

Guider
Resources



Girl 
EMPOWER
challenge



Girl Guides
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Empower Others. Empower Yourself.
Girl Empowerment.

Girl EmPower Challenge: Guider Resources

Produced September 2009 in partnership with the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) (www.metrac.org).

Some material adapted from *RePlay: Positive Video Game Handbook for Educators* (METRAC, February 2007), *Right to Play* information about children with disabilities (2008), and *Building Healthy Relationships: 10 Tips for Adult Mentors* (Government of Ontario).

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Girl EmPower Challenge

About Girl EmPower

The Girl EmPower Challenge teaches girls about healthy, equal, and non-violent relationships. It is designed to help diverse girls understand the signs of unhealthy relationships, know what healthy relationships are, challenge forms of violence and oppression that are commonly experienced by girls and women, and be empowered to create healthy, equal relationships in their own lives.

In 2008, Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada (GGC) received funding from the Government of Ontario to implement the Girl EmPower Project in partnership with the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). Working directly with hundreds of GGC girl Members and Guiders in Ontario, a Girl EmPower Challenge with training for adult Members and activities and resources for girls has been developed in English and French. The Girl EmPower Challenge toolkit includes:

- A comprehensive training guide for facilitators and Guider Resources for adult Members
- Activities and resources for Brownies, Guides, and Pathfinders
- A Girl EmPower Crest, designed by GGC girls themselves, which girls receive after successfully participating in the Girl EmPower Challenge activities.

Goals of Girl EmPower

1. To build a strong sense of self-worth, respect, rights and responsibilities amongst diverse girls between the ages of eight and 14 who are in Brownies, Guides, and Pathfinders.
2. To provide girl Members with the tools and space they need to create healthy equal, non-violent relationships in their own lives.
3. To provide adult Members with the skills they need to effectively engage with and empower Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders, as well as facilitate activities that promote healthy, equal, and non-violent relationships.



Why is the Girl EmPower project necessary?

Violence against women and girls is an all-too-common reality in Canada. Statistics demonstrate that girls and boys are likely to learn unhealthy ways of interacting from a young age, which can lead to the continuation of the cycle of violence in their adult lives. By proactively engaging girls in learning about healthy relationships and empowerment, the cycle of violence can be broken.

The Girl EmPower Project also addresses the identified needs of GGC volunteers. In a recent training needs analysis, Guiders indicated that they wanted additional training in facilitating girl programming, addressing teen pressures and managing challenging issues within their Units. The facilitator's guide focuses on giving Guiders and Trainers the tools to do effective group facilitation and develop their youth engagement skills. Guiders also learn about common pressures and barriers that different girls face in their homes, schools, communities, and relationships. Such information will better equip them to handle challenging issues as they come up within the context of GGC activities.

What is empowerment?

Empowerment is the right to make your own choices and the ability to act on them. It includes how entire communities work together and share knowledge, tools and techniques to change and improve the quality of their own lives and societies. Through empowerment, individuals and communities manage, contribute to, and make positive change in their lives and environments.

What do you think it means for girls to be empowered and feel empowered?

Violence Against Girls and Women

Violence against girls and women (often referred to as gender-based violence) is a serious problem in Canada. Statistics show that this form of violence usually happens between people who know each other and is often done by men and boys against women and girls.

Gender-based violence happens because women and girls don't always get the respect and rights they deserve in our society. It's a result of sexism (mistreatment of, power over, and discrimination against women and girls because of their gender), both in society and between individuals. Violence against women and girls comes in many different forms:

- Emotional violence: someone criticizing, insulting or making fun of you; making

you feel worthless; treating you badly; bullying, ignoring, harassing or stalking you; threatening to tell your secrets; manipulating you to get what they want.

- Physical violence: someone hitting, pushing, kicking, pulling hair or biting; holding you down; not taking care of someone when they depend on others; forcing you to do drugs or drink; threatening to hurt your kids (if this happens, the law says you must contact your local children's aid society); threatening to hurt your service animal (e.g., seeing-eye dog).
- Sexual violence: any unwanted sexual activity, such as forced kissing, touching, or rape; someone threatening or manipulating you to make you do sexual things; incest (sexual abuse of children in families); forcing you to watch something sexual.
- Financial abuse: someone stopping you from getting money so you'll be dependent on them; not letting you get a job; harassing you at work; forcing you to miss work; taking your money away; forcing you to pay all the bills.
- Spiritual abuse: disrespecting your beliefs or religion; stopping you from practicing your beliefs; making you eat or do things that aren't a part of your beliefs; forcing you to take on somebody else's beliefs.
- Verbal abuse: abusive behaviour involving the use of language to hurt, control, disrespect, mock, deride and devalue. It can happen when people are speaking to each other as well when people are writing to each other (e.g. emails, text messages, Twitter, Facebook messages, letters).
- Psychological abuse: constant criticism, verbal abuse, insults, humiliation in public or private, manipulation, lies, and ridicule that undermines a person's self-esteem and positive view of herself or himself. Psychological abuse affects one's mental state of well-being. Can include making someone feel like they are incompetent, crazy, stupid, or abnormal and "messing with" someone's mind to control or hurt them.

