



M*O*N*E*Y and Your Leadership Project

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California | 6601 Elvas Avenue Sacramento, CA 95819 | www.girlscoutshcc.org

One of the biggest challenges facing every girl working towards her Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award is how to fund it. On the one hand you are asked to meet a need in your community; on the other hand, you have some major money constraints outlined in *Volunteer Essentials* and by your council. So what's a girl to do?

OK; the reality first, and then some possible ways to approach it. Think of those who have gone before you. They figured it out and earned Girl Scout Silver or Gold, and so can you! Once you get everything figured out be sure to clear your plans with your award advisor and your Girl Scout council.

You can NOT...	But you CAN...
<p>You can't ask for money as a girl member of Girl Scouts. You can't ask for materials or services, either (technically called 'gifts-in-kind'). Asking for cash or gifts-in-kind is considered fundraising, and for lots of reasons Girl Scout Adults are the only people who can fundraise for Girl Scouts.</p>	<p>You have an advisor, so use her or him! Since Adults <i>can</i> ask for money or gifts-in-kind, work with your advisor or another Girl Scout Adult to get donations. You can do all the explaining, write a letter, do a presentation or whatever needs to be done, and your Girl Scout Adult can do the official 'ask' and sign on the dotted line.</p>
<p>As a Girl Scout, you can't raise money for another organization, and you can't donate money to another organization. This means you can't hold a drive for pet toys for the SPCA, and accept cash, too. You also can't hold an event to benefit the homeless shelter or take pledges for a marathon to benefit cancer research. Lastly, you can't take cash that you had set aside for your project and donate it to an organization as part of your Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award.</p>	<p>You <i>can</i> donate goods to another organization. You <i>can</i> also hold a drive for materials for another organization, and if someone tries to give you cash politely refuse and ask them to purchase an item and donate it. You can also get your troop to help you hold an event to fund your Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award and use the money to purchase materials to donate to an organization. Remember that you must have council approval to do a fundraising activity, and your troop must all agree where the funds are going. This one can get a bit tricky, so if you have questions call or email the Program Specialist overseeing your award.</p>
<p>You can't give Girl Scouts' IRS Tax ID number to people or businesses in exchange for donations. Businesses often will want to use the donation as a tax deduction. Donations of goods are obtained for the beneficiaries of your award project, not for use by Girl Scouts Heart of Central California. As such, GSHCC's Tax ID number cannot be used for reporting purposes to the donor.</p>	<p>You <i>can</i> contact the Program Specialist overseeing your award and request a formal letter, on council letterhead, stating that you are a member of Girl Scouts and you are working on your Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award. You can use this letter as verification when working to obtain goods as donations. You may also ask the organization that is the beneficiary of your award project (if it is a nonprofit) if they are willing to use their Tax ID number for the purpose of obtaining donations of goods. If so, the organization may be willing to give you a letter to use to obtain donations of goods.</p>

If you are an individually registered member (a Juliette Girl Scout), things are slightly different. You cannot earn money as an individual Girl Scout for yourself. The money you earn must go to an account held by a group (troop/group, service unit, or your council). Next, you must present your need for funds to that group. There is no guarantee that you will get back the amount of money you earned for the group, as the dispersal of funds will be a group decision. Check with your council about the options open to you.

MONEY-EARNING IDEAS

Reminder: All Girl Scout activities should meet *Volunteer Essentials* and council guidelines.

1. Sell Girl Scout cookies and fall product. (Think big — why not fax order forms to businesses in your area, or arrange for booths at sports events or college dorms. You end up helping your council as well as your group.)
2. Provide childcare at special events during the holiday season or community events. (Be sure to have an adult trained in first aid present.)
3. Recycle aluminum cans. (How about a community can-a-thon? Involve small businesses as well as families.)
4. Put on a gigantic garage sale.
5. Offer clown activities and face painting at family events or malls.
6. Wrap gift packages at holiday fairs.
7. Apply for a community improvement grant. (Check with the mayor's or governor's office and your council. Arrange for an adult to be the signer. The money may need to go through your council or service unit, as well.)
8. Hold a penny drive. Appeal to friends and family members to save loose change for you. (Donations of coins can accumulate really fast, and can present you with the nice problem of hauling a heavy load to the bank.)

