

2019 Cookie Training Q&A

Cookie Program Dates

Can girls take orders through March 11, or March 17?

- Girls can sell cookies all the way through March 17, but the last day for troops to place an order for more cookies from a cupboard is March 10. If a girl takes orders after March 10, she'll either need to get cookies from your remaining troop inventory, transfer from another troop, or direct her customers to order online.

Managing Your Troop

Do I turn the permission slips in to someone or do I just hold on to them?

- As the Troop Product Manager (TPM), you will hold onto your signed *Product Program Permission Forms* for each girl. We suggest keeping all of your paperwork together, including each girl's signed *Product Program Permission Form*, and receipts for cookies and money that have been exchanged. You will only need to turn in a permission form in the case of a Girl Shortage at the end of the program.

What if I don't hear from my Service Unit Product Chair (SUPC)?

- Your SUPC will communicate with you about your Initial Order pickup location, as well as any plans for a Service Unit Cookie Rally, and also be a resource to help with questions during the program. If you haven't heard from your SUPC by early January, please reach out to us at info@gsiowa.org.

What does it mean for a girl to have a financial restriction? How do we know if girls have financial restrictions?

- Sometimes families have a shortage in paying for product from a previous program, or other debt owed to the council. In these cases, girls are able to sell cookies online only, without handling money or product. TPMs and SUPCs will be notified of girls with restrictions in December. Those girls will also be shown with an asterisk (*) next to their name in Smart Cookies.

I would like to have the TPM be someone other than myself as the troop leader, but does that mean that person needs to pay \$25 and complete a background check?

- Yes, that's correct: all Girl Scout volunteers must register as members and pass a background check. That \$25 annual membership fee goes directly to Girl Scouts of the USA, to pay for things like Girl Scout activity insurance, program development, and technology for members. GSGI offers financial assistance to cover the membership fee for first-year troop leaders. After the first year, the idea is that troops can self-sustain, including paying adult memberships, through participation in GSGI's product programs, so please note that the registration for an adult volunteer could also be considered a troop expense.

I read somewhere that Daisies (grades K-1) aren't able to do participate in the Cookie Program. Is that true?

- Nope! Daisies can definitely participate, and many Daisies love interacting with customers! We encourage girls at all levels to participate. Daisies will need extra help giving change, and also probably need shorter booth sales times. Daisy troops may have smaller troop goals than say, a Cadette troop saving up for a troop trip or extended campout. Start out with what you're comfortable with, and network with other leaders for ideas. The [Official Girl Scouts of Greater Iowa Leaders Group](#) on is a great place for that!

Troop Materials

Where can I get additional materials for my troop?

- If you need more girl materials, you can either stop by any of the GSGI Leadership Centers, request more by contacting us at info@gsiowa.org, or connect with your local Service Unit Product Chair (SUPC).

Do we give each girl a receipt book?

- Primarily you'll use the receipt books to account for cookies that you're transferring from the troop to girls, or from one troop to another. Girls do not need to write receipts for each customer transaction, though they certainly can upon request.

Troop Kickoff

Thanks for the sample package of cookies! If our troop chooses to sample a package of the new Caramel Chocolate Chip cookies, do we still only get \$4 credit and just absorb the extra \$1?

- Yes, that's correct.

For larger troops, will we have the option for more than one sample package for the troop?

- We are only able to offer one package per troop, regardless of size. Last year each troop received one package of S'mores, and this year we opened it up to a package of your choice (of the \$4 varieties).

Do we have to account for the sample package anywhere in our cookie inventory?

- Yes, great catch! With your one credit for a sample package for your troop, you will have one extra package that you'll move in a *Troop to Girl Transfer* by the end of the program, because you'll automatically be credited for the sample package. This will also apply to any free sample credits received for booth sales. As a TPM, you can randomly select a girl to receive credit for that package, give it to a girl who is close to meeting a certain recognition level, or transfer to a girl who's put in extra effort to meet her goals!
- Note that the change this year means that your troop won't be able to open your sample pack until after you've received cookies, either from your Initial Order or from a Cookie Cupboard.

Do you have an example of how to run a troop kickoff meeting?

- Yes! Check back on the Bridge soon for a sample agenda and activity ideas! Also, be sure to download the customizable Family Welcome Letter with important information to share with your troop. It's at gsgibridge.com/cookieprogram, under Cookie Materials – it opens up in as a Word document (or other word processing software).

