

## The Pre-Cookie Program Caregiver Meeting

**Why hold a Pre-Cookie Program caregiver meeting?** As the Troop Cookie Coordinator you have the important role of supporting your Girl Scouts through the Cookie Program and preparing them for a lifetime of leadership, one package at a time! It is also important that you set clear program guidelines, so that everyone understands their role in the program. A pre-cookie program caregiver meeting and good communication throughout the program is key to your troop's success.

**When to Hold the Caregiver Meeting:** You should schedule the meeting after your training and prior to the cookie booth sign-up opening date of January 8, 2019.

**Why is it imperative that all caregivers attend this meeting?** It is important to each girl's experience and the troop's success that everyone is well-informed of the council policies and procedures of the cookie program as well as the guideline your troop has put in place, including deadlines, safe money handling, getting cookies, booth sales, and more. Caregivers also should understand what their girl is learning through the cookie program and how they can best support her and the troop's experience.

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### Prepare for the Meeting

Some decisions need to be made prior to your meeting. You should meet with your Troop Committee to discuss and decide upon:

- Date, time and location for the caregiver meeting
- Incorporating girl programming into the experience, such as the cookie badges, financial literacy badges and the cookie activity pin.
- Troop proceeds and goals. Consider how many packages are needed to meet those goals.
- Determine troop cookie guidelines and deadlines, including:
  - Troop finance management plan
    - Set money collection dates throughout the sale
    - Whether your troop will accept credit cards and/or checks
    - Who will be responsible for bank deposits and keeping the deposit receipts
  - Troop inventory management
    - Review the initial order worksheet for caregivers.
    - May cookies be returned to the troop? If so, what's the deadline?
    - Who is able to pick up cookies for the troop/girls?
  - Troop Booth Plans
    - Consider the volunteer's time availability for booths knowing 2 adults must be present at each one.
    - Who will sign up for booths in eBudde?
    - Will we set up any troop scheduled booths? If so who will submit them for council approval?
- What ways do you need caregiver help? If you have previously collected Caregiver Involvement Forms refer to these as well.

Once these decisions have been made then...

- Reserve a meeting space.
- Invite all caregivers/guardians using your troop roster in the Volunteer Toolkit. Be sure to include the date, time and location, as well as whether or not their girl should attend.
- Plan some activities if the girls will be present. One co-leader could run activities with the girls while the other co-leader meets with the caregivers. Or recruit some older girls to work with the girls while co-leaders meet with caregivers.
- Create an agenda to keep the meeting on track and be sure you cover what you need to with the caregivers. You can use the information below to create your agenda.
- Prepare meeting materials, including the Family Guide and girl's sales packets.

## Hold the Meeting

- Welcome & Introductions
- Overview of the Cookie Program benefits to the troop
- Overview of the Cookie Program benefits to the girls
- Council Cookie Program standards, guidelines and basic cookie facts
- Girls' rewards, Dakota Dough, and goal setting. Be sure they know what Dakota Dough can be used for.
- Cookie Program Safety
- Important Dates
- Inventory and Money management and financial responsibility
- How caregivers can support their girl and the troop throughout the sale.
- Brainstorm Cookie Program and booth ideas
- Questions and Closing

## After the Meeting

Keep the lines of communication open! Be sure to send a follow up e-mail to all caregivers with what was discussed at the meeting and any follow up items needed. Be sure to include your contact information and preferred method of communication if they have questions for you. Send weekly communications to caregivers throughout the program to keep the lines of communication open. You should also be sure that caregivers know how and when to contact you with their questions or needs.