



# Money-Earning & Fundraising Guidelines

How to pursue goals and financially  
support Girl Scout activities

# Your Guide to Success

Helping girls earn and manage money is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. When girls participate in money-earning activities they learn important skills such as goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics.

Your Girl Scout Troop (or Juliette) is responsible for planning and financing its own activities. This puts girls in charge, with support from troop leaders and GSMISTS registered volunteers, giving them the opportunity to cooperatively set goals, manage a budget, spend responsibly and maintain record, as well as develop social, marketing and entrepreneurial skills.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and Treats & Reads Program are the two best opportunities for girls to earn troop funds. Troops must participate in both programs in order to participate in additional money-earning or fundraising activities. Consideration will be given to troops that formed after these opportunities have passed. Troops who participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Treats & Reads Program usually do not need to participate in additional money-earning or fundraising unless they are planning trips or other travel.

## Terms and Definitions

**Money-Earning Activities:** age-appropriate, voluntary activities involving goods or services executed by girls to supplement monies raised through the Girl Scout Product Programs.

**Fundraising:** involves adults asking businesses, organizations, or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support troop or service unit activities.

**In-kind Contributions:** goods or services, not money, that are used by troops or service units for Girl Scout mission-based activities. Examples include space for a meeting or event, program supplies, food, camping equipment, etc.



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# Raising Money for Your Troop

## Troop Dues

Troops may request dues to finance activities and expenses. Dues should be set and agreed upon as a group. Once established, money earned from participation in Girl Scout Product Programs should be sufficient to finance troop activities and *dues may become optional*.

## Product Programs

The Treats & Reads Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program, organized by GSMISTS, are open to all registered Girl Scouts seasonally. These opportunities earn funds for troop activities and other needs. The funds earned must be used for Girl Scout mission based activities and retained by the troop or service unit, not by individuals.

If troops or Juliettes need funds beyond earnings from Product Programs and troop dues, they can request permission to organize additional money-earning or fundraising activities.

## Money-Earning Activities

Money-earning activities are age-appropriate, voluntary activities involving goods or services executed by girls. Some activities may require pre-approval from GSMISTS. The funds earned must be used for Girl Scout mission-based activities and retained by the troop or service unit, not by individuals.

## Fundraising

Fundraising involves adults asking businesses, organizations or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support troop or service unit activities. Primarily for troops planning activities that require larger than usual budgets (trips, conferences, etc). Approval is required if making multiple requests or requesting donations of \$500 or more.



# Money-Earning

It is great for girls to have opportunities to earn funds a part of their Girl Scout Leadership Experience. The role of troop leaders and other volunteers is to help the girls balance money earning activities with other activities that have less emphasis on earning and spending money. It is also important that girls have a clear plan and purpose for their proceeds from the Girl Scout Cookie Program, Treats & Reads Program and other money-earning activities. An important aspect of the Entrepreneurship Pillar is facilitating girl-led financial planning, which includes the following:

## Goal Setting 101

1. **Dream Big:** What do girls want to do during the year that requires money? What skills do they hope to build? What leadership opportunities present themselves?
2. **Create a Budget:** Use a budget worksheet that includes both expenses (the cost of supplies, admission to events, travel, etc) and available income (the troop's account balance, projected Girl Scout Cookie Program and Treats & Reads proceeds, etc). Subtract expenses from available income to determine how much additional money your troop needs to earn.
3. **Make a Plan:** The troop can brainstorm and make decisions about its financial plans. Will the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Treats & Reads Program earn enough money to meet the goal? If not, what additional activities could be completed to make up the difference?
4. **Write It Out:** Once the plan has been decided, put it in writing. The group can use the Money-Earning and Fundraising Activity Group Agreement to outline responsibilities, how money earning funds will be distributed, etc.

## Examples of Money-Earning Activities

The following activities are pre-approved and do not require additional permission:

- **Host a Community Event:** Talent Show, Spaghetti Dinner, Pancake Breakfast, Bake Sale, Yard/Garage Sale, Craft Sale, Car Wash
- **Provide a Service:** Gift Wrapping, Yard/Garden Maintenance, Pet Care, Babysitting, Window Washing, Snow Removal, Tutoring, Face Painting, Concession Stand Staff
- **Host a Workshop:** Badge workshops, cooking classes or demonstration
- **Organize a Collection Event:** Pop can drive, cell phone recycling, bulk metal recycling, ink cartridge recycling

Check out  
**Community Babysitting Event as a Money-Earning Project**  
on page 6 for more guidance.

