



New Leader Launch

September Questions

Welcome to Girl Scouts – We're Glad You are Here!

Topic 1: Fall Produce Program

1. Describe to a new troop leader what the Sweets & Treats Fall Product Program is?

- Friends and family sales that occur in mid-September through mid-October
- Items sold include nuts, chocolates, magazine subscriptions and specialty items such as candles, Tervis tumblers, stationery, and Bark Boxes
- Beginning platform for the Girl Scout Entrepreneurial Program. The girls develop five essential skills including goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills and business ethics
- Girl Scouts will use the skills she learns in this program throughout her lifetime
- Girl Scout troops earn 15% of proceeds for every item sold. There is also another option for Junior, Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador troops to earn an additional 2% in troop proceeds if they opt out of rewards. This is an option only for these program level troops and must be an ALL-girl decision within a troop. The process for this is described in training and the volunteer guide.

2. Is it difficult for a new troop to participate in Sweets & Treats?

No, it is a very easy sale to participate and recommended for new troops as a starting point for girl entrepreneurship.

- Volunteers consistently praise the simplicity of this program. For a very simple experience, troops can have caregivers 'set it and forget it.' For this the caregiver helps their Girl Scout, set up their page, makes sure it is set for 'shipped only' only and then they don't worry about it. They send out 18 unique emails and share their site which helps the girl scout earn certain levels and then watch for the customers to respond. The emails are only sent to friends and family. This gives the Girl Scout an opportunity to experience entrepreneur programs.

- Girl Scouts love what they learn and the fun they have throughout the program. They can create an avatar which then is used on their personalized patch. The personalized patch is earned when they send the 18+ emails, share their site, and sell \$325 items.
- All items make great gifts for the special people in your life – family, friends, teachers, coaches and more!
- There are tips to make the most out of your experience. We have several resources available for download – one talks about how to simplify the experience and the other offers tips from troop leaders.
- Great program for earning new year start-up funds for your troop. Your troop earns proceeds PLUS there is the opportunity for the troop bonus. The bonus provides an opportunity to earn \$10 per girl for your troop by having each girl register her account and sell at least 5 online items by Oct. 5. The \$10 per Girl Scout helps your troop with start-up funds and is deposited directly into your troop's account by Oct. 30.

3. What do new leaders need to do to make sure their troops can participate?

- Complete troop level fall product manager 2026 Sweets & Treats training – available in gsLearn. All volunteers have access to this training in gsLearn.
- Fill out the troop fall product manager agreement for M2 access. This form is found in final module of Sweets & Treats fall training. Once you complete it, the products team is notified that you have completed the training, and the team begins the process to add you into the M2 platform. M2 is the system we use for the Fall program.
- Ensure your troop has roles assigned to the leader and troop fall product manager, MY26 active membership, background screened
- To earn proceeds, troops must have a minimum of 5 girls registered and 3 of those girls must be participating. Troops not meeting this will earn council credits.

4. If leaders need help during the season, what support is available?

- Contact your Service Unit Fall Product Manager – they are a great resource of experience and can connect you with other troop leaders
- Attend the Sweets & Treats Chats – in the moment learning, Wednesday evenings, 7 p.m., schedule in gsLearn. During the chats we discuss what you need to know during that time of the sale. There is also the opportunity to ask questions.
- Contact info@gswcf.org. If you are unable to find an answer for your question you can always contact the product program team through info@gswcf.org.

Topic 2: New Leader Training

1. What training is required for all new troop leaders, and how soon should they get started?

- Every new leader should complete the New Leader Learning Path in gsLearn, which is our online learning platform for Girl Scout volunteers. Ideally, you would want to get started before meeting with your troop and complete it within your first six months of becoming a leader. You can see what the learning path looks like in gsLearn on the screen. It covers topics like how to deliver the Girl Scout program, troop safety, your first troop meeting, and managing troop finances. Even if you are completely new to Girl Scouts, this training does a great job of explaining what Girl Scouts is about and how to be an effective leader.