How Common is Violence Against Women and Girls?

One-half of Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16 and four out of ten Canadian women will experience sexual assault in their lifetimes (Statistics Canada, 1993; Johnson, 1996). Girls and young women are most at risk. For example, children make up 61 per cent of reported sexual assaults and 79 per cent of this number are girls (Statistics Canada, 2004). According to Statistics Canada's 2006 report, Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile:



- Nearly 28,000 cases of violence between people married or living together were reported to the police in 2004; 84 per cent of victims were women.
- Women were more likely than men to report being targets of 10 or more violent incidents.
- Police reports showed that men were much more likely than women to commit violence against their partners; men were also more likely to abuse their partners over and over again.
- Women were twice as likely to be injured as a result of this violence.

Statistics show that violence against women and girls is about power and control. Some people try to blame women and girls for it, but it's not their fault. It's not caused by a man just "losing his temper" and it's not just "between him and her." It hurts everybody – children, families, parents, grandparents, and entire communities.

Some women and girls are more vulnerable than others to abuse and have a harder time finding help to deal with the violence. They get even less respect and rights because of the other aspects of who they are, such as their immigration status, income, age, sexual identity and orientation, disability and deafness, and ethno-racial background. At the same time that they face sexism because they are women and girls, they face additional forms of discrimination such as racism, **classism**, **ageism**, **heterosexism**, **transphobia**, and **ableism** that can make things worse (see Oppression and Other Terms on page 11 for definitions). For example:

- 83 per cent of women living with disabilities will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime (Stimpson and Best, 1991, "Courage Above All: Sexual Assault against Women with Disabilities").
- Up to 75 per cent of survivors of sexual assaults in Aboriginal communities are young women under 18 years of age – 50 per cent of those are under 14 years of age and almost 25 per cent are younger than seven years of age (McIvor and Nahanee, 1998, "Aboriginal Women: Invisible Victims of Violence", in Bonnycastle and Rigakos, eds. *Unsettling Truths: Battered Women, Policy, Politics and Contemporary Research in Canada*).
- Women of colour may be more vulnerable to sexual assault because of racist sexual stereotypes, which can limit their access to the justice system (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2002, "Factsheet: Women's Experience of Racism: How Race and Gender Interact").
- Poverty and unemployment make women more vulnerable to violence, especially added to stigma, stereotypes, control from authorities and a lack of social supports like affordable housing (Jiwani, 2002, "Mapping Violence: A Work in Progress").

Personal quiz: Violence against women and girls

Can you guess the correct answer for the questions below? Turn to Appendix B for answers.

1. Fill in the blank: less than ____ of all sexual assaults are reported to the police.
 - a. 40%
 - b. 80%
 - c. 10%
 - d. 20%
2. True or false: young women are at greater risk of sexual assault, physical assault and murder than older women.
3. Fill in the blank: statistics show that when women are stalked, it's usually by an ex-partner. Over 60% of stalking victims were followed for more than one _____.
 - a. week
 - b. month
 - c. season
 - d. year
4. What percentage of victims of spousal violence report that their children witnessed the violence against them?
 - a. 11%
 - b. 24%
 - c. 37%
 - d. 18%
5. Fill in the blank: poverty and a lack of financial resources are barriers for many women who are trying to leave abusive relationships. One out of ____ Canadian women lives in poverty today.
 - a. 7
 - b. 13
 - c. 25
 - d. 84
6. Which barriers to safety do women living in rural and remote areas often face?
 - a. less access to transportation
 - b. less privacy from abuser
 - c. less services in their area
 - d. all of the above



What is a Healthy Relationship?

Healthy relationships can be between different people, like friends, family members, acquaintances, workmates, people dating each other, and spouses. However, when people talk about healthy relationships, they're usually talking about people who are dating or partners, seeing each other, intimate, living together, or married. When someone is in a healthy relationship, they feel respected, cared about, appreciated, and good about themselves. They feel like they have dignity and support. They don't feel nervous, scared, uncomfortable, disrespected, blamed, or pressured. In a healthy relationship, people:

