

GIRLS INCORPORATED® OF JACKSONVILLE

Overarching Vision:

Empowered girls and an equitable society.

National Organizational Vision:

To be recognized as the premiere nationwide organization that helps all girls to realize their full potential and exercise their rights.

National Organizational Mission:

To inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold.SM

Girls Incorporated® of Jacksonville Mission:

Empowering girls to realize their full potential through gender specific programming that inspires all girls to be strong, smart and bold.SM

The Volunteer

The Commitment

The decision to volunteer must come from a genuine desire to offer friendship and support to a girl aged 5-18. You must be willing to make a commitment to the girls, the Agency and to the programs you are involved in.

Process of becoming a volunteer

Every potential volunteer is screened by Girls Incorporated of Jacksonville. The screening process includes:

- an application form
- attendance at Girls Inc. training, if offered
- an interview with a staff member at the office
- Background screening/Clearance

Confidentiality

As a volunteer you may be privy to confidential information about our members and/or their families. The sharing of information concerning a member should occur only with a Program Coordinator. Under no circumstances should this information be discussed with anyone except persons fully authorized by staff. You should never discuss our members in public. Doing so is a violation of the agency's policy on confidentiality and more importantly of our members' privacy.

Your Role as a Volunteer

As a volunteer you are a role model for a younger member. Many of her impressions will be drawn from the way in which you act and react.

Things to Remember:

- be a friend
- be yourself
- be honest
- be understanding and patient
- be reliable and responsible
- provide support
- be a facilitator of simple life experiences
- show respect
- be open and flexible

Responsibilities of a Volunteer

As a volunteer you are accountable to all members and the Agency.

Responsibilities to members:

- accept the girls for who they are
- allow them to express their thoughts and feelings
- help them to evaluate alternatives and make their own decisions
- show sincerity and commitment
- show them that friendship is unconditional
- help girls to feel like they are a part of the organization by attending agency events/activities
- speak with Volunteer Coordinator or Site Director if you have any questions or concerns

Responsibilities to the agency:

- participate in the orientation process
- participate in organized discussion groups and educational programs
- read Newsletters to keep track of upcoming agency events/activities
- maintain a professional attitude when representing our Agency
- ask questions when you are not sure or do not understand
- notify the agency of change of address, phone numbers, illness or other related information that may affect contact with the agency
- have adequate automobile insurance (you may have to drive a member at some time)
- notify Volunteer Coordinator if your intent is to leave the agency

A volunteer member is not responsible for:

- solving girls' life problems
- solving her family's problems
- babysitting
- spying on girls for parents/guardians, agencies or anyone else
- giving final authority on what is right or wrong
- being a social worker

Rights of a Volunteer

As a volunteer you have the right to:

- appropriate training
- select programs you want
- appropriate information to help you assist our members
- direction and assistance in coping with concerns or problems
- have your effect as a volunteer evaluated
- be accepted as an integral part of the organization

- information on organized activities, meetings, agendas, policies and guidelines

Your expectations:

Time is always needed to establish friendships and relationships. Do healthy things. Be friendly, understanding and caring. Always remember to have fun!

THERE IS A HEAVEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

Many of us will be shocked to find, when the day of judgement nears,
There's a special place in heaven set aside for volunteers.

Furnished with big recliners, satin couches and footstools,
Where there's no committee chairman no group leaders and no car pools.

No eager team that needs a coach and no bake sales to hold,
There will be nothing to staple and nothing to fold

Telephone lists will be outlawed but a finger snap will bring,
Cool Drinks and gourmet meals as well as treats fit for a queen and king

Who'll serve these privileged few and work for all they're worth?
Why...all those who reaped the benefits and not once volunteered on earth!

Author Unknown

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication is a very important factor when dealing with friendships. In most cases, communication is the main difficulty encountered in a relationship with a younger member. Establishing sound communication is a challenge. It may be easier for you to do most of the talking, even to 'preach', but girls have heard plenty of this before. What she probably has not experienced is an adult who will hear her out and really listen to what she has to say. Listening is not just hearing the words but really understanding them. Watch her body gestures and listen for influx in tone of voice. Remember children tend to complicate their communication because they have a harder time relating to adults and their thought process may take some time to form. It takes time and patience to hear what the child is saying.

