

**GIRLS INCORPORATED OF ST. LOUIS**

# MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

INSPIRING ALL GIRLS TO BE



**STRONG, SMART AND BOLD !**

**WITH YOU IN HER CORNER,**  
SHE WILL WIN.

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# Welcome to Girls Incorporated!

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This handbook provides important information to parents/guardians and members. We are excited to have the opportunity to serve you and we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship.

The programs and services of Girls Inc. are designed to encourage girls to try new things, build their skills and knowledge and prepare them for a bright future. At Girls Inc., we believe that growing up is serious business and we grow in a fun atmosphere.

Please read the contents of this handbook carefully. Feel free to consult with the Director of Programs if you have any questions.

**We are delighted to have you join Girls Incorporated of St. Louis!**

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## Mission Statement

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The mission of Girls Incorporated of St. Louis is to provide educational, recreational, and cultural programs to girl in a safe environment , to enable them to raise their aspirations and realize their potential.



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# History

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Since its inception in 1981, Girls Incorporated of St. Louis has served over 125,000 girls from the Metropolitan St. Louis area. At Girls Inc., we believe that each child has unique intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical potential. The cultivation of this potential is our priority. Programs give girls the information skills, strategies and resources they need to make good decisions, solve problems, meet their own needs and lead others. These activities provide the opportunity to experience success as they grow to understand their options, accept new responsibilities and face new challenges.

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## Girls Inc. Bill of Rights

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***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Be themselves and to resist gender stereotypes.



***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Accept and appreciate their bodies



***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Express themselves with originality and enthusiasm



***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Have confidence in themselves and to be safe in the world.



***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Take risks, to strive freely, and to take pride in success



***GIRLS HAVE THE RIGHT TO***  
Prepare for interesting work and economic independence..

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# Programs and Services

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## Every Day

We provide transportation for girls who attend schools on our bus routes. Homework help is provided during programming from 3:30pm to 4:15pm every day. We provide paper, pencils, dictionaries, computers, encyclopedia, markers, calculators and other tools the girls may need to get their homework done. We also provide staff and volunteers to help with homework. We staff our center with caring, nurturing adults who want the girls to succeed.

## Girls Inc. Programming

During the school year, Girls Inc. offers what we consider our "core programming" between 4:30 and 6:00pm each day. During this programming time, we offer classes that help to make your daughter smarter, safer, healthier and more confident. It is during this time that we provide math and science enrichment, reading instruction, dance classes, art classes, fitness activities, guest speakers, college and career prep programs, and lifesaving awareness classes for our teens and more.

During the school year we do monitor early pick-up. If your daughter has a doctor's appointment or an occasional reason to be picked up earlier than 5:45pm, we can be flexible. Just send us a written note or give us a call in advance. If you must regularly pick your daughter up before 4:45pm on school days, you must speak with the Center Director about the possibility of creating a plan for your daughter's daily schedule at Girls Inc.

## Meals

At Girls Inc., girls are served a healthy catered dinner daily during the Extended Learning program.

- **Summer:** During the summer breakfast, lunch and a snack are provided. Your daughter may participate in this program or they may bring their breakfast lunch and/ or snack. **No refrigeration or heating/cooking services will be provided for members who bring their breakfast or lunch.**
- **Breakfast:** During the summer, breakfast is served from 7:00am- 7:45am. If your daughter arrives after 7:45am, please make sure she has a good breakfast at home.
- **Lunch:** During the summer, lunch is served from 11:00am-12:00pm, depending on your daughter's age group.
- **Snack:** During the summer, snack is served from 2:30pm-3:00pm. And for After school, snack is served from 6:00pm-6:30pm.
- **Dinner:** During the **School Year Only**, Dinner is served from 4:00pm-4:45pm.



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# Information for Parents/ Guardians

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## Hours of Operation

Extended Learning program hours vary. "Don't Miss" announcements such as program hours, early closings, center closings or other scheduled changes will be posted on the Front door or on the check-in/ check-out desk. Please make it a practice to check daily for any announcements.

- **Extended Learning Program (Summer Hours)** **7:00am— 6:00pm**
- **Extended Learning Program (Afterschool Hours)** **3:30pm— 6:00pm**

The office is generally open at 9:00am during the school year and at 7:00am during the summer for parent/guardian inquires and information.