- Communicate with respect and care for each other's feelings. They don't insult their partner, make fun of them, or make them feel bad about themselves through words. Even if they argue or disagree with each other sometimes, they treat their partner like a human being worthy of respect.
- Are honest and open. They don't hurt, manipulate, or lie to their partner just to get what they want.
- Respect their partner's spiritual beliefs and faith community.
- Are glad that their partner has their own friends and family. They don't stop their partner from communicating with friends or family or going out. They don't isolate their partner and make them feel like they have no one else in the world.
- Respect their partner's body and personal space. They don't force or pressure them into sex or sexual behaviour. They don't refuse to use birth control or protection. They don't hit, push, or slap. They don't stop someone from moving or hold them down. They don't stalk their partner (follow them around constantly and contact them all the time).
- Respect their partner's finances. They don't trick their partner into giving up their money and they don't keep money away from their partner when they need it. They don't prevent their partner from working or using money to support their kids.
- Take care of each other. They don't keep medicine away or refuse to take care of their partner. They don't use their partner's disability or deafness to belittle or control them.
- Speak well of each other. They don't spread rumours about their partner or tell their partner's secrets to hurt or get back at them.
- Respect the relationship they have. They don't date others if their partner isn't okay with it. They don't flaunt affairs or threaten to have affairs to make their partner feel afraid or uncertain.

Can you think of other signs of healthy relationships? Write them below:

What are Characteristics of an Unhealthy Relationship?

An unhealthy relationship is one that includes:

- Any form of abuse or threat of abuse, including sexual, physical, emotional, spiritual, financial, verbal, and psychological (see Violence Against Girls and Women on page 4 for definitions)
- Isolation of one or both people, including pressured or forced isolation from friends, family, neighbours, and coworkers
- High levels of jealousy or suspicion
- Unrealistic or unreachable expectations for one or both people
- Little or no acceptance of who a person is (e.g. their background, personality, race, class, gender, sexual identity, physical and mental abilities, age, religion or beliefs, and experiences)
- Constant fault finding or blaming
- Manipulation, control, bullying or force
- A sense of discomfort or fear
- Name-calling
- Threatening to reveal a partner's secrets
- Lack of privacy and personal time and space
- Lies, holding back of important information, and exclusion
- Sacrifice or neglect of one person's needs, wants, dreams and desires
- Pressure to change in order to meet the other persons' expectations and standards

Can you think of other characteristics of unhealthy relationships? Write them below:



Gender Stereotypes

Research shows that addressing the issue of violence and sexism with children and youth can help them break the cycle of violence and oppression. Children learn stereotypes about what it means to be a “real man” and “real woman” from a very young age, and these gender stereotypes can lead to violence against women and girls. Almost everything in our society – such as the media, schools, policies, governments, institutions, sports, family and friends – teach that girls and boys are supposed to act a certain way because of their gender.

Boys and men are supposed to:

- Be strong, tough and good at sports
- Limit their emotions and only show anger
- Be muscular and tall
- Have short hair
- Wear the colour blue
- Be aggressive and in control
- Be heterosexual, sexually active, and “good in bed”
- List your own:

Girls and women are supposed to:

- Be pretty, skinny and light-skinned
- Have long hair
- Be sexy, but not too sexy
- Be submissive and “lady-like”
- Wear the colour pink
- Be heterosexual and be physically attractive to men in a very specific, physically-centred way
- Be good with housework, childcare, and cooking
- Be smart, but not too smart
- List your own:

These stereotypes are so well known that people think they’re normal and okay. But they affect how children see themselves, relate to each other, and grow up. Girls and boys internalize or personally adopt society’s gender stereotypes, just like they internalize other stereotypes about things like race, class, sexuality,

age, and ability. Unfortunately, gender stereotypes make it seem natural and acceptable for men to control women through abuse and violence. They make girls and women seem less important, smart, valuable, and deserving than boys and men.

Have you ever heard:

- “Be a man.”
- “You throw like a girl!”
- “Boys will be boys ...”
- “Girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice.”
- “Men are from Mars, women are from Venus.”
- “Good little girls do this” or “Good little girls don’t do that”

How do you think these sayings are related to gender stereotypes?

Oppression and Other Terms

What is oppression?

The fact that some people have more power than others leads to oppression. It happens when people with less power are silenced, ignored, stereotyped, disrespected, shut out, and looked down on. Oppression within our broader society leads to oppressive behaviours between individual people. Since it is a result of the way our world is structured, it’s not always intentional and it can be hard to identify when it’s happening and what needs to be done to stop it. Oppression comes in many forms, including:

- **Sexism:** unfair treatment and exploitation of women and girls based on the idea that men and boys are better than women. Examples: Most literature that students read in English class has been written by men; girls are often expected to do more chores than their brothers do; in Canada, women make about 75% of what men make for doing the same jobs.
- **Racism:** when people of colour and Aboriginal peoples are discriminated against based on characteristics that are seen to be part of their race. Racism is based on the assumption that people who are not white are



inferior. Examples: being taught only Western or European history at school; children and youth who belong to various racial communities are often seen as “troublemakers” by people in authority; in Canada, people of colour and Aboriginal people are watched more by the police and are statistically likely to be given harsher sentences for doing the same crimes as white people.