Verbal

- use simple language
- express feelings openly
- show the other person that you are listening, e.g. "Yes, I see" or "how did that make you feel" or repeat exactly what they have said. They will know what you heard and that you are interested

Nonverbal

- relay messages through body gestures and facial expressions
- stay in the other persons comfort zone, do not crowd them but do not leave their space completely
- maintain eye contact
- use touch as long as the member is comfortable with it

Listening

- stop talking and concentrate on what the person is saying
- ask for clarification when needed
- avoid distractions while listening
- be relaxed
- sometimes they are really talking it out for themselves, let them make decisions
- do not offer advice, reflect the question back
- restate what you have heard to make sure that you are really hearing the speaker

Comments on Communication

"When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice, you have not done what I asked."

"Listen! All I asked was that you listen, not talk or do. Just hear me!"

"When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness."

THE GIRLS' BILL OF RIGHTS

I have the right...

to be myself and to resist gender stereotypes;

to express myself with originality and enthusiasm;

to take risks, to strive freely, and to take pride in success;

to accept and appreciate my body;

to have confidence in myself and to be safe in the world;

to prepare for interesting work and economic independence.



OUR MEMBERS

Who is a member?

A member:

- is between the ages of 5 and 18 years
- is a girl who could benefit from friendships, positive role modeling and programs
- may be from a large family
- may be from a single parent home
- may be shy and withdrawn
- may be a girl who has not had the opportunities of other girls her age
- may be a girl who is experiencing difficulties in school or at home

Our members are individuals and need to be treated as special people with unique qualities.

A member may:

- feel that you are another parent or authority figure
- think that you are being paid for the time spent with her

Our members are special!

Being a volunteer means that you are prepared to accept girls as they are including their strengths and weaknesses, their congenial and uncongenial qualities, their positive and negative feelings, their constructive and destructive attitudes, their endearing and annoying behaviours while keeping in mind their dignity and worth as individuals.

Referral Process:

Parent(s), guardian, DCPS, Social Service Agencies, Doctors or friends may refer girls.

Referrals are made by contacting the Girls Incorporated office in your community. An application is completed which includes information on the prospective member. It also identifies which programs girls are interested in attending.

Child Development

Note that this model is a basic outline and that every child is different and has her own development pace.

Ages 5 – 8

- very active and have gained control over their bodies
- moving towards self direction and control
- become more selective in choosing friends
- large muscle control superior to fine motor coordination
- begin to become sensitive to others feelings
- go through phases of self reflection and seriousness with more thinking than talking
- eager to please, like to help, enjoy responsibility and want to do well
- want to know what things are for and what to do with them

Ages 9 – 11

- quarrels become less frequent
- sensitive to criticism and ridicule
- as they approach puberty, increased interest and concern about sex
- excellent fine and gross motor skills
- peer group powerful and a source of behaviour standards
- exercise own autonomy
- need understanding, but also firmness
- emotions tend to be extreme, highs and lows

Ages 12 – 14

- very concerned about their physical appearance (being too fat, too thin, too tall etc.)
- defy adult authority
- greatly concerned with what others think of them
- moods change dramatically
- certain amount of awkwardness exists; probably due to sudden growth and self consciousness
- may exhibit *acting-out* behaviour against adult rules

Ages 15 - 18

- periods of storm and stress emotionally
- peer group very powerful, reaches it's height of influence
- independence very important
- a better understanding of them self

Remember:

Real friendship means,

- giving and taking
- accepting girls as they are not as you expect them to be
- trusting them as we expect to be trusted
- being concerned about them as we expect others to be concerned about us

Getting to Know You

Sometimes it is hard to find something to talk about when you meet a person for the first time. Try using some of the following to break the ice.