DO NOT ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING KINDS OF ACTIVITIES:

1. **Money-earning projects where you are performing an activity that someone normally gets paid to do** — in other words, taking jobs away from people, such as store workers, maintenance staff, or service providers. (**However**, if certain activities — for example, cleaning a stadium after a game or gift wrapping at a store — have previously been defined clearly as opportunities for nonprofits to earn money, you can undertake these activities **with council approval**.)
2. **“Cheap labor” projects disguised as money-earning projects.** At first it may sound like a great idea, but you are actually being taken advantage of and taking away the job of someone who should be paid more money than you are being offered. That's why there are child labor and minimum wage laws!
3. **Money earning projects where Girl Scouts of the USA might be perceived as endorsing a product or political viewpoint or cause.** This includes getting paid to pass out flyers for political candidates or freebees at a business opening. When in doubt, check with your council.
4. **Money earning projects where the money goes to individuals rather than to your group as a group donation.** You cannot be employed as a Girl Scout to earn money.
5. **Selling anything on the Internet as a Girl Scout.** Safety issues and council boundaries are of primary concern here.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON MONEY

Q: Can I use my own money on the Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award Project?

A: Yes. If you want to use your own money, you can. You may receive help from your family, too. However, we encourage you to work with others to earn the money. That's part of the process. Earning a Girl Scout award is not meant to be a hardship on a family or individual.

When designing your project, it's important to think creatively about how you can make a difference with little or no money. Then talk to your council and advisor about ideas for financing the project or arranging for the donation of materials and services.

Some individual activities with great potential:

1. Pet walking and pet care
2. Babysitting
3. Lawn mowing, leaf raking
4. Plant sitting
5. Recycling
6. Tutoring younger kids
7. Providing respite care for family caregivers
8. Refereeing sports games
9. Party giving (clowning, magic shows, game leading)
10. Making or repairing jewelry
11. Creating hand-made greeting cards
12. Providing a calligraphy service for addresses on special invitations

Q: Can I ask friends and neighbors for help?

A: You shouldn't ask for donations of money, but you can ask for donations of time and stuff, such as clothing for a clothing drive or that pile of bricks left over from your neighbor's backyard project.

Q: What if what I want to do costs too much?

A: It's better to succeed with a smaller project that is within your budget than to be unable to complete a larger project because it exceeds your budget. Be realistic about what you can and can't do. Work with your adult advisor to develop a reasonable budget for your project. If your resources are not sufficient for you to realistically accomplish your goal, then you need to rethink the project. Planning is the key to a good Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award Project. Your council has the right to put a cap on spending, as well as to request that large donations go through the council office. Work with them.

Q: Is it all right to seek help from other organizations when doing my Girl Scout Silver or Gold Award?

A: Yes, with some qualifications. Many service organizations have budgets for community projects. You can use their interests (e.g., Lions Club International focus on vision care, while Soroptimists may have a committee on literacy) as leverage to support your project and get volunteers to help you. Do some research on local service organizations; even some businesses give workers time for community service hours and projects. However, remember the rule about having the adult doing the "ask" for actual money and gifts-in-kind, and clearing your joint approach with your local council. (Your council may be asking the same group for major donation and you don't want to interfere with the council's "ask.") Don't let the organization's agenda drive your vision for your project.

Q: I know you can't raise money as a Girl Scout for other organizations, but can I do it on my own?

A: As an individual, you can volunteer for other organizations, but you should not identify work that you do to raise funds for another organization as part of your time going toward the Girl Scout Gold Award. Additionally, you may not present yourself as a Girl Scout to the public in this process since you are a volunteer for another organization. For example: If your local Red Cross needs money to purchase training dummies, you may participate under their supervision as an individual volunteer to raise funds, but you cannot count that service as part of your time toward any Girl Scout award or service hours.

Q: Can we charge for a Girl Scout event to earn money?

A: If it is a service project, a fee can be collected to cover the cost of materials. The project ceases to be a service project if you are charging a fee for the event above cost, in which case the hours cannot go toward service hours in any award. If you are doing an event as a Girl Scout (e.g., a Badge Workshop, Bike Rodeo, etc.) and are planning to charge a fee above the cost of materials, you must first clear this with your Girl Scout council. Provision should be made for scholarships for troop/groups or individual girls who cannot afford fees to your event and you must be clear in your advertisements and materials that this is a money-earning event for your troop/group.