- **Classism:** control and disrespect of people with less money and financial resources. It’s grounded in the idea that people who don’t have much money aren’t as good as other people. Examples: schools in lower-income neighbourhoods often have outdated equipment and fewer art and recreation programs; looking down on someone who cannot afford ‘in-style’ clothes; movie stars and high-level businesspeople can more easily get the attention of policy makers and political representatives than average citizens.
- **Lookism:** discrimination against and criticism of people who do not fit stereotypical or mainstream ideas of attractiveness. Examples: unofficial practices of only hiring “thin” and stereotypically attractive people for certain jobs (e.g. customer service, waitressing); a parent constantly pressuring her/his daughter to lose weight.
- **Adulthoodism:** discrimination against children and youth because of their age. Examples: youth getting kicked out of store when there’s more than two of them; children and youth are not allowed to vote or have a political voice.
- **Ableism:** discrimination against and ignoring people with physical and developmental disabilities and people who don’t have the ‘perfect’ body. It is the false idea that people who are able-bodied (stereotypically “healthy” and mobile) are superior. Examples: many public spaces and washrooms are not wheelchair accessible, let alone barrier-free; a young deaf woman getting teased when she uses American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate.
- **Heterosexism:** the belief that heterosexual relationships between a man and a woman are better than others and that heterosexual people are better than people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited, intersexual and queer. It goes hand-in-hand with the sexist idea that men are the “better half” of women. Examples: most romantic comedies star a man and woman; in many jurisdictions, same-sex marriages are not allowed and rights that same-sex couples do have are often debated or challenged.
- **Transphobia:** hatred and discrimination against people who don’t conform to gender stereotypes, most often people whose gender identity doesn’t match the sex they were assigned at birth (e.g. transgender and transsexual individuals). Examples: a boy getting teased because he doesn’t act “masculine” enough; in Canada, transgender individuals are at greater risk of being harassed, assaulted, and murdered.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is behaviour, policies and practices that cause unfair treatment of people, based on the group they’re part of (e.g. age, race, gender). Examples include: a person using a wheelchair going for a job interview but being unable to enter the building because it’s not wheelchair accessible; a person’s family members getting mad because their new partner is a person of colour; “zero-tolerance” policies in schools being applied in such a way as to disproportionately push black and Aboriginal students out of the school system.

What is power?

Power is a term to describe the rights, advantages, and privileges some people have and other people can’t get. Examples include: students with money can afford university or college but others can’t; men are not usually afraid of sexual assault when walking home in the dark, but women and girls often have to deal with this fear.

What is a power imbalance?

It’s the ability of some people to get what they need and want while others are blocked from getting what they need and want. Examples include: women are more likely to be living in poverty in Canada because they don’t have as much access to opportunities, support, and other financial resources as men do; parents pressuring their child to choose a certain career path and threatening to kick them out of their home if they don’t.

What is an anti-oppression framework?

An anti-oppression framework allows people to understand, identify, and positively act upon issues of social and individual oppression. It is a way of looking at the world that recognizes how power is not equally shared. An anti-oppression framework allows people to challenge oppression and do something to end it. It also allows us to celebrate our diversity as human beings and encourage positive, just interactions between people.

It is important to work from an anti-oppressive framework in promoting healthy, equal, and non-violent relationships with girls. As Guiders, it’s important for us to be mindful of the key realities that our girls experience:

- They likely will experience sexism or have experienced sexism. Statistically, they are also at highest risk of experiencing all forms of gender-based violence.
- Girls will face different and multiple forms of oppression, depending on their unique identities (e.g. girls living with disabilities will likely experience sexism, ageism and ableism; girls living in poverty will likely face sexism, ageism, and classism; girls of colour who are lesbians will likely face sexism, ageism, heterosexism, and racism).



- They will be bombarded with oppressive ideas, which will impact their abilities to establish healthy relationships with others and will impact how others treat them in relationships (e.g. children are often taught the idea that girls are to be “quiet” and “submissive”, which put girls at higher risk of being in relationships where they do not feel that they can communicate their needs and where they feel controlled).

Knowing these realities helps us speak to and understand girls’ real day-to-day experiences and better challenge the oppressions they face and internalize, and prevents us from unknowingly perpetuating oppressive ideas in our Units. Our anti-oppressive actions and attitudes can help empower girls to stand up to the oppression they face and to value themselves and others – a first step in promoting healthy, equal, and non-violent relationships.

Please note that accessibility for people with diverse physical and mental abilities is an important factor in anti-oppression practice. As such, tips about how to make Girl EmPower activities more accessible to girls of many abilities in your Unit are provided in Appendix C.