2. How long does it usually take to complete the required new leader training?

- Most leaders can complete the online training in about 2–3 hours. You don't have to do it all at once — gsLearn saves your progress so you can work through it at your own pace.

3. Is it realistic for leaders to complete it in one sitting if they would like to? Or should they expect to spread it out?

- While you could complete all the training at once, we highly recommend spreading it out over the course of your first six months of being a leader. The first course in the New Leader Learning Path is called “Welcome to Girl Scouts of West Central Florida” and it will give you an overview of all required courses, when it is recommended to complete it, and how long it will take.

4. How do leaders access gsLearn?

- You will start by navigating to our website, gswcf.org, which you should be able to see at the top of the home screen.
- Log in to your MYGS account. After logging in, you will see a gsLearn button in the left-hand navigation menu. Click that, and you are in gsLearn.
- From there, use the search bar to type in “New Leader Learning Path” and it should come right up, but keep in mind if you are logging in to gsLearn for the first time, there will be a slight delay in loading your volunteer course library.
- If it is your first time logging in, wait around 30 minutes and your course library should be loaded by then.

5. Do troops need to establish someone who is CPR/first aid certified? When would be a good time to have CPR/FA completed?

- Yes. As soon as your troop is ready to go on an outing away from the regular meeting place, at least one registered and background-

checked adult must have CPR/First Aid. We recommend multiple volunteers in the troop get their certification, so the troop does not have to rely on just the troop leader as the first aider. This could be your co-leader or a reliable troop helper.

6. So a troop can begin meeting without CPR/First Aid certification, and it becomes required once they start outings — is that right?

- Yes. Simple meeting activities do not need a first aider, but keep in mind, some meeting activities that can be done at your meeting place may require a First Aider. This is usually when the activity has any risk. For example, your troop may eventually progress in learning outdoor skills and could complete a pocketknife activity at your troop meeting. In this case, a first aider would need to be present. In the beginning it is highly unlikely you will be facilitating such advanced activities.

7. How would you know if an activity needs a first aider present?

- Volunteers should refer to the “Safety Activity Checkpoints” document. This is where we record official guidelines that provide detailed safety checklists and considerations for a wide range of activities that Girl Scouts can do. You can find it on the Forms and Documents page of our website, under Health and Safety. [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)

8. Can volunteers receive their CPR/First Aid certification anywhere or do they have to take it through Girl Scouts?

We approve CPR/FA certifications from Girl-Scout approved organizations, and we offer CPR/FA sessions frequently throughout the year at a low cost to our volunteers. Volunteers can go to our events page to see upcoming CPR/FA offerings near them. Again, this is a great way to get families involved in supporting the troop.

9. What counts as Girl Scout–approved CPR/First Aid training?

We accept training from organizations like the American Red Cross, American Heart Association and National Safety Council. The key is that it must include both adult and pediatric CPR and AED with the first aid component, and it must be hands-on, not just online. There are many websites out there that claim their curriculum is through Red Cross or the American Heart Association but allow you to take the course online for free and just pay for your certificate. This is not accepted by council. Here are a few that are approved;

American Red Cross • American Heart Association • Health Safety Institute (formerly ASHI and MEDIC) • National Safety Council • EMP America • National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)

10. If a leader already has a certification, say from the Red Cross through their workplace, do they need to retake it through Girl Scouts?

Nope. If it meets the guidelines outlined and is current, it counts. We ask that volunteers who received their certification outside of a Girl Scout CPR/FA training, upload a copy of their certificate to the “Approved General First Aider” course in gsLearn.

11. If leaders have questions while they’re working on training, what’s the best way to get support?

Email Nicole directly at adultlearning@gswcf.org or email our customer care team at info@gswcf.org.

