guardian's name, nature and extent of abuse, and any other information which would be helpful in investigating the situation. Upon notice to the social services and police, immediate notification should be made to AHG officials advising them of the situation and action taken.

Adherence to these policies and procedures not only enhances the protection of our members, but also ensures the basic values of American Heritage Girls while providing a healthy and safe environment.



NEW GIRL MEMBER REGISTRATION FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2008-2009

American Heritage Girls 175 Tri-County Pkwy.Suite 100 Cincinnati, OH 45246 (513) 771-2025

"I promise to love God, cherish my family, honor my country, and serve in my community." PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY, DO NOT ABBREVIATE, COMPLETE FULLY

GIRL'S LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

NICKNAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

GIRL'S EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL (Check one) \_\_\_\_\_ PUBLIC \_\_\_\_\_ PRIVATE \_\_\_\_\_ HOME SCHOOLED

TROOP # (i.e. OH0015): \_\_\_\_\_ TRANSFER FROM TROOP # \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL  Pathfinder (5-6 yrs.)  Tenderfoot (6-9 yrs.)  Explorer (9-12 yrs.)  Pioneer (12-14 yrs.)  Patriot (14-18 yrs.)

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT AHG? \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL: (AHG RECEIVES INQUIRIES FROM AGENCIES REGARDING ETHNIC COMPOSITION) Check one-

\_\_\_\_\_ African American / \_\_\_\_\_ American Indian / \_\_\_\_\_ Asian / \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian / \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic / \_\_\_\_\_ Bi-racial / \_\_\_\_\_ Other

FAMILY INFORMATION: All mailings from AHG will go to this name and address.

FAMILY'S LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE# (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

(Street address, if different) \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Exclude from mailing?

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_ (mother/grandmother, etc.)

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

WORK # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Exclude from mailing?

RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_ (father/grandfather, etc.)

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_

WORK # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

IMPORTANT:

PLEASE COMPLETE CONSENT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE AGREEMENT ON THE BACK, INCLUDE THE NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE, AND RETURN TO THE TROOP REGISTRAR PROMPTLY. REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE AHG NATIONAL OFFICE BEFORE A GIRL MAY PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEETING OR EVENT.

Registration Fee \$22.00  Cash  Check  Girl in "Sister Cap"

Registration fees are non-refundable. Membership is transferable to another troop.



# CONSENT, WAIVER, AND RELEASE AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN AHG ACTIVITIES

Members agree to adhere and subscribe to, and comply with the AHG Mission Statement, AHG Oath, Creed, and all other AHG rules, policies and procedures. Their parents have read the Statement of Faith. **Adult members also agree to adhere and subscribe to, and comply with the AHG Statement of Faith.**

**Release:** In consideration of the benefits of participation in the activities of American Heritage Girls ("AHG"), an Ohio nonprofit corporation, I, for my minor child and/or myself, the heirs, personal representatives or assigns of my minor child and/or myself, consent to my child's participation in AHG Activities and further waive all claims or causes of action against AHG its agents, directors, trustees, employees and volunteers (collectively referred to as the "AHG Group"); arising out of my minor child's and/or my participation in AHG Activities and hereby release, hold harmless and discharge the AHG Group from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever, including attorney fees, arising out of or related to any loss, damage or injury (whether direct, indirect, consequential or otherwise), including death, that my minor child and/or I might sustain or that any of my minor child's and/or my property might sustain while participating in any AHG Activities.

**Assumption of Risks:** Knowing, understanding, and fully appreciating all possible risks, I hereby expressly, voluntarily and willingly assume all risks and dangers associated with my minor child's and/or my participation in AHG Activities. I understand and acknowledge that AHG Activities could result in injury and I agree that participation in all AHG Activities shall be at my minor child's and/or my sole risk.

**Acknowledgment of Understanding:** I have read this Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement and understand the terms used in it and their legal significance. This Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement is freely and voluntarily given with the understanding that right to legal recourse against the AHG Group is knowingly given up in return for allowing my minor child's and/or my participation in AHG Activities. I agree that this Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement shall remain in effect and apply each time my minor child and/or I participate in any AHG activities.

**AHG Child Abuse Prevention Policies** I have read the AHG Child Abuse Prevention Policies which is part of the Registration Packet, and is also found in the unit leader handbook and on the leader web site.

### *Photograph, Film or Vocal Recording Media Release*

I authorize this release based on the following conditions:

1. These records become the property of American Heritage Girls (AHG)
2. This release is given without promise of compensation
3. This is effective until terminated by a retraction in writing from the person granting the authorization
4. The parent/legal guardian and AHG member do release to AHG any right, title and/or interest of any kind they may have in the records produced.

I hereby grant to American Heritage Girls the right and authority to photograph, film and/or record vocally. These records may be used for promotional or publicity purposes and may be published in mass media publications, in AHG quarterly newsletter and other AHG publications, on AHG's internet site, or shown on television or movie presentations. The member and family's last name may be used. This release is effective until revoked in writing by the undersigned. Such revocation shall only be effective to prevent any expanded future use of the records.

*By signature below*, I acknowledge and accept all terms and conditions of this Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement. If I am signing this Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement on behalf of a minor, I certify that all representations are true and that I am the minor's legal guardian or custodial parent with full authority to bind the minor and myself to the terms and conditions of this Consent, Waiver, and Release Agreement. Check box if authorization is denied.

Participant Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Troop #: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must include the state abbreviation+ four digits - NH0316, OH2696)

I do NOT authorize photograph, film, or vocal recording media release.

Member or Parent/Guardian Signature (if participant is under 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_