GIRL SCOUTS OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA | COOKIE PROGRAM

Facts, Myths & Sensitive Issues

Answers & Guidance for Caregivers

Keep this handy at booths, door-to-door, and anywhere your Girl Scout sells.

Cookie season helps your Girl Scout learn to set goals, make choices, handle money, talk with people, and be honest in business. Your job is to keep it **safe** and **positive**.

Keep it short. You never have to argue or explain big topics.

Protect your girl. Grown-up questions go to grown-ups, not girls.

Safety first. If it feels unsafe, leave and get help.

Important Phone Numbers

REAL EMERGENCY Someone is hurt or in danger	**Call 911**
Cookie emergency Elizabeth Locke-Thomas	**951-212-3654**
Any other urgent problem Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona	**520-977-6623**
Reporters & media Do not give interviews. Send them here:	**communications@girlscoutssoaz.org**

Myth vs. Fact

WHAT YOU MAY HEAR	THE FACTS
MYTH: Cookie money goes to Planned Parenthood.	**FACT:** No. Girl Scouts has no partnership with Planned Parenthood. Cookie money does not go there.
MYTH: Girl Scouts gave out a Planned Parenthood brochure at the United Nations.	**FACT:** No. Girl Scouts of the USA says it did not hand out the brochure and had no part in it.
MYTH: Cookie money goes to the national office.	**FACT:** No. After the bakery is paid, the money stays here in Southern Arizona with our council and troops.
MYTH: Girl Scouts is political.	**FACT:** No. Girl Scouts does not pick sides. We do not support or oppose any candidate or party.

WHAT YOU MAY HEAR	THE FACTS
MYTH: Girl Scouts takes a side on abortion or birth control.	**FACT:** No. Girl Scouts does not take a position on these topics.
MYTH: Girl Scouts is not for families of faith.	**FACT:** Not true. Families of every faith are welcome. Girl Scouts does not promote one religion.
MYTH: Girl Scouts is only for some girls.	**FACT:** Not true. Girl Scouts welcomes every girl, of every background.
MYTH: Only families with money can be Girl Scouts.	**FACT:** Not true. We offer financial aid so cost never keeps a girl out.
MYTH: The cookies are unsafe because of heavy metals.	**FACT:** The bakers checked. The levels in the report were not a food-safety concern.

Everyone Is Welcome Here

People keep asking us about DEI. What do we say?

From the very start, Girl Scouts was meant for **all girls**. Juliette Gordon Low started Girl Scouts in 1912 because she wanted every girl to have a place to learn, lead, and have fun.

Today, girls of every race, religion, background, and ability are welcome. Every girl should be treated with kindness and respect. That is what the Girl Scout Law means when it says to be “a sister to every Girl Scout.”

You do not have to debate this. Keep it short and kind.

> **YOU CAN SAY**
> *“Girl Scouts is for every girl. That has always been our goal. Would you like to buy some cookies today?”*

What if someone asks about another girl or family?

Do not talk about anyone else’s private life. Send those questions to the council.

Handling Tricky Moments

A customer brings up a hot topic.

Stay calm. Keep it short. You do not need to argue.

> **YOU CAN SAY**
> *“Thanks for asking. Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona can help with that. Today, our girls are practicing their business skills.”*

Someone asks my Girl Scout hard questions.

Step in right away. Girls should never have to defend Girl Scouts or answer grown-up questions.

> **SAY**
> *"I'll handle this. Please ask me, not the girls."*

A customer gets angry or rude.

> **SAFETY FIRST**
>
> End the talk. Tell the booth manager. If anyone feels unsafe, move the girls away and call security or **911**. **Your Girl Scout's safety comes first.**

I don't know the answer.

That's okay!

> **SAY**
> *"I'm not sure, but Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona can give you the right answer."*

A reporter walks up.

Do not give an interview. Politely send them to **communications@girlscoutssoaz.org**.

Cookie & Food Questions

Are the cookies safe?

Yes. Girl Scouts says the cookies are safe, and the bakers follow food-safety rules. For a problem with a box, use the baker's phone number printed on the box.

Questions about allergies?

Show the customer the ingredients and allergy info on the box.

> **IMPORTANT**
>
> Never say a cookie is "allergy-safe." Let the customer read the box and decide.

Gluten-free, vegan, kosher, or halal?

It depends on the cookie. Check the box first. Do not guess. "Vegan" does not always mean safe for milk allergies.

GMOs or palm oil?

Some ingredients may come from GMO crops. Palm oil helps cookies stay fresh. For more, point customers to the baker's website.

Money Questions

Where does the cookie money go?

After the bakery is paid, the money stays **here**. It pays for troop trips, girl rewards, camp, and programs in Southern Arizona.

We hear it costs more and more to be a Girl Scout.

We never want cost to keep a girl out. **Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona offers financial aid** for families who can't afford membership.

> **YOU CAN SAY**
> *"If cost is a worry, please call Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona at 520-977-6623. We have financial help."*

Why are prices different in other towns?

Each council sets its own price. Always use our council's price. Do not raise or lower it.

Can we sell cookies to raise money for another group or a campaign?

No. Cookie sales support Girl Scouts only. Want to help a local group? Ask your troop leader about a service project.

Is buying cookies tax-deductible?

Buying cookies to eat is a normal purchase. Donated cookies may be different. Customers should ask a tax expert.

What is Care 2 Share?

Customers can buy cookies to donate. They go to veterans, military members, hometown heroes, and people in need.

We have extra cookies at the end.

Call your troop cookie volunteer **early**. You cannot just return extra cookies.

Our Values

Is Girl Scouts okay for families of faith?

Yes! All faiths are welcome. Girls may use their own word for "God" in the Girl Scout Promise.

Is Girl Scouts part of a political party?

No. Girls can learn about government and their community. But keep politics out of cookie sales.

When in Doubt

Call the council about safety, a box problem, a complaint, the media, or anything you're not sure about.

YOU CAN ALWAYS SAY

"We want you to have the right answer. Please contact Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona."

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Thank you for helping our Girl Scouts learn and lead!