Smart Cookies

Will I use the same login to Smart Cookies as last year?

- The website is the same, and you will still login with your email address. However, all users are deleted from the system each year, and then re-added, because we need to ensure all volunteers have submitted their agreements for the year. You will receive an email with a link to set up your new account in Smart Cookies from noreply@abcsmartcookies.com.

Are there directions available for adding Smart Cookies as a “safe sender” to ensure parents receive their Smart Cookies emails?

- The steps are a little different for each email service, but in most services you should look for “Settings” or “Options,” and then an option for “Safe Senders,” “Safety Options,” or “Junk Email.” From there, you should be able to add an email address to your “Safe List” or “Safe Senders.” Then, add noreply@abcsmartcookies.com.

How early will we have access to Smart Cookies to submit the order?

- Volunteers and girls will start receiving Smart Cookies logins the week of December 11, as long as your volunteer agreement is submitted (Troop Product Manager Agreement, Service Unit Product Chair Agreement, or Juliette Parent/Guardian Agreement). After that, we'll continue adding new volunteers and girls on a weekly basis, as we receive signed agreements.

Does each girl/parent have to do the online Smart Cookies training?

- We offer three different Smart Cookies training webinars, in partnership with ABC Bakers. There are volunteer trainings for SUPCs and TPMs, to go through how you'll use the system to manage the program. There is also a training available for girls and parents, to go through how girls use the system to set goals, sell online, and take credit card payments. All the trainings are recorded, so you can attend live, view them later, or just download the resources to walk through on your own. Recordings are typically posted about a week after the live training is held.
 - **Wednesday, January 2:** Smart Cookies Training - Service Unit Dashboard
 - **Thursday, January 3:** Smart Cookies Training - Troops Dashboard
 - **Tuesday, January 22:** Smart Cookies Training - Parent/Family Dashboard

Initial Order

What are the benefits to the troop of doing an Initial Order? Is this optional?

- It is optional. Placing an Initial Order means the girls will have cookies in-hand earlier, and also lets you have cookies sooner for booth sales. The *Initial Order Estimator Tool* is available to help you figure out what your troop may need to get started.

Can each girl tell you how many boxes she wants from the Initial Order, before you order it?

- You can definitely talk to families about how many packages they'll plan to sell - just know that girls cannot start taking orders before Feb 1!

In order to pick up cookies, do we need money in the troop account to cover the \$1 per box? When is the first payment due?

- The first payment is not until March 1, so you will have a month of sales before the payment of \$1 per box is due. If for some reason your troop is not able to make the full payment at the first auto-withdrawal – for instance, if bad weather or other circumstances have impacted your sales – you can request a lesser payment by submitting a *Payment Adjustment Form*.

New Caramel Chocolate Chips

Will the new Caramel Chocolate Chip cookies be available to order on Smart Cookies beyond the Initial Order?

- Yes, while supplies last! The quantity is limited, though we will have a larger inventory of CCCs than we previously had of Trios.

Booths & Lemonade Stands

Are the locations for troop secured booth sales our choice, or do we need to go from a prescribed list?

- There is no prescribed list, so get creative about places to sell! The primary guideline is that booth sales should be in girl-appropriate areas - if girls cannot patronize the location, they shouldn't hold a booth there. A good starting point is to look at your local community and businesses you regularly visit.

Do booth sales begin on February 8 or 9?

- Booth sales begin on February 8, as long as your troop has received cookies from your Initial Order. Remember, individual girls can begin directly selling cookies as soon as they are delivered to service units and troops.

Free sample packages for each booth! If our troop does 5 booths, does that mean 5 packages total free?

- Yes that's right - one free package per registered booth! "Registered" means that you've entered your booth information in Smart Cookies, and it's been "approved" – meaning we've double-checked to make sure no other troop has registered for the same booth time. We've also provided a free sample flyer you can use at your booths!

Do we have to account for the sample package anywhere in our cookie inventory?

- Yes, just like with the one free sample package for the girls in your troop. After each booth, you will have one extra package that you'll move in a *Troop to Girl Transfer*, because you'll automatically be credited for the sample package.

Do the Lemonade Stands receive a free sample package of cookies, like the troop booths do?