Topic 3: Parent/Caregiver Meeting

1. **What is a parent/caregiver meeting and why is it so important for a new troop?** A parent/caregiver meeting is usually the first troop meeting of the year and helps provide necessary information to families. It is a chance to welcome families, share what Girl Scouts is all about, and explain how the troop will run. It’s also the moment to communicate that Girl Scouts is a team effort — leaders, girls, and families working together make for the best experience.
2. **What else may the parent/caregiver meeting cover and how long does it last?** It lasts about an hour. Leaders and parents and caregivers introduce themselves, and discuss troop logistics like meeting day, time, and location. You’ll also talk about troop finances, have parents fill out girl paperwork, and — very importantly — establish how families can help.
3. **What paperwork should families be filling out for their Girl Scout?** The parent/caregiver meeting is the perfect time to get most required girl paperwork completed for the year. This includes the Girl Permission Form, which provides consent from a legal guardian for their Girl Scout to participate in activities throughout the year and the Health History Form, which is used by the troop leader in case of an accident.
4. **And is it suggested leaders follow a set agenda, or keep it more open?** Follow a structure. This will help keep your meeting on track and on time. The Volunteer Toolkit even has parent meeting plans that are ready to use.
5. **Where can volunteers access the Volunteer Toolkit?** Volunteers can access it by going to our website and logging in to their MYGS account. From there, the Volunteer Toolkit, which you will also see referred to as the VTK, is located in the navigation menu on the left side of the screen. Once you are in the VTK, you can select a level and explore meeting plans. Search “Intro Plan” into the search bar and you’ll see sample parent/caregiver meetings for Daisies, Brownies and Juniors.
6. **How do leaders explain to parents that their participation is part of the troop’s success?**

Family is part of the formula. When parents are engaged, girls get a richer experience, and leaders aren't carrying the load alone. Families can chaperone trips, lead a badge, help with the cookie program, or even just share a skill. Everyone has something to contribute. You will see in the sample Parent/Caregiver Meetings in VTK, they recommend you host it while you also do your first introduction meeting with your Girl Scouts. This helps families feel ownership in their girls' Girl Scout experience.

7. What if families are nervous or unsure about volunteering?

That's normal. Be specific and transparent. Instead of saying, 'I need help,' try, 'We need one chaperone for the museum trip on October 12, from 10 to 1.' Clear asks make it easier for parents to say yes.

8. How would you recommend leaders ask families to help at or after the parent/caregiver meeting?

It is best to be prepared with a list of roles at the meeting. GSWCF even has a form "Ways Adults Can Help" that can be distributed at the meeting as part of their paperwork. It allows families to share how they would be willing to support the troop or skills they may have that can be shared with the girls.

9. Can any family member volunteer with the troop?

It is important to define the difference between a volunteer and a participating adult. Volunteers have a current valid background check on file with us and are registered with the troop as a Troop Helper. They can be part of safety ratios, be responsible for watching girls and handle money. If you have an aunt of a Girl Scout who is a nurse, she can come lead a first aid badge with the troop and not need a background check. She just could not be counted as part of safety ratios or be responsible for watching girls.

10. Volunteers are adults with a current valid background check who are registered as a Troop Helper in our system. A participating adult is someone who can help the troop but just not be responsible for girls or handle troop money?

Correct. Some troop leaders require all adults who will interact with the troop to register as a Troop Helper so they are required to get a background check, but that is up to the discretion of the Troop Leader and their co-leader.

11. Are there any other resources that new leaders could go to about the parent/caregiver meeting or how to engage families?

Yes, this is also covered in the New Leader Learning Path in gsLearn, which requires new leader training. "GSUSA New Leader Onboarding: Family Engagement - The Key to Success" is the specific course that covers the importance of families being involved in their Girl Scout's experience, roles they can fill, how to ask for help, and details how to run a parent/caregiver meeting.

12. Where can leaders go if they have more questions about parent/caregiver meetings?

They can email info@gswcf.org to connect with their Community Manager, or they can talk to their service unit's Troop Consultant.

Questions from Attendees

What is the site and where to assign the roles? Roles are assigned through someone registering to volunteer. The role of a troop product team member should be a choice to select, but if a person needs help they can contact info@gswcf.org.