1. What is your favorite possession/toy?
2. What is the most embarrassing thing that you have ever done?
3. What kind of movies do you like? What is your favorite movie?
4. What is your best friend like?
5. If you could change your name what would you change it to?
6. Name the nicest thing that you have ever done for someone.
7. What is the nicest thing that someone has done for you?
8. What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you or your family?
9. Describe the perfect day for you?
10. What is your nickname? How did you get it?
11. If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?
12. What is your favorite season?
13. If you could be any animal, what would you be?
14. What is the one thing in the world that you would like to be able to do?
15. Do you have a lucky charm?
16. What chores around the house do you hate/like the most?
17. What do you want to be when you grow up?
18. Do you like school?
19. What are you afraid of more than anything?
20. Name something that you wish did not exist.

Members' Behaviors

Positive Reinforcement

Children are regularly reprimanded for unacceptable behaviour but all too often are not praised when they do something acceptable. Many children continue to exhibit negative behaviour because they think it is the only way they can receive any attention.

Compliment your friend whenever you can. Refined skills, positive behaviour and accomplishments deserve regular recognition.

Be Consistent

Present yourself clearly, firmly and simply. Always mean what you say and never make a promise or proposal unless you have thought it through first. Remember that things can and do go wrong, broken promises are hard to deal with. Be serious about the limits you set or the promises you make. Girls will test you to see if you do in fact follow through consistently.

Give Attention and Affection

Some girls may not have experienced sustained attention and affection. She may not know how to handle it. She might absorb it hungrily without giving it in return or she might not respond at all.

Do not be afraid to let your feelings show, but do not be disappointed if you do not receive explicit thanks or reciprocal feelings from her. If she shows appreciation let her know how much this means to you. Show her that adults need encouragement as well.

Respect Privacy

Be cautious about asking probing, personal questions, especially early in the relationship. Girls may respond with resentment until such time as the relationship can support discussion of personal issues.



APPENDIX A

Nutrition

Some children think a treat consists of a glass of pop in one hand and a bag of chips in the other. They are often unaware of the importance of nutrition and usually equate what is good for them with foods they do not like.

However, with a bit of imagination, nutritious food can be fun. You can add to a girl's knowledge of good eating habits through your own example. Nutrition in practice is easy; it consists of the three basic principles of variety, moderation and energy balance. While sharing a meal or a snack, you should remember the guidelines outlined in Canada's Food Guide.

Snacking is Okay

Snacking is a way of life. In today's busy life style we may *grab a bite, eat on the run or take a break*. Between meal snacking is quite acceptable when good snack foods are selected. Sensible snacking means choosing foods which help our bodies and teeth stay strong and healthy.

Snack Ideas

- Celery stuffed with cream cheese/peanut butter.
- Pizza slices; spread sauce, cheese and whatever you like on a pita. Bake in oven until cheese melts.
- Cut up fruit. Dip in plain or flavoured yogurt.
- Veggie kabobs. Marinate in dressing, skewer and place under broiler for 10 minutes.
- Roll breadsticks in peanut butter and then roll in sesame seeds.
- Scoop seeds out of half cantaloupe. Fill with cottage cheese. Serve.

APPENDIX B

Health

FITNESS

Physical fitness is a major source of happiness and self esteem. Encouraging fitness is a good way to bolster positive self esteem. Exercise is also a good outlet for her frustrations. Keep fit by walking, swimming, jogging, biking or skating. These are healthy, no cost activities to share.

BODY IMAGE

Body image is the mental picture one has of oneself. It can be shaped both positively and negatively through the media, major life event, such as puberty; actual occurrences to the body, such as abuse or an accident; and the judgements and feedback received from significant others.

Unhealthy body image and eating disorders are relevant issues for today's youth. In Canada, approximately 4% of adolescent and young adult women have an eating disorder, 80%-90% of females dislike their bodies and 90% of those with an eating disorder are female. Comments to members about her weight, body shape and size or eating habits should be avoided as they can be detrimental to her body image.