Reinforcing Healthy Relationships: Tips for Guiders

Relationships can be complicated, especially for teens and pre-teens. There are many people who influence what youth learn about relationships – parents,



friends, teachers, Guiders, coaches, media stars, older siblings, and others. There are also many factors that influence them, such as movies, the Internet, music videos, magazines, TV, school, religious institutions, and more.

As a Guider, you understand that girls need positive role models. You have a role to play in helping them build the confidence and critical thinking skills they need to have healthy, equal relationships. You can make a difference that will last a lifetime.

Influence the girls you work with. Lead by example. Demonstrate your ability to resolve conflict in a calm, rational way without yelling or name-calling. Show what it means to talk about and with other women and girls with respect, so girls will learn about how they should be treated. Value what your girls have to say by listening to them and taking them seriously. Expect the best from all of them and help them achieve it.

Make it safe. Create an environment where girls are treated like equals. Treat children in an equitable, respectful manner and help them to treat each other in the same way. Provide girls with diverse opportunities and responsibilities, such as learning about cars, playing sports, doing art or music, participating in eco-activities and community service initiatives, and developing their leadership and civic engagement skills.

It’s never too early. Girls are exposed to complicated social issues and problems at an early age, whether or not we want them to be. They need your guidance to develop attitudes and behaviours that will help them develop healthy, equal relationships before they start dating. You can talk to younger girls about the importance of treating their friends as equals.

Girls need guidance. Talk to them about healthy, equal relationships. Teach them that they have the right to be treated fairly and as equals. Teach girls that boys and girls are equal and deserve to be treated that way. Replace the harmful messages about what it means to be a “real man” and “real woman” with positive ideas about the many opportunities available to all boys and girls.

Keep talking about it. Look for opportunities to engage girls in conversations about equal relationships. Turn every-day activities into learning opportunities. Talk about the lyrics of songs they like and figure out together what is being said about women, men, and relationships. Help them articulate what’s positive and ask them to critique what’s negative. Have them draw pictures or cut them out from magazines and discuss whether or not they show women and men of all backgrounds as equals. You’ll find that they have a lot to say about relationships and stereotypes.

Active learning. Engage girls in exercises that will build the skills they need to have healthy, equal relationships, like how to deal with angry or hurt feelings.



Remember, it's not just about "anger management" – it's about challenging how society has taught them to react to things. Encourage girls to participate in activities that provide them with outlets for their emotions such as music, art, writing and sports. Create opportunities for them to practice resolving conflicts in a respectful, non-violent manner. Help the girls work together to create a code of conduct for your Unit. Work with them to develop skits that deal with issues of abuse or comedic sketches that illustrate stereotyping ideas about men and women. These activities allow young people to explore these issues through creative learning.

Spread the word. Tell everyone you know that they can prevent violence against women and girls by promoting equality and mutual respect. Share these tips with your colleagues and friends. Talk about why you think it is so important to help youth break free from harmful ideas about men and women and develop the skills to have healthy relationships – it could save their lives. Organize an awareness event during Sexual Assault Prevention Month in May, Wife Assault Prevention Month in November, and/or the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on December 6th. Please note that GGC has a National Day of Action Challenge you may want to participate in with your Unit.

Keep your senses open. Look for warning signs that may indicate a girl is in an abusive situation. Ask her about her relationship and listen for indicators of controlling behaviour, criticism and jealousy. Pay attention to changes in her behaviour. Girls who are in an unhealthy relationship often become anxious, depressed, and withdrawn from their friends and normal activities. Boys who are abusive tend to blame others for their problems, become angry or frustrated easily and often seem to have two sides to their personality.

Create a supportive environment. In homes where there is domestic violence, children and youth often witness it. Even if they don't actually see it happen, they usually have a good idea that it's happening. Being exposed to domestic violence can have a devastating effect on children, particularly when they see their mother being abused by their father or male partner. Boys have an increased risk of becoming abusers and girls can start to believe that they don't deserve a healthy relationship. A supportive environment that promotes equality, helps youth identify what they witness as abuse and teaches them the importance of healthy, equal relationships can make all the difference.

Be ready. If you suspect that a girl is in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, don't be afraid to talk with her about it. Ask how she feels about her relationship and listen without judgment. Focus on her feelings. Offer to help her find resources such as confidential counselling services and crisis line support and have that information ready (Important Contacts for Help are included on page 17). Be aware that you are in a position of trust and have a legal obligation to report the suspected abuse of a child under the age of sixteen, regardless of the age of the abuser. Contact your local children's aid society for more information, and consult GGC's Girl Protection Module.



Important Contacts for Help

Note: TTY stands for "teletypewriter". It is a telecommunications device for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Call 911 or your local police if you are in immediate danger.

