# GIRLS INCORPORATED® OF FRANKLIN

**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 Franklin Mission:**

Girls Incorporated of Franklin is designed to effectively meet the needs of girls in our community; to overcome the effects of discrimination and to develop a capacity to become self-sufficient, responsible members of their community, while focusing attention on their special needs.

# 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 Franklin. The screening process includes:

* an application form
* signing an oath of confidentiality
* a limited criminal history check

### Confidentiality

All volunteers will be required to sign an oath of 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 Director. 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.

**Use discretion when talking about one of our members,**

* in training/development sessions, use her first name only
* do not reveal identifying information about her family

**Confidentiality is waived only when there are specific situations that warrant it,**

* Indications that a member is at risk of harming herself, harming someone else or of being harmed. In these situations immediately contact your Program Director, Assistant Director and/or the Executive Director
* Any “secret” about child abuse. A Member Volunteer is bound to report such a disclosure; therefore you cannot keep this a secret. ***Do not make promises that you cannot keep!***
* If you receive a subpoena to court

#### 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
* HAVE FUN!!

## 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!

You will be asked to keep a log sheet of the activities/tasks you were involved with, along with a running total number of volunteer hours.

You will also be required to fill out a Weekly Check-In form with the Program Director. This will help you assess the effectiveness of the activities you lead, as well as keeping the Program Director aware of any difficulties or concerns you may be having.

Before your volunteer experience is over we would also like for you to fill out a Volunteer Outake form. This will again, let you assess your volunteer experience with us, and inform us of the positive aspects of your time here as well as giving any suggestions or comments.

#### 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
* speak with your Director or Assistant 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
* 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

### Principal Responsibilities of a Volunteer on a daily basis

* greet members as they arrive off of the school bus
* sign members into the center
* set up/work snack bar
* monitor big room activities, outside activities, in general, know where the girls are
* plan and/or conduct projects or activities
* be aware of arriving parents, introduce yourself and help him/ her find their daughter. If you do not know the parent ask a staff member to please identify them.
* file forms, make copies, assemble packets, and other clerical work as assigned.
* cleaning duties as assigned
* interact with the girls as much as possible!

**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

 **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 also 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.

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**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.

**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 to fat, too thin, to 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 its 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.

***Ideas for Activities***

**Some things to think about while planning activities.**

*FUN* **-** aim for cooperative rather than competitive activities

*GOALS* **-** consider the needs of our member while planning activities

 e.g. gaining self esteem

*EDUCATIONAL* **-** encourage the development of time, money and life skills

 management

*SOCIAL* **-** develop and build social skills

*PHYSICAL* **-** promote healthy and productive life style choices

 - show that exercise is an appropriate way of venting emotions

*EMOTIONAL* **-** encourage feelings of accomplishment

*EXPOSURE* **-** encourage an interest/respect in the community

*LEADERSHIP***-** be a motivator, be energetic and be innovative



**Sexual Abuse**

**REPORTING:** All incidences of suspected or known child abuse will be immediately reported, by phone or in person, to the police department. If you are not sure you may call Child and Family Services and ask questions. You do not have to identify yourself if you are looking for information only.

**SUPPORT:** All persons, including staff and Board Members will make every effort to support and assist persons in their actions to prevent, or report suspected Child Abuse.

**DISMISSAL:** Physical, sexual, and psychological abuse or neglect perpetrated by any staff or volunteers of Girls Incorporated, will not be tolerated and is grounds for termination. This includes; slapping, hitting, verbal abuse, threatening, or any other form of child abuse.

**RECORDING:** All incidences of suspected or known child abuse will be documented by staff at Girls Incorporated, and kept in the office in a

 locked filing cabinet. This material will be confidential and available

 only to the Office of Family and Children or appropriate authority.

**What to Report:**

As of January 2000 it is now the legal responsibility of all people to report abuse.

When making a report to the police department, you should include as much of the following information as you can.