It is important to stress healthy nutrition and exercise.

SELF- ESTEEM

Self-esteem is the value we place on ourselves and the feeling we have about all the things we perceive we are.

Self esteem is...

- Love and acceptance
- Feeling special
- Security and safety
- A sense of belonging
- Trust
- Respect

APPENDIX C

Abuse

WHAT TO SAY AND DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

1. ' I BELIEVE YOU '

Believe the child. A child who has not been abused cannot describe it. Research indicates that it is rare for a child to lie about sexual abuse.
2. ' I'M SORRY THAT HAPPENED TO YOU '

If a child discloses sexually abused, try to remain calm. Listen carefully without interruptions. Do your best to avoid expressing shock, anger, or blame. The child may misinterpret this to mean that you are angry with her. It's best to express how sorry you are that this has happened to them.
3. ' IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT '

Reassure the child that she is not responsible for what has happened to them. She may feel that the abuse was caused by something she has done. Assure her it is the abuser who has behaved inappropriately, has a serious problem and needs help.
4. ' I'M GLAD YOU TOLD ME '

Tell the child how brave she is for telling you about the incident(s). Assure the child of protection from further abuse and that you will help to keep her safe.
5. ' TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO GET SOME HELP '

Report the incident immediately to the Children's Aid Society or police. Call your Program Coordinator, if the office is closed, leave a message in the General Mailbox. A medical exam may be needed to check for injuries or to reassure the child that her body is all right. If possible, stay with the child until this is done.

IF YOU SUSPECT THAT A CHILD YOU KNOW HAS BEEN ABUSED:

- Discuss your concerns with your Volunteer Coordinator
- Take the child to a quiet and safe place and ask her what's bothering her. You may want to ask if anyone has been touching her or whether she has been told to keep special secrets about inappropriate touch.
- Call the police

What is Abuse?

NEGLECT PHYSICAL ABUSE SEXUAL ABUSE EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Neglect	The basic emotional and physical needs of the child are not being met on a continuous basis. Neglect is not providing the proper food, clothing, housing, supervision, safe surroundings, personal health care, education, medical and emotional needs.
	Development delays develop in children that grow up with neglect. Sometimes the damage is permanent.
Be aware	Cultural differences, poverty versus indifference.
Physical	Includes anything a person does that results in physical harm towards another person. Physical Abuse is bruising, leaving marks, shaking, biting, fractures of limbs, hitting with objects and female genital mutilation.
	Physical Abuse may result in minor injuries such as bruising, but can also lead to death.
Be aware	Cultural issues, intentionality.
Sexual	Occurs when power is used by a person over another person involving a sexual act. Sexual abuse is unwanted fondling, inappropriate touching, forced oral sex, forced penetration (with fingers, objects or penis), exposing oneself to others and involving children in pornography.
	The Majority of sex offenders are known to their victims.
Be aware	Family dynamics e.g. Divorce
Emotional	Consists of poor interaction between people. Emotional abuse is rejection, criticism, insults, humiliation, isolation, terrorizing, corruption, withdrawing emotion and witnessing violence against loved ones.
	68% of children witness violence, 70% of young offenders have witnessed violence in their homes while growing up.
Be aware	Children that witness violence against a loved one can suffer emotional damage.

Indicators of Child Abuse

Indicators are signs or clues that may mean that there has been abuse. Indicators do not prove that there has been abuse. They are clues that could indicate someone is in trouble. Indicators may be seen in physical health or behaviour. Adults who abuse children may show certain behaviours and attitudes that can worry others.

