



**For Immediate Release**

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December is National 'Write a Business Plan' month. It's also 'Choose a Summer Camp' month. Honestly, I don't make this stuff up. And what a coincidence! Girl Scouting puts these two together this time of year, too, all wrapped into the world's best financial literacy and entrepreneurial training program, the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program. The piece about 'Write a Business Plan' month is rather obvious. That's the work girls and their troop sisters are starting this month.

A solid business plan helps anyone with a business-related goal:

1. focus their time and energy on activities that are most likely to achieve their goals
2. know how to allocate their resources (their time, and their parents time to drive/accompany them)
3. put a solid strategy in place to help achieve the team (troop) goals
4. track the results of their efforts and make mid-sale corrections if needed, and
5. adapt their plan for improved results next year

The second piece, Choose a Summer Camp month, is probably less obvious. Step one in the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program is for girls to look at all of the program opportunities available to them for the year, both individually and as a troop, and prioritize which they want to budget for. Then they look to the community to identify needs they can address. Next they do the math, calculating their total estimated costs - including the community service they intend to give. And finally, they build a business plan around the targeted budget amount that will be necessary to cover their expenses for fun and service to others.

Since the book of Summer Program opportunities is hot off the press just before the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program kicks off, it plays a major role in girls' personal goal-setting. This is one way to develop character, work ethic, financial literacy, and a sense of personal and team accomplishment in our youth. What greater motivation exists during childhood than having fun or finding new friends? Summer Camp offers it all in one.

Author Denis Watley once said "the reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them."

Any Girl Scout participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Sale Program, with Summer Camp as the gleam in her eye, knows her goal is achievable and can tell you with whom she plans to share the adventure. She already has it all laid out in her mind.

Ann Saris is VP of Brand and Marketing for Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Inc., serving 24,000 girls and 6,600 volunteers in 58 counties across Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

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