

girls
inc.

Girls Inc of Durham



FAMILY HANDBOOK
2026

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ABOUT US

Who We Are

Girls Inc. is a registered charity serving Durham Region since 1984. We belong to a network of 84 Girls Inc. affiliates across the United States and Canada, with our head office in New York. Our comprehensive approach to whole girl development equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers to grow up healthy, educated, and independent.

These positive outcomes are achieved through three core elements: **people** - trained staff and volunteers who build lasting, mentoring relationships; **environment** - girls-only, physically and emotionally safe, where there is a sisterhood of support, high expectations, and mutual respect; and **programming** - research-based, hands-on and minds-on, age-appropriate, curriculum-based programs that meet the needs of today's girls. Informed by girls and their families, we also advocate for

legislation and policies to increase opportunities for all girls.

Mission

Girls Incorporated of Durham empowers girls to believe in themselves and reach their full potential. We inspire all girls to be strong, smart, and bold through advocacy, education and programs.

Vision

Empowered girls living in an equitable society.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM POLICES

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of program participants, volunteers and staff is of primary importance in all of Girls Inc. of Durham programs and upheld by the health & safety policy adopted Feb 26, 2010. Every effort will be made to ensure that all activities within programs and facilities are safe and secure, both physically and emotionally, thus promoting an environment in which all program participants, volunteers and staff feel comfortable for optimal learning and enjoyment.

Additionally, All provincial COVID protocols will be followed.

STAFF TRAINING

Girls Inc. Staff have received Parks and Recreation training that is designed to support the safety, well-being and healthy development of children in recreation and sport programming. There will always be at least one adult (staff/volunteer) on-site with current CPR and First Aid Certification.

CRIMINAL REFERENCE CLEARANCE

All staff and volunteers must obtain criminal reference clearance, conducted by Durham Regional Police Services prior to any interaction with program participants.

CURRENT MEDICAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Current medical and emergency information of all program participants will be on-site at all program locations, as well as in our database system. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure that this information is correct.

Under no circumstances are staff or volunteers allowed to administer medications. Participants requiring medications but not old enough to administer their own (as identified by parent), parent/guardians must ensure medications are administered prior to program or event. *With exception of an EPI PEN.*

“

My 10 year old thought she was too old and cool for camp (that wasn't specifically sports related). Then she came here. An amazing and empowering week that she is so excited about. She's already talking about going back next year as a counselor in training. Thank you for all you do.

Wade and Erin Murphy-Simpson

”

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AT PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Girls Inc. of Durham primarily conducts programs utilizing community locations each program emergency plan will abide by the location specifications. However, all program participants, volunteers and staff will be made aware of emergency exits and all program participants will discuss with staff/volunteer an emergency plan that is specific to the location in which the program is being offered.

In the event of a medical emergency or accident on an outing, staff will make every effort to inform the parent or guardian as quickly as possible. If the participant is injured or unwell while in Girls Inc.'s care, medical attention will be sought.

OUTINGS

While on a Girls Inc. outing, staff will have with them all emergency information pertaining to the participants attending. The information will include but is not limited to: home and emergency phone numbers, list of allergies and medications. In the event of an emergency the participant's needs will be met first and the parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

POLICY ON DIVERSITY AND ANTI DISCRIMINATION

Girls Inc. is committed to diversity in principle and practice. Our programs are open to all girls. Our commitment is founded in our communal sense of justice and gives expression to our belief that the world and our organization are nourished and enriched by the diversity of our cultures and experiences. We strive toward a world of understanding and mutual support.

We recognize and attempt to bridge the growing gulf in our society between rich and poor, privileged and neglected. Working with girls and young women, we also endeavor to eliminate sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination.

We celebrate the similarities and differences among girls and embrace girls of every background and ability. We believe that girls are sisters: discrimination targeted toward some girls not only hinders their achievement but diminishes the strength of sisterhood for all.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated at any Girls Inc. of Durham programming. In-keeping with Health and Safety Policies, it is the intention of Girls Inc. to ensure that all program participants, volunteers and staff feel safe and secure in the learning environment. The topic of bullying and other behavioural expectations will be discussed as a group on the first day of every program and group agreement will be created.

Should a problem with bullying behaviour present itself Girls Inc. will undertake the following necessary steps to resolve the issue:

- The program participant initiating the bullying behavior will be privately spoken to and will be made aware of the consequences of persistent undesirable behaviour. Every effort will be undertaken to work positively, constructively, and a non-judgmental manner with the program participant to alleviate the undesirable behaviour.
- If the undesirable behaviour persists, parents/guardians will be contacted and a meeting will be arranged between the staff, parent/guardian and the program participant. Strategies for overcoming the behavior will be discussed. The program participant and parent/guardian will be made aware of the consequence of persistent undesirable behaviour.
- If the undesirable behaviour persists, and, only as a last resort, when the above strategies have been exhausted, the program participant will be removed from the program.
- Fee re-payment in its entirety or any part thereof, may or may not be issued in the result of a removal from the program.



PROGRAM TIMES

March Break Times

Times for camp are as follows 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

Summer Camp Times

Times for camp are as follows 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday.

Extended hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at an added cost.