# Money-Earning Do's & Don'ts

## Please Do:

- Participate in **both** the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Treats & Reads Program
- Get **approval** from the Fund Development Department if the activity is not on the preapproved list on page 4.
- Keep girl participation **voluntary**.
- Ensure that girls and adults are **registered members** before participation in any money-earning activity.
- Keep activities **within** GSMISTS Jurisdiction.
- Demonstrate a **justified need** for additional funds.
- Follow Volunteer Policies & Procedures, Volunteer Essentials, and Safety Activity Checkpoints to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl to adult ratios of approved GS volunteers.
- Submit **all reports** for previous money-earning activities to the GSMISTS Director of Fund Development before submitting additional approval forms.
- Submit Troop Finance Report **annually** prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.
- Involve girls in **developing the budget** for using earned funds.
- Ensure **girls can explain** why they are earning money.
- Use the Girl Permission Form for **all activities**.
- Keep activities **age appropriate**.
- Arrange for **safeguarding money** during and after activities.

## Please Don't:

- Plan money-earning activities **during council sponsored** product program sales Treats & Reads and Girl Scout Cookie Program. Usually mid-September through October and January through March.
- Allow **girls to** solicit money from individuals, organizations, or businesses.
- Participate in **games of chance**, raffles, drawings, bingo or silent auctions or product endorsement.
- Sell or endorse **third-party** commercial products. Example: Thirty-one, Tupperware, Pampered Chef, etc.
- Raise money for **other organizations**, political campaigns or causes when identifying as Girl Scouts or wearing the uniform, vest/sash, official pins, etc.
- Carry **money over** from year to year (unless saving for a trip or big expense). Money should be spent in the membership year it was raised.

## Exceptions

- Seniors and Ambassadors working toward their Gold Award are allowed to solicit money from individuals and organizations.
- Pop-can drives are allowed year-round.

# Community Babysitting Event

Community babysitting events, such as “Parent’s Night Out” or “Youth Activity Night,” allows parents to enjoy time alone while their children participate in organized activities led by Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors. **Please note:** these events are not for children under 3 years old or older than 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

A successful event will meet the following requirements:

1. Community babysitting events must be supervised by a minimum of two registered adult volunteers who are unrelated, including one female, in the following ratios:

Adults Needed	Ratios by Age			
	3 years to 1 <sup>st</sup> grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	4 <sup>th</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
2 adults	12 children	20 children	25 children	25 children
+1 adult	1-6 children	1-8 children	1-10 children	1-12 children

*Always use the ratio for the youngest child in attendance*

2. The registered adult volunteers are responsible of the safety and wellbeing of all who participate in a community babysitting event and at least one must have a current First Aid & CPR Certification on file with GSMISTS.
3. The community babysitting event is held at a space open to the public, such as a community center, park pavilion, library meeting room, etc. It cannot occur at someone’s private home.
4. Girl Scouts will prepare structured activities for the event such as craft projects, games, etc. Participating children **should not** be expected to entertain themselves.
5. Community babysitting events should not have a set fee but can have a suggested donation amount based on the number of children per family and/or align with the average rate per hour for babysitting in your community.

# Fundraising

## Who?

- Only troop leaders and registered volunteers are allowed to fundraise.
- Parents that are not registered and girls (except for those earning their Gold Award) should not be involved in fundraising efforts.

## What?

- Fundraising involves asking businesses, organizations or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support troop or service unit activities.
- In-kind donations are goods or services that include providing a meeting place, supplies for activities, loaning equipment, or volunteering their time/talent.

## When?

- Because this does not involve girls doing money-earning activities, troop leaders and registered volunteers can fundraise throughout the year.

## Where?

- Fundraising efforts must remain in your troop's geographic area or have an existing relationship with your troop (ex. someone's employer, etc).

## Why?

- Troops and service units may plan activities that require more funds than the Treats & Reads and Girl Scout Cookie Program can support. Ex: a trip to Juliette Gordon Low's birthplace in Savannah, GA.
- Support from local businesses and organizations can ensure that all girls in the troop have an opportunity to participate in Girl Scout activities.

## How?

- Be prepared with a letter outlining your purpose and needs and a Donation Agreement Form.
- Meet in-person if possible



## Disclaimer

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore is a taxexempt entity, incorporated in the state and designated as a 501(c) (3) organization and operates in compliance with the State of Michigan's License to Solicit Charitable Contributions.

Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore is the only authorized entity to receive contributions (regardless of value, form or designated use) that require a 501(c) (3) number.

Troops and service units are sub-units of Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore and do not have 501(c) (3) status; gifts made directly to troops or service units are not tax deductible.



