

What Is a Self Sustaining Troop?

A self sustaining troop plans the activities for their year and future events and is able to pay for all of their activities with the proceeds they earn from the council-sponsored Fall Product Sale and Cookie Sale, as well as other approved money earning activities the troop may want to do to meet their set goals.

It means the girls in your troop are “Learning to Earn” by:

Goal Setting - Working together to determine their wants and needs and building a troop budget around this is the first step in troop planning and goal setting...

- Where are their Girl Scout experiences going to take them this year, next year and the year after?
- What activities do the girls want to participate in? What badges do they want to work on? Is the troop participating in the many council-sponsored programs? Is a troop trip being planned for this year or following years?
- Don't forget service and philanthropic goals. *Will troops/groups donate to the Juliette Gordon Low World Friendship Fund or to the food shelf and spend a day volunteering?*
- Encourage individual and troop goal setting.

Decision-Making - How are they going to get there, and who will attend? (Girls and adult chaperones)

Prioritizing, Budgeting and Evaluating - How is the troop going to pay for planned activities?

Participation in product sale programs offers each girl a first-hand experience in running their own business.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program is the ‘largest girl-led business in the country’! With adult guidance and encouragement, troops/groups will participate in four steps to successfully becoming self-sustaining:

- They will work as a team to set troop goals, as well as individual goals.
- Create a business/marketing plan and troop budget to meet their goals.
- Money management; decide how to spend their proceeds as a troop.
- Evaluate their successes - will the troop be able to participate in all of the activities planned? Does the troop need to reevaluate priorities?

Benefits for girls to become a Self Sustaining Troop:

- Learning how to manage their troops/groups own real money.
- Learning to save and becoming independent and confident about money management.
- Feeling the sense of accomplishment when goals are met.
- Learning to handle disappointment if goals are not met.
- Dealing with this disappointment positively and adapting plans accordingly – not giving up.
- Learning to be self sufficient.

Benefits for families to become a Self Sustaining Troop:

- Their girls learn all of the above.
- The cost to the families for their girl to belong to Girl Scouts is minimal. If planning and budgeting are done well, families may only have to provide for their girl's first year's membership fee, uniforms, and books, as the troop incorporates renewal of membership and all troop activities into the troop's yearly budget.

Troop Sponsorship – Don't forget - each troop can be sponsored up to \$125.00 per year. Visit www.gslakesandpines.org for troop sponsorship guidelines. Recognizing the troop sponsor's generosity is always encouraged. Whether a troop is new or has existed for several years, every troop is encouraged to participate in the council-sponsored product sale programs. Every troop can be self-sustaining! All it takes is some planning, realistic goals, good work habits and TEAMWORK! And everyone in the troop benefits! Money earning activities can pay for EVERYTHING ... events, trips, materials, ceremonies, awards, membership registrations (girls and adults), etc. Once troops/group become self-sustaining, the possibilities of what they can do are endless, and the skills learned will carry them through their lifetime.