Members: Early drop-off/late pick-up + \$45/week

Non Members: Early drop-off/late pick-up+\$55/week

PROGRAM FEE POLICY

Fees requested for programs are used to assist Girls Inc. of Durham in covering costs associated with supplies used by participants in the programs.

If a program should be cancelled due to low registration before the scheduled start date a full refund will be issued.

If a participant is removed from a program, a partial fee refund may be available depending upon the circumstances and remaining time left in the program.

Refunds will not be issued in the event of program cancellations due to inclement weather. As well, refunds will not be issued in the event of missed programs due to illness or absenteeism.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

Cancellation requests received four days prior to the 1st day will receive a full refund, minus a \$50.00 cancellation fee.

Less than four days notice or withdrawal after camp has started NO other refunds can be issued.



DROP OFF AND PICKUP POLICY

Parents/Guardians MUST come into the building to sign in their child and out each day.

As a safety precaution, we do NOT allow participants to wait outside unattended for their parent/guardian to arrive.

Participants will only be released to the individual as stated by the drop off parent/guardian. Please call us or send us a note in advance if someone else will be picking up the child you bring to programming. If we do not receive notice, the child will not be permitted to leave Girls Inc. until a parent/guardian is contacted.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

It is the expectation that parents/guardians will arrive on-time to pick-up participants. Girls Inc. of Durham reserves the right to charge the parent/guardian a late pick-up fee.

The late fee shall be applied as follows:

A charge of \$1/minute, per child, for every minute late will apply to the parent/guardian for all participants picked up late from a camp. You will be required to pay the fee before you leave with your child.

In the event that a program participant is not picked up by a parent/guardian or appointed responsible individual, Girls Inc. of Durham staff/volunteer will never leave a program participant unattended. If an inordinate amount of time passes with no communication from the parent/guardian or appointed responsible individual, Girls Inc. of Durham staff will have no choice but to contact the appropriate authorities; the Children's Aid Society or the Durham Regional Police.



PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Please encourage your child to participate in activities, to try new things, and to make new friends. Review the program expectations with her and help us reinforce the importance of respecting herself, others, and property.

Your child will bring home each week a theme calendar that is created the first day of each week. Please encourage your child to be creative no costume is too big or too small. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to speak with the camp leader.

TIDYING UP

Girls are expected to help clean up the site as needed. Tasks may include cleaning up after snack, lunch, or activities, sweeping etc. Please encourage your daughter to take pride in the appearance of our Girls Inc site and to pick up after herself.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

Many of the Girls Inc. of Durham programs require activity and movement, therefore program participants should be dressed comfortably and running shoes should be worn. As well, dressing according to the weather is also advised.

SUN SAFETY

Every effort is made to ensure limited sun exposure (between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m). Parents/guardians will be required to provide sunscreen for their daughter at camp. A sign permission form will be required for staff to administer sunscreen to your daughter.

FOOD AND SNACKS

Every effort is made to ensure that Girls Inc. of Durham programs or group events are peanut/nut-free space. Girls Inc. of Durham provides 2 snacks a day, families are expected to provide lunch.

MONEY AND VALUABLES

It is advisable that the girls do not bring valuables to the program. We recommend that girls leave their cell phones at home. Participants are not allowed to have their cell phones during programming time. However, if parents/guardians allow their child to bring these items to Girls Inc. we ask that they are left in their bag. If this rule is not followed, Girls Inc. reserves the right to remove the item and return it at pickup time.

Girls Inc. of Durham will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items.

Any money over and above the registration fee that is required for the program or activity will be requested, in advance, by staff running the program.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

All of our programs are informal educational researched-based programs that are specifically designed for girls. Our programs address needs specific to girls and women with the goal of preparing girls and young women for confident, independent, and responsible adulthood. Generally, we operate programs with a ratio of 1 adult to 4 participants. The following is a condensed list of some of the characteristics you will find of all of our programs.

Innovative: Programs provide girls and young women with unique, non-traditional learning opportunities.

Active: We promote learning by doing. Our programs engage girls and young women and encourage them to participate.

Age-Appropriate: Program objectives and methods are tailored to address the specific needs of the age group being served.

Challenging: Our programming enables girls to experience sports and other physical activities, involves them in science, math, and technology projects and introduces them wherever possible to non-traditional career options.

Inclusive: All programs serve girls and young women from diverse backgrounds with varying abilities in an integrated way.

Affirming: Staff and volunteers actively promote the development of a positive self-concept in each girl and young woman.

A girl is a young person who identifies as a girl regardless of her assigned sex at birth or who is exploring gender identity or expression

GIRLS INC. BILL OF RIGHTS



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**BE THEMSELVES
AND TO RESIST GENDER
STEREOTYPES.**



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**EXPRESS THEMSELVES
WITH ORIGINALITY AND
ENTHUSIASM.**



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**TAKE RISKS, TO STRIVE
FREELY, AND TO TAKE
PRIDE IN SUCCESS.**



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**ACCEPT AND
APPRECIATE
THEIR BODIES.**



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**HAVE CONFIDENCE IN
THEMSELVES AND BE
SAFE IN THE WORLD.**



GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO
**PREPARE FOR INTERESTING
WORK AND ECONOMIC
INDEPENDENCE.**

Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold.

WITH YOU IN HER CORNER,
SHE WILL WIN.



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