# Fundraising Do's & Don'ts

## Please Do:

- Submit a Money-Earning and Fundraising Pre-Approval Form **prior to** approaching any potential sponsors. GSMISTS will verify that the potential sponsor has not already been approached this fiscal year or is otherwise in good standing.
- Strengthen **your ask** with tips from the GSMISTS Director of Fund Development.
- Ensure the funds go **to your troop** by submitting a Donation Agreement Form with any donation.
- Ensure donation checks are made out to **Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore**.
- Show **your appreciation** by sending thank you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.
- Spend **any** financial contributions in the fiscal year in which they were received, unless otherwise arranged.



### *Forms and Documents*

- Pre-Approval Form
- Donation Agreements
- Group Agreements
- and more!

## Please Don't:

- Involve girls **in any** direct solicitation for donations per Girl Scouts of USA Blue Book of Basic Documents. Exception: girls earning their Gold Award may solicit donations.
- Apply for grants **of any** kind. If you are asked to complete more than a simple donation request form or to submit an IRS Tax Designation Letter, please contact GSMISTS Director of Fund Development.
- Use **crowdfunding sites** such as Kickstarter, Go Fund Me, etc, including those provided by social media platforms such as Facebook.
- Fundraise **for other** organizations when identifying yourself as a Girl Scout (wearing uniform, sash/vest, pins, etc). This includes a walkathon/telethon.
- Participate, directly or indirectly, **in any** political campaign or work on behalf of a candidate or public official. This includes letter-writing campaigns, participating in a political rally, circulating a petition or carrying a political banner.
- Sell, endorse or provide testimonials **for commercial products** including anything sold at a retail location or benefits a forprofit organization.
- Require girls **to participate** in any religious observance of a sponsoring group.

# Fundraising Approval Process

**Determine:**

The leaders and volunteers determine what fundraising activities will be held and what potential sponsors they want to approach.

**Submit:**

The troop leader will submit a completed Money-Earning and Fundraising Pre-Approval Application to the Director of Fund Development at least four weeks prior to publicizing the events or reaching out to potential sponsors. (Pre-approved money-earning activities listed on page 4 do not need to be included on this application.)

**Evaluation:**

The Director of Fund Development will evaluate if the activities (and troop) meet the following criteria:

- Activities take place within GSMISTS jurisdiction
- Activities will not take place during Council-Sponsored Product Programs (mid-Sept-Oct; Jan-March)
- All reports for previous money-earning activities must be completed and submitted to the GSMISTS Director of Fund Development.
- The most current financial record is in the Troop's Annual Troop Finance tab in the Volunteer Toolkit.
- Demonstrated need for additional funds and the amount must be reasonable.
- Follow all guidelines provided in this document.

Once all the criteria are met an approval email will be sent. The leaders and volunteers may then proceed with the plans.

**Payment Options:**

Sponsors can mail a check or pay with a credit card on the GSMISTS website. Once the funds are received a tax receipt and thank you card will be mailed to the sponsor and a check will be mailed to the troop for the full amount donated.

Sponsor checks must be made out to Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore and mailed to 3275 Walker Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544.

Businesses and organizations may donate up to \$500/year to GSMISTS to benefit individual troops or service units. Donations from up to four (4) businesses and organizations may be secured per year.

Contributions must include a Donation Agreement - Money form and must be made out to GSMISTS and not troops or service units.

# Gold Award Projects



The Gold Award is the culmination of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Just five percent of Girl Scouts nationwide earn this honor. The resulting Take Action Gold Award projects demonstrate leadership when girls address the root cause of an issue, build and oversee their volunteer team, meet measurable goals, and change people's beliefs, attitudes, assumptions, and behavior.

Based on their vision of change, Girl Scout Gold Award recipients make a commitment to their communities and fulfill it. Because of this, special consideration for money-earning activities may be given to girls seeking financial support for Gold Award projects.

Girls working on their Girl Scout Gold Award project may need additional funds to complete their projects.

According to GSUSA's Blue Book of Basic Documents policy:

Solicitation of Contributions (pg. 20), girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money **except for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who may solicit donations of cash or in-kind goods for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, provided they have secured prior written permission from the GSMISTS Director of Fund Development.** In addition, girls must abide by all GSMISTS policies and procedures with regard to Gold Award fundraising.

In-kind donations are the preferred donation for all money-earning activities, including Gold Award projects, but Seniors and Ambassadors working toward their Gold Awards may solicit individuals and organizations for cash donations.

## *Please note:*

Whenever a girl receives a donation, the donor **will not** get a tax donation letter. A tax letter can only be given when the donation is given to GSMISTS, who is the holder of the 501(c)3. Donors can be recognized by sending thank you cards, inviting them to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.



Have additional questions?  
Contact us at,  
844-476-4787 or [funddevelopment@gsmists.org](mailto:funddevelopment@gsmists.org)

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of michigan  
shore to shore