

Below is a screen shot of a page on the GSUSA website that recommends to leaders that they bring in a professional from a “health center.” The relevant text has been highlighted in yellow to make it easier to see. The page can be accessed online [here](#).

The screenshot shows the Girl Scouts USA website. At the top left is the Girl Scouts logo. To the right are navigation links: "Join Us | Volunteer | Careers | GS Central | Find a Council" and a language selector for "Español". Further right is a search bar with a "GO" button and a "DONATE NOW" button. Below this is a horizontal menu with tabs for "Who We Are", "Program", "Research", "News", "For Adults", "For Girls", and "Girl Scout Shop".

The main content area features the article title "Girl Talk: Anything But Small Talk" in green, with a byline "By Helen Orloff". To the right of the title are social media sharing buttons for "Like", "Tweet", and "Share". Below the title is a photograph of a young girl with a white towel on her head, applying makeup.

The article text includes several quotes from girls:

- "My mom says I am too young for makeup—she is just so uncool."
- "Everyone I know is wearing a bra—everyone except me."
- "There's this cute guy in my chemistry class..."
- "My mom always takes my brother's side!"
- "Is it true that when you start shaving you have to keep doing it?"

The article then discusses how many times these comments are heard and why girls want to talk about family rules, makeup, boys, and body changes. It provides advice for leaders on how to use Girl Scout meetings to address these issues.

Atmosphere Counts

When girls want time to talk, how do they want to do it? Do they want girl talk while their hands are busy in an activity? Will it be structured time—with the girls choosing the topics they want to discuss? Or is a "chips and chat" the perfect setting for "not-so-small-talk" amongst the girls? Remember to ask the girls if they want you to be part of the conversation or take a behind-the-scenes role. Let the girls decide what would work best for them.

Chatter—Not Clatter

When girls are chatting about boys, makeup, and body changes, each may have a different opinion. Welcome and encourage girls to exchange their ideas and opinions. After all, that's what Girl Scouts is all about—helping girls learn how to express themselves and respond to others in a respectful way.

Keep It Safe

Girls talk to each other and may share misinformation on a serious issue. Why not give girls a safe place to get accurate facts and information—your next troop or group meeting can be a great place to start. **Offer to bring in professionals from your community to talk with the girls.** Girls might love to have a few tips from a makeup artist or to **talk openly with someone from the local health center.**