Kids Help Phone/ Jeunesse J'écoute

24-hour, bilingual and anonymous phone counselling, referral and Internet service for children and youth; 1-800-668-6868 | www.kidshelpphone.ca | www.jeunessejecoute.ca

The Assaulted Women's Helpline

24-hour, confidential support line for women and girls experiencing violence; services in 154 languages; 1-866-863-0511 | 1-866-863-7868 (TTY)

Family Service Canada

List of family service associations, which offer many different supports for individuals and families; www.familyservicecanada.org

Femaide

Crisis line for Francophone women and girls experiencing violence; 1-877-336-2433 | 1-866-860-7082 (TTY)

Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youthline

Confidential peer support phone and instant messaging service for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirited, queer and questioning young people); 1-800-268-9688 | www.youthline.ca

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations (Toronto)

Education, support, and counselling for 2-spirited Aboriginal people affected by HIV/AIDS; 416-944-9300

Pink Triangle Services (Ottawa)

Peer support, educational, research and advocacy services; 613-563-4818

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies

Information on child abuse and local child services; www.oacas.org

Sexual Assault Centres

Emergency help and follow-up treatment; for local centres, look in your local telephone book; www.ocrc.ca

Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres

Emergency help and follow-up treatment; www.satontario.com



Some local sexual assault centres:

Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre (North Bay): 705-476-3355
Sexual Assault Care Centre/Partner Assault Clinic-Sault Area Hospitals: 705-759-5143
Thunder Bay Sexual Assault/Sexual Abuse Counselling and Crisis Centre: 807-344-4502

Shelters for Women and Children

For local shelters, look in your local telephone book
www.shelternet.ca

Some local shelters:

YWCA Genevra House Shelter (Sudbury): 1-800-461-0133
Women in Crisis (Sault Ste. Marie): 705-759-1230
Ojibway Family Resources (North Bay): 1-800-387-2465
Beendigen Crisis Home (Thunder Bay): 807-346-4357

Educational Resources

Girls United Challenge

Designed to prevent bullying between girls; developed by PrevNET and GGC;
www.girlguides.ca/member_zone

Day of Action Tool Kit

GGC's Day of Action Challenge to help girls engage with issues of abuse and violence against women and children in Canada; www.girlguides.ca/member_zone

Girl Protection Module

Explains what to do if a girl in your Unit discloses experiences of abuse or neglect and how Guiders should protect themselves against allegations of abuse; www.girlguides.ca/member_zone

RePlay: Finding Zoe/ ReJouer: Ou Es Zoe

Interactive, youth-friendly online video game and accompanying educational materials to help children and youth learn more about healthy, equal relationships; developed by METRAC; www.metrac.org/replay

EqualityRules.ca

Interactive website for children and teens to promote healthy relationships for girls and boys; www.equalityrules.ca

Appendix A

Sample information letter for parents and guardians

Dear Parent/Guardian,

It is with great delight that I announce that Girl Guides of Canada-Guides du Canada (GGC) has launched the new Girl EmPower Challenge for Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders. Developed in partnership with the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women (METRAC) and funded by the Government of Ontario, Girl EmPower will help girls in building healthy, equal and non-violent relationships. Specifically, it aims to help girls:

- Build a strong sense of self-worth, respect, rights and responsibilities
- Develop the tools necessary to create healthy, equal and non-violent relationships

The Challenge also provides adult Guiders with the skills they need to effectively engage with and promote empowerment amongst the girls they work with.

In the context of the Girl EmPower Challenge, “healthy relationships” refers to the many relationships that girls can have, including their friendships, family relationships, siblings, and dating relationships. Girls will be involved in important activities that examine the warning signs and characteristics of both healthy and unhealthy relationships.

We are very excited about this new adventure and Challenge. If you would like to join us in celebrating the promotion of healthy relationships, please feel free to ask for more information and let us know if you would like to attend any of our events.

Together in Guiding,

Your name



Appendix B

Answers to Quiz

Question 1: (c) Less than 10% of sexual assaults are reported to the police (Statistics Canada, 2006, "Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends").

