



# Friendly Cookies, Sinister Connection

**Planned Parenthood's influence  
on the Girl Scouts of America**

By Jim Sedlak

“E very year, millions of Americans anxiously wait for a Girl Scout to come to their door selling ‘America’s Best Cookies’—those irresistibly delicious Girl Scout cookies we all know and love. Caramel deLites with milk. Thin mints with ice cream... Any time is a good time for Girl Scout cookies.” Or so it was—until people began discovering that Girl Scout councils across the United States had ties with Planned Parenthood, the largest provider of abortions in the nation. But Girl Scout cookie ads aren’t advertising that to the public.

Why? Because it turns the stomach. At least that’s what mothers who don’t want Planned Parenthood corrupting their children think.

## Nothing new

In the mid-1980s, a group of Christian women took on Planned Parenthood in Dutchess County, New York. The women discovered that their local Girl Scout council had invited Planned Parenthood to speak to the scouts. The mothers, many of them Girl Scout troop leaders themselves, met with the council to request that it ward off Planned Parenthood. The council’s leaders, however, liked Planned Parenthood. The firm was here to stay. It was the mothers, in effect, who could get lost.

Dutchess County remained quiet until the following year. Then, in the middle of the cookie drive, the women went back to the council. Again, the result was the same. But this time, the ladies had a different response: “We want you to understand that we are now going back to the troops that we lead, and we’re telling our girls to stop selling cookies. We’re also going to call all the people who have ordered cookies from us and tell them that we can’t deliver their cookies this year, explaining to them why.”

“Give us 24 hours,” was the council’s reply. A day later, the council leaders handed the mothers a letter, which stated that

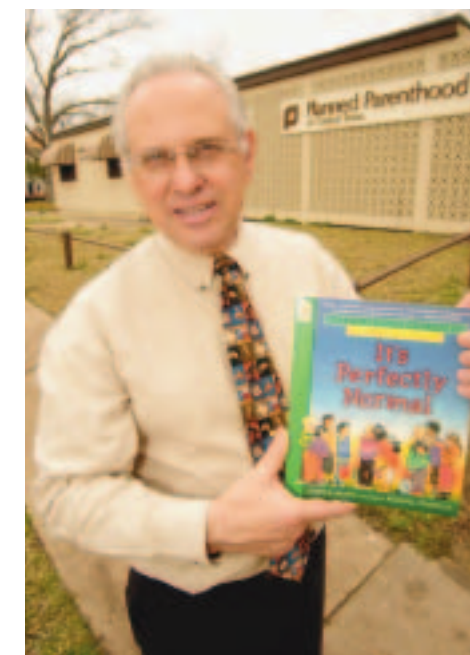
Planned Parenthood would never be invited back to talk to the Girl Scouts. The women had triumphed. Cookies, they learned, are more important than ideology.

## “Nobody’s Fool”

Almost twenty years later, Pro-Life Waco was catapulted into the spotlight after it brought Girl Scout cookies a whole new level of publicity. John Pisciotta, the group’s co-director, began exposing the connection between his local Girl Scouts council and Planned Parenthood of Central Texas’s annual “Nobody’s Fool” conference—a half-day sex-ed seminar for children grades five to nine.

For nine years, Pro-Life Waco had tried to rally the community to oppose the conference. But because Planned Parenthood doesn’t inform parents about the contents of the seminar, or allow anyone except children to attend the event, convincing the community that Planned Parenthood was public enemy #1 proved difficult.

In 2003, however, Planned Parenthood announced in a “Nobody’s Fool” flyer that every child in seventh through ninth grade would go home with a free copy of the book, *It’s Perfectly Normal*, and fifth and sixth graders



*Dr. John Pisciotta holds the sexually explicit book Planned Parenthood gave to children at its conference.*

would be given a copy of *It’s so Amazing*. Both of these works were written by Robie H. Harris. The former, which is essentially a form of pornography, includes directions on how to perform sexual acts and masturbation.

Because of this, the Bluebonnet Girl Scout council, a sponsor of “Nobody’s Fool,” was urged by Pro-Life Waco to quit supporting the conference, but the council continued to ignore these supplications. A year later, though, Pro-Life Waco’s exhortations would not be so easy to refuse.