- No, the new Lemonade Stands are managed by girls and their parent/guardian, not by the TPM. Lemonade Stands are not entered in Smart Cookies, and do not receive the free sample package.

Can Lemonade Stands be in public places? Are there any ideas on where to set these up?

- Yes, Lemonade Stands have the same guidelines as troop booth sales – they can be held anywhere, provided it's a girl-appropriate location. We encourage girls to get creative!

Can my daughter set up a Lemonade Stand under my supervision, even though I am the TPM as long as she uses her own inventory?

- Yes, that's correct! That option is available for you as a parent, to host with your daughter. Of course, we still encourage troops and TPMs to set up booth sales, which are a great way for the girls to work together!

Credit Card Payments

How do I get started using the Clover credit card reader app?

- In order to use Clover for your troop, you will first need to set up your Clover Go account with GSGL, by submitting the Clover Go Login Request. *If you already have an account from previous years, you will be able to use your same login.* Once your account is set up, download the Clover Go app on your phone or tablet. Check out the Clover Go User Guide for additional directions and trouble-shooting. Note that to use Clover, you will either need a WiFi connection or mobile data available on your phone; cards cannot be processed offline.

If we used Clover last year, do we have to delete the previous app, and download a new app?

- The app you will need to use is called Clover Go – if you try to use the previous app, called Wells Fargo Mobile Merchant, it may automatically update or redirect you to the Clover Go app. If it does not redirect you, we recommend deleting the previous app and downloading Clover Go.

If the troop has the Clover hardware for booth sales, can we still use it or are we required to download the Clover app?

- You can still use your reader device to process credit cards, with the chip reader or card swiper, or you can just use the app to scan cards, through your phone camera. However, either way you will need to use the Clover Go app, as that is where you will enter the transaction amounts and have the ability to text or email receipts.

Can customers pay for Girl Delivery with a credit card online, like they did with Fall Product?

- YES! The way this works through Smart Cookies is that the customer will select Girl Delivery, and the girl will have the ability to process the credit card through Smart Cookies at the time of delivery. She can also use this technology for any customer orders – not just online orders!

In order to process credit cards, do I make one Clover account as the TPM, and then have all girls go through Clover on my phone to charge credit cards? Or can each girl/parent make their own account on Clover?

- The Clover option is set up only for troop use at booth sales. You can log into your Clover account on multiple phones – if, for instance, you need more than one person able to process cards at a busy booth, or if one phone is running low on battery!
- Girls will not use Clover to process their individual sales. They have the option in Smart Cookies to process credit card transactions, so they can use that option when selling door-to-door and to friends and family.

Now that the girls can take credit card payments for all of their orders, how does that information get to me as the TPM, so that I can track each girl's cookie inventory and payments?

- When a girl processes a credit card payment in Smart Cookies, the transaction is viewable from both the Girl and the Troop view in Smart Cookies. The transaction will be labeled "Girl Delivery Credit Card," and is visible in the Girl Balance Summary and Troop Balance Summary. As the TPM, you will still need to transfer cookies to the girl, using a *Troop to Girl* transfer.

So are all credit card transactions not counted for the first withdrawal?

- The first withdrawal, on March 1, includes \$1 per package of cookies transferred to the troop by February 15. Depending on how many credit card transactions have been processed for your troop, you may see an adjustment of your total if your troop has had more credit card sales versus cash/check.
- This is a process that we are continuing to review, because with the additional options for credit card purchasing, there could be more credit card sales than we have had previously. Therefore if we need to change the process for the first troop payment to account for credit cards, we will notify SUPCs and TPMs as soon as we know there is a change.

Direct Ship Orders

If a customer orders more than 12 packages, do they not get the half off shipping?

- Yes, that's correct. The subsidized shipping option is limited to 5-12 packages, with the discount shipping rate of \$5.75. A customer could always place multiple orders though!

Wait, is the cost \$4 for 5 packages of cookies in the gift box!?

- Not quite! The cost of the gift box itself is \$4, plus the cost for 5 packages of cookies (\$4 each, or \$5 for Caramel Chocolate Chips) – plus \$5.75 shipping.

The Joy Project

Is the Joy Project just a different name for cookie shares?