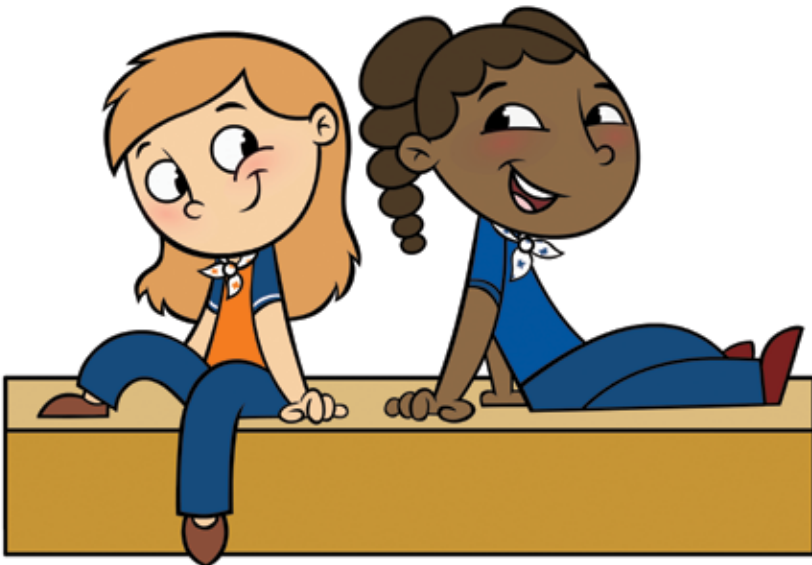
Question 2: True - reports show that young women are at greater risk of many kinds of violence (e.g. Statistics Canada, 2006, "Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006").

Question 3: (d) Women who reported being stalked said they were stalked for an average of one year (Statistics Canada, 2005, "Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile").

Question 4: (c) 37% of spousal violence victims reported that their children witnessed the abuse (Statistics Canada, 2005, "Family Violence").

Question 5: (a) One out of seven Canadian women are living in poverty today (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2005, "Women and Poverty").

Question 6: (d) All of the above are common barriers (METRAC, "Rural Women's Justice Guide").



Appendix C

Tips for working with children living with disabilities

ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Refers to individuals that display consistent behavioural characteristics – mainly, impulsivity, distractibility and hyperactivity

Possible characteristics

- Trouble paying attention and listening
- Acts impulsively
- Fidgets and squirms
- Has difficulty following instructions
- High levels of energy

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Place the child where she can easily hear instructions
- Eliminate distractions such as excessive or unnecessary noise, bright lights, or flashing lights
- Maintain a routine and have smooth transitions between activities
- Give the child extra duties, such as setting up the play area or cleaning up after the activity to keep her focused on task
- Break down instructions into concise and simple steps

AUTISM

Developmental disorder characterized by communication and social difficulties and repetitive or distracted behaviours

Possible characteristics

- May be unaware or have less awareness of others
- Unwilling or hesitant to interact with others
- Appears to have hearing impairment
- Difficulty interacting with others
- Engages in repetitive behaviours
- Displays outbursts and other aggressive behaviours

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Emphasize sensory sensations, such as sound, touch, smell, and taste, when explaining activities
- Place the child where she can easily hear the instructions
- Eliminate distractions, such as noise
- Provide one-on-one instruction
- Break instructions down into small steps and keep them simple
- Maintain a routine (e.g. follow the same format for each new activity) have smooth transitions between activities
- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions throughout the activity



CEREBRAL PALSY

A group of chronic conditions affecting body movement and muscle coordination

Possible characteristics

- Motor skills may be differently developed than able-bodied individuals
- Muscle tone may be decreased or different than able-bodied individuals
- May favour one side of the body or one type of movement pattern
- Posture may be affected
- May focus on immediate surroundings and not upon new, larger areas
- May walk on tips of toes or carry arms high to help with balance
- May experience seizures and tremors

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Include many opportunities for muscle stretching
- Be aware of safety issues that may arise in activities
- Explain all modifications of the activities to children in the unit so everyone is aware of what they should do to support each other and increase safety

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

A term used to describe individuals with decreased or different intellectual abilities; can be the result of a number of factors, including birth or genetic “defects”, illnesses, and/or accidents

Possible characteristics

- May have difficulties understanding instructions
- May become upset by new or uncomfortable situations
- May live with hearing or speech disabilities
- May live with motor disability and/or decreased or different muscle tone
- May have difficulty adapting to new situations

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions
- Break instructions down into smaller, easier to understand segments
- Provide immediate feedback to the child to allow them to build their understanding of the activity
- Provide positive feedback to encourage the child and help them feel safe
- Eliminate distractions, such as excessive or unnecessary noise
- Use demonstrations as much as possible
- Maintain a routine and have smooth transitions between activities

DEAFNESS OR HARD OF HEARING

Sometimes named “hearing impairment”; refers to total or partial hearing loss; it can be caused by a number of factors, such as infections or accidents, or it may be hereditary

Possible characteristics

- Total or partial hearing loss
- May not engage in verbal communication or may do so on a limited basis
- May use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate, read lips, or engaging in other signing behaviours to communicate
- May use hearing aids
- May be shy and/or have difficulty balancing

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Use clear visual aids to explain activities, such as drawings and hand gestures
- Provide clear written instructions for the group
- Ask participants to make as little noise as possible when the instructions are being explained
- Face the child directly when speaking so she can read your lips and/or see what you are demonstrating; speak clearly and slowly and do not eat or chew gum in the process
- Give the child paper to write or draw on so she can communicate her needs and questions

