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Financial Assistance Overview

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts is committed to educating girls, volunteers, and parents about money-earning opportunities available within our organization, in order to help girls have the best Girl Scout experience possible. As an organization, Girl Scouts provides something truly unique money-earning programs, which include a time tested and very successful Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program. The cookie sale program, along with the fall product sale program and additional money-earning efforts, makes it possible for girls to fully participate in Girl Scouting. Participation in council-sponsored product sales (cookies and fall product) is encouraged for all Girl Scouts, Daisy through Ambassador, as a means to earn funds for programs and develop valuable life skills.

An important component of the Girl Scout program is giving girls the opportunity to learn to plan, budget and manage money. For Girl Scouts who participate in a troop or group, most activities are financed by dues, money-earning activities, and through the council-sponsored product sale programs. Leaders and girls should understand that troop/group money belongs to the entire troop/group and decisions on use and spending should be made through the troop/group's system of self-government. Through participation in GSCWM product sales and other troop money-earning projects, girls should plan and budget for all activities they would like to do. For this reason, GSCWM only provides financial assistance for individual girls which directly affect their ability to take part in the Girl Scout Movement and not for trips and activities for which adequate budgeting should be built into the planned activity. See below for additional details.

Girl Scouts provides financial assistance for:

- **Annual Girl Scout Membership Fee**
GSCWM is committed to providing financial assistance to any girl and/or adult who wants to join Girl Scouts.
- **Basic Uniform Components** (for girls only) - Available at subsidized cost to families.
Basic uniform components include: sash, pocket sash, vest, cargo pocket vest, or tunic; council Id set, American flag patch, troop numerals and insignia tab.
- **GSCWM Summer Camp Fees**
Based on need and availability of funds (use summer camp-specific financial assistance request form).
- **Destinations** (national and international travel opportunities for teen Girl Scouts)
Based on need and availability of funds.

Girl Scouts does not provide financial assistance for:

- **Troop Dues**
Most troops collect troop dues, which can be paid at each meeting or collected quarterly. Girls and parents should discuss and determine the amount at the parent meeting. The amount chosen should be manageable (\$1-2 per meeting is suggested). If a girl and her family are not able to fully contribute to troop dues, leaders should discuss options with the family (i.e. Can the family pay at each meeting instead of quarterly? How much can the family contribute? Can the family contribute in other ways such as helping with set up, chaperoning trips, etc?).
- **Trips and Activities**
Girl Scout events and activities will result from realistic girl-adult planning that allows Girl Scouts adequate time to prepare money-earning projects that will support the girls' choice of activities. If most or all members of a troop can not participate in a troop activity, it may be an indication that further planning is needed. If a troop does not meet its financial goals, adjustments should be made to the activities themselves or the projected timetable.