## School's Out Days

Girls Inc. is generally open to members from 7:00am – 6:00pm. School's Day Out programming will be at the discretion of the center. **All parents should check with the Girls Inc. office to confirm.**



## Membership ID Cards (Summer Only)

Each member will receive a picture ID card when they begin attending. The ID card will be used to sign-in and sign-out daily. Each member **MUST** have their ID card to attend any outside fieldtrips. Lost or damaged cards can be replaced for a fee of \$7.00.

## Drop-Off and Sign-In Policy

For the girls' safety, daycare licensing requires that the girls ages 5-12 are passed directly from the supervision of one adult to another. Girls ages 5-12, therefore, **MUST** be escorted into the building by an adult. Once in the building, all girls are required to check-in.

## Sign-Out and Pick-Up Policy

It is our policy that girls be picked up only by the people indicated on the membership application. At least two (2) adults must be listed on your approved pick-up list. You or an adult on your pick-up list must come inside Girls Inc. and sign your child out. Adults picking up girls from our center may be asked to show photo ID or agency ID. Girls will not be released to anyone under the age of 18. While we make every reasonable effort to comply with this policy, at times it is impossible for us to monitor all pick-ups. **Before leaving the building, all girls are required to be signed-out.**



## **Sign-Out and Pick-Up Policy (cont....)**



If you would like someone that is not on the membership application to pick your child up, you **MUST** come to Girls Inc. and add that name to your pick-up list. Names will not be added to the pick-up list over the phone, by email or by fax.

If your child is not picked up by closing time, we will first call you and then call those on your approved pick up list. If we are unable to reach anyone and/or secure a ride home for the girl, it is our policy to call the police. We do not like to do this, as it is obviously traumatic for the girls. Please make all efforts to pick up your daughter up by the scheduled closing time.

## **Parking**

Please enter the parking lot from the driveway located on the north side of the building and exit using the driveway on the south side of the building. Please note that these driveways are one way. Parking is in rear of the building. Do not park or double park along side of the building. That is a fire lane and you will be ticketed or towed. Please be aware of children on the parking lot when entering and exiting.

## **Transportation**

For safety reasons, girls are not allowed off transportation before reaching their destination and non-staff/volunteers are not allowed to board transportation.

Please help us conserve. If our transportation stops at a designated school and no girl's board, staff are instructed to discontinue stopping at that school until further notice. It is a parent or guardian's responsibility to call Girls Inc. by 10:00am, if your daughter does not need to be picked up from school.

## **Teaching Appropriate Behaviors**

Girls Inc. staff will deal with minor behavioral issues internally without interrupting the parent by calling about an issue that arises. If behavioral issues persist, they will be logged and parents will be contacted.

Girls with behavioral issues will be directed to our Program Director or Program Manager. Girls who have committed an infraction that warrants removal from their classroom or activity will receive a disciplinary notice to be signed by the parent or guardian. If behavioral issues persist the member may be suspended or removed from the program.

## **Permission Slip Policy**

Additional permission slips may be required for participation in special programs, activities or fieldtrips.

## **Pre-Membership Visits**

Girls may attend one time a year as a visitor during regular afterschool programming or regular summer programming. The parent/guardian of a visiting girl must provide, in writing, emergency contact information and pick-up information on the day of her visit. Visitors must check in at the office. Visitors do not attend fieldtrips.



## **Emergencies**

Closings – In cases of extreme weather conditions or other emergencies, Girls Inc. may deem it necessary to close early or not provide transportation to our center. Girls Inc. generally follows the Normandy School District guideline for extreme weather. If Normandy School District is closed, Girls Inc. will most likely be closed, but the final decision is at Girls Inc.'s discretion. Girls Inc. submits inclement weather closings to KMOV (Channel 4) and KSDK (Channel 5).

Parents/Guardians must complete the weather/emergency cancellation procedure form in the Membership Application. This form lists instructions for your girls in the event that Girls Inc. is closed due to weather or other emergencies even though school is not cancelled. Be sure your girl(s) know what to do in this situation. If possible, we will make every effort to contact the schools to let them know Girls Inc. is closed.

If bad weather occurs during programming hours, emergency procedures will be followed based on the weather conditions. During a Tornado Warning, girls will remain in designated areas of the building. We will not release girls during a Tornado Warning. Parents are welcome to take shelter in the building during storm warnings.

## **Fire and Tornado Drills**

Girls Inc. will have monthly fire drills and quarterly tornado drills so that everyone is prepared for emergency situations.