Seek ASL or note-taking services to better include the child, if applicable

DOWN SYNDROME

Caused by a chromosomal “abnormality” during conception; associated with decreased or different cognitive functioning and physical features, such as distinctive facial features and decreased or different muscle tone

Possible characteristics

- May be unwilling to participate or listen
- May live with different or decreased motor skills and different or decreased muscle tone
- May talk to herself
- May have to engage in less physical fitness activities due to cardiac conditions
- May live with vision and hearing disabilities

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Make instructions clear and brief
- Place the child where she can easily hear instructions
- Eliminate distractions, such as excessive or unnecessary noise
- Provide one-on-one instruction
- Use visual aids and demonstrations
- Maintain a routine and a solid structure for the space and activities
- Change activities where necessary to better suit different fitness levels of the group
- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions



EPILEPSY

Characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures

Possible characteristics

- Experiences seizures and convulsions periodically (could be frequent or rare)
- May faints or experience blackouts
- May experience periods of staring or wandering and a loss of awareness of the external world
- May experience lapses in memory and/or difficulty concentrating

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Consult with the child and/or their parent/guardian to better understand what may trigger seizures and the protocol for when seizures occur
- Keep the child hydrated, if appropriate
- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child to alert an adult if the child begins to seize
- Reduce distractions and possible triggers, such as excessive or unnecessary noise, bright lights, or flashing lights

LEARNING DISABILITY

Neurological “disorder” characterized by difference or difficulty in reading, writing, and/or interpreting language

Possible characteristics

- May have difficulty understanding instructions
- May live with a speech disability
- May have difficulties expressing herself
- Likely learns differently
- May be hesitant to engage in activities due to fear that her different learning style will not be understood or respected

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Ask the child directly about how you can help her participate and help her feel comfortable; affirm that everyone learns differently and that she has a right to learn in a way that works for her
- Break instructions down into smaller, clear segments
- Eliminate distractions, such as noise
- Use demonstrations, visual aids, and examples as much as possible
- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions and activities

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

Anxiety “disorder” that can develop after exposure to one or more traumatic events that threatened or caused harm to the child or someone close to the child

Possible characteristics

- May experience depression or disinterest, irritability, sadness, or anger
- May experience sudden changes in mood
- May act out or engage in aggressive behaviours, disobedience, talking back, or self-destructive actions (e.g. self-harm, cutting)
- May have a loss of concentration, distractibility, attention difficulties, or restlessness

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Break instructions down into smaller, clear segments and keep instructions simple
- Allow for numerous breaks during the session
- Provide opportunities for open discussions, sharing, and opportunities for children to work together positively
- Remind the child that she is in a safe environment and show active support for her along the way

SPINA BIFIDA

Present at birth; characterized by the incomplete development of the brain and spinal cord

Possible characteristics

- May experience muscle weakness
- May use mobility devices (e.g. wheelchair, crutches, braces)
- May have difficulty understanding instructions
- May have different or lowered hand-eye coordination
- May experience a loss of bladder control
- May experience fidgety or impulsive behaviours

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Provide one-on-one instruction
- Break instructions down into simple, clear, and small steps and
- Where necessary, modify physical activities to include both girls who use mobility devices and those who do not
- Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions



VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Includes both partial sight and blindness; can be caused by a number of factors, including illness, accident, or hereditary factors

Possible characteristics

- May appear clumsy, especially in new situations
 - Hold head in extreme positions to look at things
 - May tune out when information is written or purely visual
 - Mays show signs of tiredness and inattentiveness
 - May frequently asks others to tell her what is going on
 - May rub eyes excessively
 - May have different or delayed motor development and motor skills
-
- **Suggestions for modifying activities**
 - Emphasize other sensory sensations, such as sound, touch, smell, and taste when explaining activities
 - Place the child where she can easily hear instructions and ask questions
 - Use sound sources to help the child locate important objects
 - Explain games using slow, clear motion if the child lives with partial sight
 - Ask a volunteer to partner with the child and demonstrate instructions

SPINAL CORD INJURY

Describes damage to the spinal cord, which often leads to lowered motor function or paralysis; can be caused by accident, illness, or hereditary factors

Possible characteristics

- May experience varying forms of paralysis (e.g. from the neck down or waist down)
- May experience numbness or loss of feeling in limbs
- May use mobility devices (e.g. wheelchair, crutches, canes, braces)
- May have different or delayed motor skills and muscle tone

Suggestions for modifying activities

- Be sensitive to safety issues and include the entire Unit in ensuring the space and activities are safe
- Enlarge activity materials to better reflect diverse motor skills in the group
- Where necessary, modify physical activities to include both girls who use mobility devices and those who do not