1. Your name, job title, and description of work capacity. (Volunteer)
2. Name, address, and phone number of family.
3. Names of mother, father, and/or other adults in the home.
4. Name and age of abused child.
5. Name of child’s school.
6. Names and ages of siblings.
7. Your sense of whether siblings are at risk.
8. Particulars of the incident:
* when and where did it take place
* what were the circumstances
* who is the abuser
* how did you become aware of the situation
* description of the injuries (location, size, colouring)
* affective response and behaviour of the child (shy, fearful, defensive)

HOW YOU REACT FROM THE FIRST MOMENT YOU LEARN A CHILD HAS BEEN SEXUALLY ABUSED, MAY BE CRUCIAL TO HER FUTURE MENTAL HEALTH.

**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.

1. 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.

1. 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.

1. 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.

1. TOGETHER WE ARE GOING TO GET SOME HELP

Report the incident immediately to the Office of Family and Children 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 Program Coordinator
* 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 behavior. 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  |
| * Not dressed properly for the weather
* Dirty or unwashed
* Always hungry
* Lack of medical and dental care
 | * 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
 | * 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 |
| * 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
 | * 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
 | * 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 |
| * 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:

trying to go to the bathroomsitting downwalkingswallowing* injuries to breast or genital area
* pregnancy
 | * 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
 | * 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  |
| * 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
 | * 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
 | * 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
 |

**Do’s and Don’ts When There is a Disclosure**

If you suspect that a child may have been abused or is at risk for abuse, it is not your job to try to prove your suspicions. By saying or doing the wrong things, the investigation may be ruined (contaminated) and may put the child at further risk. If you suspect a child is being or has been abused or if a child discloses abuse, you must report this information to the Office of Family and Children or police. The investigation will be done by people who are experts.

If you have seen or heard something that makes you suspect child abuse, remember to:

**Control your emotions**

* try to be calm and relaxed
* do not look shocked, disgusted or say mean things about who you think may have abused the child
* if you feel that you cannot control your feelings, call your Program Coordinator to talk

**Offer comfort**

Support children by letting them know that:

* they were very brave to tell
* that you are glad they are telling you about this
* they are not alone – this happens to other children too
* that you care about and support them

**Do not say things like:**

* How can you say those things about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?
* Liar
* That horrible man has ruined you forever
* How could you let him do those things to you?
* Why didn’t you tell me this before?

Children may “take back” what they have said (recant). These children continue to need your caring and support. Accept the words that a child uses (including slang words) to describe what happened. Some children do not know the right words for body parts or sexual behaviours. Do not correct them or change the words the child uses – **it is very important for the investigation that the child’s words are used when telling what happened.** Do not use words that may frighten the child, for example, rape, incest, child abuse or jail.

**Ask Questions That Let the Person Tell the Story in Her Own Words**

* Can you tell me what happened?
* What happened next?
* How did you get that bruise?

**Do not:**

* ask questions that suggest what happened or who did it. E.g. “Did you get that bruise because mommy hit you?”
* question what the child tells you. E.g. “Are you sure it was Uncle Ted?”
* interrupt or add your own words when the child stops talking
* ask the child “Why?” something may have happened. They may feel that you are blaming them
* try to change the mind of the child who has recanted her story
* keep on asking questions because you want to try to prove child abuse

**Respect the Person Who Discloses**

* if a child is telling; listen
* if a child is quiet, do not make her talk
* do not use force to undress a child to see injuries
* do not show off the child’s injuries to others
* do not tell the child to keep your discussions secret

**Failure to Report**

If a person does not report a suspicion of abuse, then this person can be charged and fined up to $1,000.00. This shows that a child’s safety is the most important thing.

**Oath of Confidentiality**

**For Volunteers**

# Protection of Confidential Information

No information shall be released regarding the operations or management of Girls Incorporated of Franklin, except by the Executive Director (or designee). No information shall be released regarding agency clients except as delineated in the Child Abuse Disclosure portion of the Volunteer Handbook.

I have read the above statement and Volunteer Handbook and will comply with Girls Incorporated of Franklin’s policy on confidentiality. Further, I will comply with all other policies of Girls Incorporated of Franklin.

 Signature of Volunteer Date

 Signature of Supervisor Date