- It's the same idea – customers donate money, and cookies are shared with deserving organizations, including military organizations, food banks, and other charities. Previously, there were two variations of “cookie shares,” which could get confusing for troops to track. This year, we are only tracking donations through the Joy Project, in which the donated cookies are provided from the council's leftover inventory – cookies we ordered from ABC Bakers that were not distributed to troops and sold.
- If the troop would like to utilize customer monetary donations to provide cookies left in your troop inventory to organizations of your choice, that is still an option, but those donations will no longer be tracked as “cookie shares,” You'll just transfer them (*Troop to Girl*) like other cookies sold.

And there is no Cookie Share patch this year, unless we participate in the Joy Project?

- That's correct – we are only offering the Joy Project patch this year.

Rewards

If a Cadette, Senior, or Ambassador troop opts out of individual rewards will the girls still earn Cookie Dough?

- Yes, all girls earn base cookie dough starting at 24 packages sold! Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador troops may opt-out of all rewards as a group to receive \$0.10 more per package. They will still receive patches, instant items, Adventureland 700 Club, and troop experiences earned, as well as their Base Cookie Dough.

So girls either have to choose all rewards items or all Cookie Dough this year?

- That is true but only for Bonus Cookie Dough – girls will still earn Base Cookie Dough! By changing the shipping model to send rewards items directly to girls at the end of the program this year, we had to change one option that was previously available, where girls were able to choose either Bonus Cookie Dough or rewards items, by each item.
- Bonus Cookie Dough is an option for girls who sell at least 275 packages. At the 275 package recognition level, girls will have to choose between all Bonus Cookie Dough or all reward items, at this and subsequent levels. This means that a girl choosing Bonus Cookie Dough (over the t-shirt) at the 275 level is also choosing to receive Bonus Cookie Dough for all higher levels she achieves. The choice is between up-to \$75 in Bonus Cookie Dough OR items up-to the t-shirt, plush, chalkboard & sticker set, cap, soap making kit, hoodie, beach towel, and slippers.
- Girls still earn Base Cookie Dough, starting at 24 packages sold. Girls actually earn more Base Cookie Dough this year than in previous years at each level!

Are we able to purchase the individual items for the girls that maybe only want the plush and then the rest in Bonus Cookie Dough?

- Yes! New this year: the t-shirt, hoodie and narwhal plush will be available in the Girl Scout Shops for purchase by girls (and volunteers!) who participate in the 2019 Cookie Program.

How do the rewards get entered for the girls?

- At the end of the program, after all *Troop to Girl Transfers* are complete, the TPM will select recognition plans for each girl and submit the troop's *Recognition Order*. Check out the Smart Cookies resources for step-by-step directions.

Is it true that rewards items are held for any girl that owes money at the end of the program?

- Yes, this is correct. If a family has a payment shortage, the girl will not receive her rewards items until full payment has been received. Once the TPM submits the Girl Shortage Form, along with a copy of the girl's signed *Product Program Permission Form*, GSGI staff will work directly with the families to determine a payment plan, and will distribute the rewards items to the girl once the balance is paid.

League of Legendary Creatures Instant Rewards

How do we request additional instant rewards if we have more girls join, or have more girls earn the higher levels than we received keychains for?

- Please send us an email at info@gsiowa.org, and we'll figure out how to get them to you – either shipping directly to you, or having them available at a GSGI Leadership Center. You can also work directly with other leaders to swap out what you need.

If a troop didn't opt in to the instant rewards program, are there any rewards for girls below 270 packages sold?

- Yes. Starting at 24 packages sold, all girls begin earning Base Cookie Dough, and starting at 50 packages, they earn Achievement Bar patches – in addition to the troop proceeds that come with every package sold! Girls earn additional patches at 12+ packages sold, as well as 250+ packages. It is correct that there are fewer “items” for girls not participating in the instant rewards – for comparison, the items that were available last year were a stadium cup and a lip balm.

How do you know when to give the instant items earned to each girl?

- We've left that choice up to leaders – the TPM or leader can give the instant items when the family signs for cookies, on a promise to sell, OR, they can wait until the money has been turned in. We know different approaches may work for different troops.

Just for Fun!

Where can I access all the cute Nellie the Narwhal pics, and other fun cookie graphics?

- Once you're logged into Smart Cookies, if you click “Resources,” you will can find and download lots of cute digital art!