Possible Indicators of Neglect

Physical Indicators in Children	Behavioural Indicators in Children	Behaviours Observed in Adults Who Neglect Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not dressed properly for the weather • Dirty or unwashed • Always hungry • Lack of medical and dental care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not show skills as expected • Appears to have little energy • Does not play with toys or notice people • May be very demanding of affection or attention from others • Older children may steal food, drink alcohol or take drugs, break the law • Has a lot of adult responsibility at home • Discloses neglect e.g. Says there is no one at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not supervise the child properly e.g. leaves child alone in a dangerous place • May indicate that the child is hard to care for, describes the child as demanding • Is not very interested in the child's life

Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse

Physical Indicators in Children	Behavioural Indicators in Children	Behaviours Observed in Adults Who Abuse Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see diagram for questionable injuries • bruises in the shape of objects e.g. spoon, belt • wears clothes to cover up injury, even in warm weather • patches of hair missing • breathing causes pain • difficulty raising arms • human bite marks • cuts and scrapes that do not usually happen when playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refuses or is afraid to talk about injuries • does not want to be touched • is afraid to go home, runs away • tries to hurt herself e.g. tries to cut themselves, suicide • discloses abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not tell the same story as the child about how the injury happened • may say that the child seems to have a lot of accidents • severely punishes the child • cannot control anger and frustration • does not show love towards the child • does not go to the doctor right away to have injury checked

Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse

Physical Indicators in Children	Behavioural Indicators in Children	Behaviours Observed in Adults Who Abuse Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lot of itching or pain in the throat, genital or anal area • a smell or discharge from the genital area • underwear that is bloody • pain when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - trying to go to the bathroom - sitting down - walking - swallowing • injuries to breast or genital area • pregnancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowing more about sex than expected • details of sex in child's drawings/writing • fears parent, friend or relative for no clear reason • sexual actions with other children or adults that are not appropriate • does not trust others • changes in personality that do not make sense • tries to hurt oneself e.g. eating disorders, substance abuse, disorders and suicide • discloses abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be very protective of the child • clings to the child for comfort • is often alone with the child • may be jealous of the child's relationships with others • dislikes the child being alone with friends • talk about the child being 'sexy' • touches the child in a sexual way • may use alcohol/drugs to feel freer to sexually abuse

Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse

Physical Indicators in Children	Behavioural Indicators in Children	Behaviours Observed in Adults Who Abuse Children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child does not develop as expected • wets or dirties pants • is not given clothes, food and care as good as what other children receive • may have unusual appearance e.g. strange haircuts, dress • often complains of nausea, headaches, stomach aches without any obvious reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is unhappy, stressed out, withdrawn, aggressive or angry for long periods of time • goes back to behaving like a child • tries to hard to be good and to get adults approval • tries really hard to get attention • tries to hurt oneself • criticizes oneself a lot • does not participate because of fear of failing • runs away • has a lot of adult responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not touch or speak to the child with love • talks about the child as being the cause for problems and things not going well • compares child to someone they do not like • lets the child be involved in activities that break the law • uses the child to make money • lets the child see sex and violence on T.V. • forces the child to watch someone special being hurt

Failure to Report

If a person does not report a suspicion of abuse, then this person can be charged and fine.

**Girls Inc. of Jacksonville
Staff and Volunteer/Intern Summer Dress Code Requirements**

Hair shall be clean, well combed and presentable. Extreme hair styles and colors will not be acceptable.

Facial piercings are not allowed, a tiny visible stud is permitted. Visible tattoos must be appropriate and tasteful without explicit content. Necklaces, bracelets, anklets, earrings and rings are acceptable and welcome!

Skirts, dresses, shorts, baggies and culottes should be no shorter than four inches (4") above the top of the knee. Bottoms shorter than four inches (4") above the knee top with leggings or tights are not acceptable.

Midriff or "cut-out" dresses and "cut-out" tops may not be worn. Strapless shirts, low-rise cut necklines, scoop neck or deep v-necks, halter tops and spaghetti straps are not allowed. Tank tops are allowed if thick strapped and provide full-coverage.

Open-toed shoes are allowed, but flip flops are not acceptable. Sneakers, flats, decorative/fashion sandals or heels are allowed.

Bathing suits must be tasteful and not show any stomach. Side-tie bottoms are unacceptable!

***Dressing accordingly for themed field trips is encouraged. Please abide by the dress code requirements at all times to ensure proper role model and leadership behaviors for our girls.**