Is the fall manager expected to be the cookie mom? The Fall Product manager can be your Cookie manager, or it also can be another volunteer. Some managers do both roles and others have someone different for each role. It will depend on the time of year and volunteer's availability.

Is there a GS Learn app? Unfortunately, we do not have a gsLearn app. The gsLearn system is managed by the Girl Scouts of the USA. I will suggest that.

Does the full training suite for leaders need to be completed before recruiting kids? Training does not have to be completed to have your first meeting. However, you will want to use the resources in your new troop leader's start-up box to host the caregiver meeting. We highly suggest you take the training before interacting with the girls.

For the \$10 per girl bonus for 5 items, do these need to be 'care to share' items? For the \$10 per girl bonus, it can be any 5 items sold it does not need to be "Care to Share" Items. There are also 2 rewards for selling Care to Share- Girls who sell 5 Care to Share items will receive a special patch. Girls who sell 15 Care to Share items will receive the patch and \$10 in Council Dough.

Do you need to do CPR/FA if you're an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner with AHA BLS & ALCS & PALS? Healthcare and emergency professionals can serve as first aiders if their training or licensure is current and the care required is within their scope of practice and professional standards of care. For example, a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, paramedic, military medic, wilderness first aider or responder, or emergency medical technician may be options for small or large groups.

Where are the troop and leader documents stored? [GSWCF resources](#)

Where do our Troop Helpers sign up for CPR/FA? If I understand correctly, leaders can access it in their GS Learn? All registered members have access to gsLearn. So, troop helpers can access gsLearn and see all of the courses. All in person classes are on our website under the Events page. Volunteers can search for the training they wish to take.

We recommend sending them the events page and telling them to search for CPR/FA and pick a date that works best for them. Right now we have training scheduled from

Sept - January. Around December we will publish the training schedule for February - May. We aim to offer two CPR/FA opportunities a month.

What is, if there is, the difference between a Volunteer and a Helper?

A **registered Troop Helper** has an active Girl Scout membership, is added to the troop in the **Troop Helper** role, and has completed the required background check.

Someone who is **not registered** does not have the membership/background check in place, so they would not be considered an official volunteer for the troop.

If someone will be regularly helping with meetings, activities, outings, or supporting the girls, they should be registered and added as a **Troop Helper**.

Where can the fall product page be found? The Fall Product page is located here <https://www.gswcf.org/en/cookies/fall-sweets-treats.html>.

Where can we get paper copies of the permission form and health history for our families? [GSWCF resources](#) Forms and Documents page under Troop Leader Resources.

Does the cpr training cost or does the certificate cost anything? CPR/First Aid training provided by GSWCF is \$20 starting October 1.

Where can we print Ways Adults Can Help to give to our families? [GSWCF resources](#)

Will you talk about the Experiences Boxes? What is all about and what it contains? How do we get the troop leader box? Do you have a box for multi-level boxes? Your community manager must register you for the Girl Scout Experience box. At this time, there is not one specifically for multi-level troops. However, once you have a minimum of 4 girls in either Daisy, Brownie or Junior program level, you are eligible to receive the box.

Is there a difference if you take the fall program as a parent not the manager?

The Fall Product Sweets & Treats Training in gsLearn is available to all registered volunteers so the manager or any registered troop volunteer can take that training.

How do we take the training none of our coleaders or leaders receive this email?

Your service unit fall product manager will have order cards and materials for troops. All volunteers/managers who take the Fall Product training and fill out the jotform will have access to M2 the Fall Product platform starting tomorrow and girls will get an email on Sept 23 when the program starts from M2.

Don't forget to register for the next Launch, October 27, 2026 at 7:00pm

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/7e993267-c76b-49fe-b42f-fb2ddfc0ed8e@b7f116ad-96b3-4c2d-b8b9-e6c18e6c3ff0>

Thank you again for volunteering to make a positive impact on the lives of girls! improvements. Now, take a deep breath and get ready for a great year! Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need further assistance; info@gswcf.org.