## **Contact Information**

Parents/Guardians must keep address, phone, email and other contact information updated at all times. A new membership application must be filled out annually. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide us with at least one reliable person to contact in case of emergency. More than one person may be listed. You will need to come to the office in person to update this information or make any changes.

## **Fees-**

### **Membership Fees**

Girls ages 5 to 18 are eligible to join Girls Inc. Membership fees are non-refundable. The registration fee for Girls Inc. is \$550, and is due May 31st. Participants membership last from June through May. Your fees cover the approximate cost for your daughter for materials and supplies. ***(This does apply to special programs)***

### **Late Fees**

Girls must be picked up by closing time. Parents/Guardians picking up a girl after closing will be assessed a fee: \$1.00 per minute late fee. If late fees are not paid within two weeks, we will no longer provide transportation for your daughter to our center and a meeting between parent/guardian and the Program Director will be required to reinstate transportation privileges.

## **Field Trip Fees**

Many field trips are provided at no charge to the girls, while a few require a paid fee for admission. If a girl is denied access to a paid field trip due to behavioral issues, no refunds will be dispersed. If the field trip is cancelled, fees will be refunded. Fees may also be charged for girls who have signed up for a field trip, or an educational camp and do not show up.

## **Transportation Fees (August through May)**

Girls Inc. provides transportation for girls who attend schools on our bus route. This is a monthly fee that is due by the first Monday of every month. The transportation fee will be \$40 a month. Call the Center for any additional information about transportation fees.

## **Child Abuse/ Neglect Reporting Requirements**

As child care providers, Girls Inc. is mandated to report child abuse/neglect if there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect. Child abuse is defined as "any physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for the child's care custody and control". Discipline including spanking administered in a reasonable manner phase not construed to be abuse. Neglect is defined as "failure to provide, by those responsible for the care, custody and control of the child, the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, nutritional or medical, surgical or any other care necessary for the child's wellbeing."

Staff who suspect neglect or have a child confide in them must immediately report the following to the Program Director, Assistant Director or President & CEO.

- The child's name
- The child's age and race
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse or neglect, including any prior evidence of abuse or neglect.
- The name, age and address of the abuser, if known.
- Any actions taken by the staff or any other useful information.

The Director who receives the report of staff is responsible to collect the following additional information:

- The name and address of the child and those responsible for his/her care, if known.
- The family composition
- The name of and address of the person making the report, his/her occupation and where he/she can be reached.

The Director shall then become responsible for the immediate making of the report known to the Division of Family Services within 24 hours of the initial report. Reports may also be made to law enforcement or juvenile authorities as appropriate.

The Child Abuse/Neglect number is 1-800-392-3787. The Division of Family services is required to contact the reporter within 48 hour of receipt of the report.

Failure to report child abuse/neglect is a Class A misdemeanor.



## **Equal Opportunity Policy Statement**

Girls Incorporated of St. Louis specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, religion, pregnancy, sex, sexual orientation, gender, identity, age, disability, genetic information, military status and political belief.

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# **Membership Policies and Procedures**

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## **Clothing and Personal Property**

For both safety and programming reasons, girls must wear tennis shoes to Girls Inc. during summer programming. Flip Flops are **not** allowed. Some activities, such as art classes, gardening and cooking classes are messy.

Girls must leave valuables (including, but not limited to: cell phones, iPods, mp3 players, electronic games, etc.) at home. Because many girls have identical coats, jackets, backpacks, etc... it is important that personal items are clearly marked. Girls Inc. will not be responsible for lost or missing items.



## **Health and Medication**

Girls with a significant temperature (101° and above), open sores, ringworm, impetigo or any other contagious disease will be sent home. Parents/Guardians will be contacted immediately. A doctor's note will be required for a member to return to Girls Inc. Please keep girls at home when they are ill.

Parents/Guardians must sign a competency form that gives Girls Inc. staff consent to administer/oversee the use of medication. Any member requiring medication must check in with the Program Director or Program Manager. All medications must be sealed in a zip lock baggie and clearly marked with the girls name and include:

- The medication in its original container
- Any additional item necessary to administer the medication (teaspoon, etc.)
- Written instructions for use, signed by a parent/guardian including date(s) and time (s) for the girl to self-administer the medication

An Asthma Action Plan is required and an onsite inhaler is required for girls who have asthma. In order to keep the center clear of lice, from time to time, Girls Inc. staff may do head checks. Girls with lice will be sent home for treatment.

