

PRESS RELEASE



Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Council

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Girl Scout Cookies: offering more than just a sweet treat

For more than 90 years the Girl Scout Cookie® Program has helped girls develop invaluable skills they will use throughout their entire lives. Through this annual activity, girls ages 6 -17 learn how to set goals, develop action plans to reach those goals, work together as a team and cultivate a sense of business ethics. Additionally, they build confidence by developing public speaking and interpersonal communication skills. Girls also acquire knowledge in money management, marketing and customer service, thereby making the Girl Scout Cookie Program the nation's premier financial literacy and entrepreneurship program in the United States.

"Each and every year I know we're training girls to fill all sorts of roles in the future," says Anne Reel, council executive director. "One of these young ladies may some day become secretary of state, CEO of a Fortune 500 company, a local business owner or executive director of a non profit organization."

Not only do the girls gain valuable skills, they earn money for troop and council activities. All proceeds, after paying the baker, remain in this region – Elkhart, Kosciusko, Noble and Whitley counties. A portion of the money goes to the council to support all types of activities and 50 cents from every box stays with the troop selling cookies. For most troops, more than 80% of their income comes from cookie sales. Each troop decides, as a team, how they will spend that money.

Last year troops used their cookie funds for educational trips throughout the country, outings and adventures, and summer camp. The cookie program also gives girls a chance to help others. Girl Scout troops often give some of the money they generate to organizations of their choosing and last year, they provided more than 12,000 hours of community service throughout the four-county area.

At the council level, funds from cookie sales have helped support programs like the Healthy Me initiative that promotes activities like exercise, healthy eating, accepting differences, and improving self-esteem. Cookie sales also support summer camp and other events that give girls experiences that they might not otherwise have.

"While the Girl Scouts give girls tools to stay healthy physically and emotionally, we also want consumers to be healthy and still savor a good treat," says Susan Kuntz, product sales director for Indiana Lakeland Girl Scout Council. "Now all varieties of cookies contain zero trans-fats and this year we've introduced a 100-calorie pack – *Cinna-Spins*. And of course it is important to remember that cookies are a dessert and should be eaten in moderation."

In the council's service area, girls will begin taking orders for Girl Scout Cookies on **Friday, January 11**, and continue through **Monday, January 28**. Direct sales will begin the **last week of February** and continue through **March**.

To place an order, contact your favorite Girl Scout, or call our service center at 574.533.8881. You can also visit our website at www.indianalakeland.org or visit the GSUSA cookie website at www.girlscoutcookies.org.

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Editor's note: Please contact us at 574.533.8881 or 866.223.7740 if you'd like to set up a photo or interview. We have troops and groups who have stories to tell.