



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Girl Scouts

1. Who is responsible for maintaining the Catholic identity of parish Girl Scout troops?

The National Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts and Camp Fire is an organization that oversees religious recognition programs in Girl Scouting and provides training for diocesan and parish Girl Scout troop leadership.

2. How are Girl Scouts membership dues spent?

Individual membership dues from each girl are sent to Girl Scouts of the USA to cover the cost of fundamental services supporting the Girl Scout Movement. This includes, but is not limited to, accident insurance for members participating in approved Girl Scout activities, program development, research, resources, training, technology, services to councils, and protection of the Girl Scout brand. They also help fund the implementation of new technologies to improve the Girl Scout experience for girls, volunteers and parents.

3. Does GSUSA have a policy on issues regarding human sexuality, contraception, and abortion?

“The GSUSA national office articulates a non-position policy when it comes to the topics of human sexuality, contraception (or birth control), and abortion. This national policy of neutrality does not prohibit individual councils or troops from taking a position or sponsoring programming on human sexuality or other topics (either from a secular or religious platform), presuming parental consent and other necessary approvals have been provided. Also, GSUSA understands this national non-position still allows it to research and report on issues related to such topics.”
*USCCB Catholic Scouting Questions.*ⁱ

4. Does GSUSA have an official relationship with Planned Parenthood?

“GSUSA has stated that it has no official relationship with Planned Parenthood. It has also acknowledged that, due to the structure of GSUSA and the Girl Scouting movement, the national office (GSUSA) does not have the authority to prohibit local councils or troops from collaborating with or forming their own local relationships with Planned Parenthood (or other organizations) as long as parental consent and other necessary approvals have been provided.” *USCCB Catholic Scouting Questions.*ⁱⁱ

5. What about GSUSA’s membership position with regard to youth who identify as “transgender”?

Regarding the situation of youth who identify as “transgender,” GSUSA has provided an FAQ on its website noting its case-by-case approach to this issue. The answer to the FAQ reads as follows: “Girl Scouts is an inclusive organization and is proud to be the premiere leadership organization for girls in the country. Placement of transgender youth is handled on a case-by-case basis, with the welfare and best interests of the child and the members of the troop/group in question a top priority. That said, if the child is recognized by the family and school/community as a girl and lives culturally as a girl, then Girl Scouts is an organization that can serve her in a setting that is both emotionally and physically safe.” *USCCB Catholic Scouting Questions.*ⁱⁱⁱ

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, the Girl Scout Council of Eastern Pennsylvania is bound by the Memorandum of Understanding regarding parish-based troops to “Respect the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church by not promoting and/or teaching practices, policies, aims and objectives which contradict Catholic doctrine and practices”.

6. How is the money raised through cookie sales spent?

After satisfying the cost of the cookies to the baking company, the net proceeds from Girl Scout Cookie sales stay local with the originating council (Girl Scout Council of Eastern Pennsylvania) and the local troop to fund activities for girls year-round as well as impactful girl-led community projects. Most of the money raised by the local Girl Scout Troop stays with the local troop for its own purpose and use. A portion of the funds is also given to the Girl Scout Council of Eastern Pennsylvania to support local programming offered for its local troops. Girl Scout councils do not provide any portion of their cookie revenue to Girl Scouts USA, and no other revenue from cookie sales goes to GSUSA.

7. Are Girl Scout troops that are not affiliated with a parish allowed to sell cookies on the parish campus?

No. Only parish-based Girl Scout troops can sell cookies on the parish campus.

ⁱ <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/youth/catholic-scouting-questions.cfm>

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