# Dress Guide

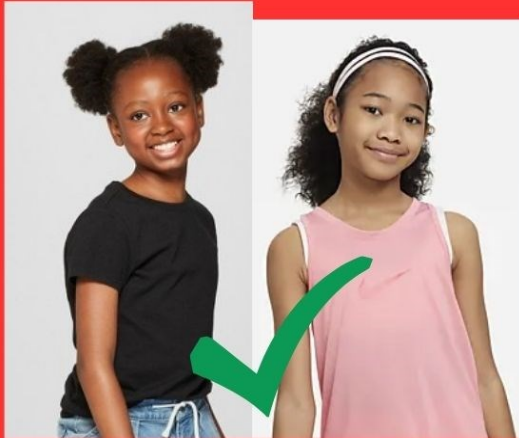
To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all, please take note of the following dress code guidelines for our summer camp.  
Thank You

**girls  
inc.**<sup>®</sup>

Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold

## Acceptable

## Non-Acceptable



## **Restroom Breaks**

We do not have staff to accommodate individual trips to the restroom. We take group restroom breaks every hour to hour-and-a-half. While we will attempt to accommodate individual emergency situations, for enrollment purposes, we accept girls for whom our restroom break is not a hardship.

## **Telephone**

In case of emergency, girls should inform a staff person. Girls are not allowed to use cell phones. Please do not call or text your daughter. Please call the Girls Inc. main number for all contact with your daughter at 314-385-8088. For example, when you are on your way to Girls Inc. to pick up your daughter, please do not text her to meet you in the lobby.

## **Insurance**

All girls have Secondary Accident Insurance while participating in Girls Inc. activities. The cost for this insurance is included in the membership fee.

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# **Parents/ Guardian Policies and Procedures**

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Girls Inc. staff is open to hearing any of your concerns and is here to answer any questions you may have about our policies and procedures. Our staff will be professional and respectful when addressing your concerns and we ask parents and guardians to respect staff in return.

## **Orientation**

In order to become a member of Girls Inc. a parent/guardian must attend a yearly orientation session. All new enrollment applications must be accompanied by a birth certificate and Current immunization records for our files.

## **Staff Member Concerns**

If you have a concern about one of our staff members, ask to speak with the Program Director, Program Manager or President & CEO.

## **Volunteers**

Parents/Guardians, grandparents and other interested adults are encouraged to get involved in Girls Inc. programs. Volunteers are needed for a variety of programs and activities. All volunteers are required to have a background check before working with our girls. For more information please contact the front desk.



## **Parent/ Guardian Consent and Agreement**

Parents/Guardians are required to fully complete the Parent/Guardian Consent and Agreement section of the Membership Application form. Consent items include but are not limited to:

- Consent to access your child's school records
  - Consent to obtain a copy of the original Birth Certificate
  - Consent to obtain your immunization records
  - Consent to obtain a copies of any other documentation for the child (ex: Asthma Action Plan, IEP, Vaccination Cards)
  - Consent for medical treatment
  - Release of Girls Inc. from any and all claims or causes of action
  - Consent for your child to ride on Girls Inc. buses or vans
  - Consent for your child to participate in evaluation activities
  - Consent to use your child's name, photograph or video/film image
  - Consent for your child to participate in age appropriate classes and workshops
  - Consent for your child to participate in field trips
  - Agreement to review member rules with your child
  - Consent for your child to have access to reproductive health educational programs and access to reproductive health services (Teens Only)
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## **Information for Members**

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Please read this section with your daughter. Girls Inc. strives to offer a safe and positive environment. It is essential that members follow the Girls Inc. rules and the direction of staff at all times. Disciplinary action, up to and including cancellation of membership, will be enforced for inappropriate behavior.

### **Center Rules**

- Be respectful of yourself, other girls, staff and visitors.
- Be respectful of the Girls Inc. property and building. (Girls and/or parents will be required to pay for willful damage to any Girls Inc. property).
- Be safe and let staff know of any unsafe activities.
- Girls may not bring in outside food or drink (this includes gum).
- Ask for staff permission before sharing items or taking items that do not belong to you, such as: food, money, etc.
- If you have an issue with another member, tell a staff person.