*Three of the parents who stood up to the Girl Scouts: Donna Coody, Lisa Aguilar and Cynthia Baylor.*



## 60 seconds

In 2004, when the Bluebonnets started their cookie drive, Pro-Life Waco launched two 60-second radio spots on a local Christian radio station. They notified the public of the contents of *It’s Perfectly Normal*, and stated that the Bluebonnet council had honored the head of Planned Parenthood in Waco (an abortion facility) with a Distinguished Woman award. Each radio spot invited listeners to oppose Planned Parenthood and

## Is Planned Parenthood infecting your scout troop?

STATE	CITY	SCOUT COUNCIL
California	San Diego	Girl Scouts, San Diego-Imperial Council, Inc
	San Jose	Girl Scouts of Santa Clara County
Connecticut	Hartford	Connecticut Valley Girl Scout Council, Inc.
	North Haven	Girl Scouts, Connecticut Trails Council, Inc
Massachusetts	Boston	Patriots' Trail Girl Scout Council, Inc
Michigan	Ann Arbor	Girl Scouts of The Huron Valley Council
Minnesota	Saint Paul	Girl Scout Council of St Croix Valley
	Waite Park	Land of Lakes Girl Scout Council
Missouri	Kansas City	Girl Scouts of Mid-Continent Council, Inc
Nebraska	Omaha	Girl Scouts - Great Plains Council
Nevada	Las Vegas	Girl Scouts of Frontier Council, Inc
	Reno	Girl Scouts of The Sierra Nevada
New Hampshire	Manchester	Girl Scouts of Swift Water Council
New Mexico	Albuquerque	Girl Scouts of Chaparral Council, Inc
New York	Phelps	Girl Scouts-Seven Lakes Council, Inc
	Plattsburgh	Girl Scouts of The North Country, Inc
	Queensbury	Girl Scouts of The Adirondack Council, Inc
Oregon	Eugene	Girl Scouts of Western Rivers Council, Inc
	Medford	Winema Girl Scout Council, Inc
Pennsylvania	Allentown	Girl Scouts - Great Valley Council, Inc
	Pittsburgh	Girl Scouts - Trillium Council
	Scranton	Girl Scouts, Scranton Pocono Council
	Wilkes Barre	Penn's Woods Girl Scout Council
	York	Penn Laurel Girl Scout Council, Inc
Texas	Amarillo	Girl Scouts-Texas Plains Council

demand the Bluebonnets stop sponsoring "Nobody's Fool." Pro-Life Waco also gave its contact information so that listeners could acquire more details on the controversial books.

Parents called, took a look at the books and were outraged. Mothers began to pull their children out of the program, and two of the Girl Scout troops in the area shut down almost immediately. A massive e-mail campaign mounted, with e-mails going to the Bluebonnet Council, demanding that it withdraw its support.

The council supported the program at first. But as the pressure increased, the council backed

down. In just a little over two weeks after the ads first ran, the council met with its board of directors and announced that the Bluebonnets would cease to endorse the "Nobody's Fool" program and refrain from any involvement with Planned Parenthood.

### A problem nationwide

NBC News invited John Pisciotta to the *Today Show* to discuss events in Waco. Kathy Cloninger, executive director of Girl Scouts of the USA, was also invited. After John mentioned that the Bluebonnet council stopped its association with Planned Parenthood, Kathy

Cloninger responded by saying that the Bluebonnets had made an independent decision. Girl Scout councils across the country, she asserted, partner with numerous community groups, including Planned Parenthood. These groups would be free to maintain their relationships.

Immediately after the show, parents started calling STOPP headquarters to find out if their council supports Planned Parenthood. Prompted by this, we launched an investigation of the nation's 315 Girl Scout councils.

Few councils wanted to answer our inquiries. After several attempts to find out why, we obtained some answers. A local Girl Scout CEO said that she had been instructed not to answer any of our questions. Apparently, the Girl Scouts national office had given the order, though numerous councils did answer us. In the end, STOPP was able to classify a total of 116 of 315 Girl Scout councils. Of the 116, 22% had a relationship of one kind or another with Planned Parenthood.

Please be sure to research all organizations with whom your children are involved.

STOPP has created a website, [www.all.org/stopp/scouts](http://www.all.org/stopp/scouts), to present to the public the results of its investigation of the Girl Scouts association with Planned Parenthood. The site identifies the response of each council to STOPP. If you discover new information concerning whether or not Planned Parenthood is involved with your local Girl Scouts council, please contact STOPP to let us know. The fight to take back the streets of America from Planned Parenthood rests with all of us.

Jim Sedlak is the executive director of STOPP International and vice-president of American Life League.