### **Computer Lab**

- No food or drink in the labs.
- Be considerate of the other person when sharing a computer.
- Get staff immediately if something inappropriate comes on the screen.
- Ask for staff help if you have problems with the computer or printing.
- Use only flash drives given to you by staff (not flash drives from home or school).
- Only access websites authorized by Girls Inc.
- Do not download anything to the computers.
- When in doubt – Ask!

## **Internet Use Policy**

### **(Please see Internet usage policy addendum)**

In order for a member to access the Internet while at Girls Inc., she will have to sign the User Agreement Form, indicating that she agrees to Girls Inc.'s Internet Use Policy rules and regulations. She must also have a signed permission from her parents/guardian, who will indicate the type of online resources that she may or may not access (i.e. websites, chat and email). Any violation of the Girls Inc. rules and policies regarding Internet use, as well as other program rules, and applicable government laws shall be reviewed individually on a case by case basis. Any violation of these rules and policies may result in the loss of Internet privileges and computer privileges.



## **Transportation**

Girls Inc. transportation is a privilege. Girls that do not follow bus and van guidelines may lose their transportation privileges. Monthly bus fees are not refundable if a girl loses her privileges due to inappropriate behavior issues.

- Use a soft voice on the bus or van.
- Follow directions.
- Be respectful of other girls, transportation staff and the driver.
- Wear a seat belt and remain seated and belted until the vehicle comes to a complete stop.
- Only get off of transportation at your designated stop or when told by staff.



## **Science Lab and Art Room**

- Follow instructions carefully. If you do not understand a direction or part of a procedure, ASK YOUR GIRLS INC. STAFF BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THE ACTIVITY.
- Do not touch any equipment, chemicals or other materials in the laboratory or until you are instructed to do so.
- Perform only those experiments and work only with only those tools authorized by your Girls Inc. staff.
- Do not eat or drink in that laboratory. Do not use laboratory glassware as containers for food or beverages.

## Science Lab and Art Room (cont...)

- Notify Girls Inc. staff immediately of any unsafe conditions you observe.
- Sinks are to be used only for water. Check with Girls Inc. staff for disposal of chemicals and solutions.
- Keep hands away from face, eyes, mouth and body while using chemicals or lab equipment. Wash your hands with soap and water after performing all experiments.
- Experiments must be personally monitored at all times. Do not wander around the room, distract other students or interfere with the laboratory experiments of other.



## Clothing

- Any time chemicals, heat, glassware or power tools are used, and girls will wear safety goggles. **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE!** This includes girls with prescription eyeglasses.
- Dress properly during a laboratory activity. Long hair must be tied back and dangling jewelry and baggy clothing must be secured. Shoes must completely cover the foot. A lab coat should be worn during laboratory experiments.



## Accidents and Injuries

- Report any accident (spills, breakage, etc.) or injury (cut, burn, etc.) to Girls Inc. staff immediately, no matter how trivial it seems.
- If you or your lab partner is hurt immediately yell out to get a Girls Inc. staff's attention.
- If a chemical should splash in your eye(s) or on your skin, immediately flush with running water at the Eye Wash Station for at least 20 minutes. Immediately yell out to get Girls Inc. staff's attention.



## **Handling Chemical**

- All chemicals in the laboratory are to be considered dangerous. Avoid handling chemicals with fingers. Always use tweezers. When making an observation, keep at least 1 foot away from the specimen. Do not taste or smell any chemicals.
- Check the label on all chemical bottles twice before removing any of the contents. Take only as much chemical as you need.
- Never return unused chemicals to their original container.
- Never remove chemicals or other materials from the laboratory area.

## **Handling Glassware and Equipment**

- Never handle broken glass with your bare hands. Use a brush and dustpan to clean up broken glass.
- Examine glassware before each use. Never use chipped, cracked or dirty glassware.
- Do not immerse hot glassware in cold water. The glassware may shatter.

## **Heating Substances**

- Use of a hot plate is only allowed in the presence of Girls Inc. staff. Take care that hair, clothing and hands are a safe distance from the hot plate at all times.
- Heated glassware remains very hot for a very long time. They should be set aside in a designated place to cool and be picked up with caution. Use tongs or heat protective gloves if necessary.
- Never look into a container that is being heated.
- Do not place hot apparatus directly on the laboratory desk. Always use an insulated pad.



# Girls Incorporated of St. Louis

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[info@girlsincstl.org](mailto:info@girlsincstl.org)

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