

GIRLS INCORPORATED® OF OMAHA

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK



**Inspiring all girls to be
strong, smart, and boldsm**

Updated: April 2016



MISSION STATEMENT

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



WELCOME TO GIRLS INC.!

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 Front Desk staff or the Center Director if you have any questions.

Girls Inc. is licensed as a day care by the State of Nebraska. We follow the State's rules and regulations for the safety and wellbeing of all our members.

We are delighted to have you join Girls Incorporated of Omaha!

United Way
of the Midlands



EVERY DAY

We provide transportation for girls who attend schools on our van/bus routes. We provide dinner during the school year; during the summer we provide breakfast, lunch, and a light snack. We help with homework by providing paper, pencils, dictionaries, computers, encyclopedias, markers, calculators and other tools the girls may need to get their homework done. We also provide staff, volunteers, and paid homework helpers to help with homework. We staff both of our centers with caring, nurturing adults who want the girls to succeed. We provide counseling services for girls who may need help with mental health issues, family problems, social adjustment issues, conflict resolution, etc.

GIRLS INC. PROGRAMMING

During the school year, Girls Inc. offers what we consider our “core programming” between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. each day. This is the “power hour” at Girls Inc. This is the hour that helps make your daughter smarter, safer, healthier, and more confident. It is during this hour that we provide math and science enrichment, reading instruction, dance classes, art classes, fitness activities, guest speakers, college & career prep programs, pregnancy prevention and lifesaving HIV/STD awareness classes for our teens and more.



During the school year we do monitor **early pick-up**. If your daughter has a doctor appointment or an occasional reason to be picked up earlier than 6:00 p.m., 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 5:00 p.m. 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. **Girls who are picked up frequently during “power hour” may lose their spots in our program.**

Some specific programs, such as Operation S.M.A.R.T.[®], have limited spaces available and attendance requirements. Girls who are signed up for these programs but do not meet the attendance requirements may lose their place in the program and lose the opportunity to join other programs.

MEAL PRIVILEGES

If your daughter arrives after a designated meal time, please make sure she has eaten **prior** to arrival. Do not drop her off with outside food and please do not drop her off hungry!

- **Breakfast** – During the summer we serve breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
- **Lunch** – During the summer we take the girls from the North Center across the street for lunch at Holy Name at 11:30 a.m. At the Emma Lozier Center, girls walk across the street to the YMCA at 11:30 am.

- **Snack** – Girls receive an afternoon snack every day.
- **Snack-A-Licious** – On a Snack-a-licious day, girls with ID cards can buy snack items and juice drinks ranging in price from 5¢ to \$1. Girls ages 5-8 can turn in Snack-a-licious money to the Front Desk when they arrive. Girls should not share money or snacks. There is no set schedule for Snack-a-licious.
- **Dinner** - During the school year we serve dinner at 6:00 p.m. Girls who eat dinner will not be paged to the front desk for pick up between 6:00 pm and 6:30 pm.
If you don't want your daughter to eat dinner at Girls Inc., you may call the front desk and have her put on the "no dinner" list.

Girls are not required to eat everything on their tray. They will, however, be encouraged to try a bite of everything and to give new foods a chance. While girls must take a milk at each meal, they are not required to drink it. While we do not withhold food as punishment for behaviors, if a member consistently dumps all or most of her food in the trash, we will contact parents and offer the "no dinner list" option. Food is expensive.

FUN CLUB DAYS

Hours vary. **All** parents should check with the Girls Inc. annual calendar to confirm schedules for school holidays or teacher in-service days.

PATHFINDERS MENTORING PROGRAM

Mentoring has been critical to the success and achievement of many women. Pathfinders is a one-on-one match program where a mentor will work with a young lady until she is a senior in high school, and in some cases, through college. Parents interested in enrolling their girl(s) in this program must attend an orientation to receive an application. To learn more about Pathfinders, call our mentoring coordinator at 402-457-4676.



SUPERVISION

Caring, nurturing, trained adults provide supervision during Girls Inc. activities and programming. Teen girls, while supervised most of the time, are occasionally allowed to be on their own to work on a project, go to the restroom, type up homework, or some other sanctioned activity. Teens may be left alone, for example, for a few minutes in a teen center while a staff member steps out in the hall to have a private conversation with one girl. Girls Inc. is not the best environment for teens that require more supervision than this.

Girls Inc. is not a locked facility.

WE SAVE WEDNESDAYS

In an effort to promote financial literacy, Girls Inc. hosts savings accounts for Girls Inc. members. Members are encouraged to make weekly deposits into their accounts. Guidelines for the accounts are as follows:

- Girls can make deposits on a weekly basis.
- Girls Inc. will maintain the account until members are 18 and/or graduated from high school. At this time, members may withdraw all funds in the account.

Girls Inc. maintains the “mother” account and it is administered by the Director of Finance.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

GIRLS INC. CENTERS

- **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Summer and school-year program hours vary. All **DON'T MISS** announcements such as program hours, early closings, center closings, or other schedule changes will be posted on the large television screen by the front desk. Please make it a practice to check daily for any announcements.

Summer Session	7 a.m. – 6 p.m.
School Year Session	2:30 p.m. – 7 p.m. on school days

The Front Desk is generally open at 8 a.m. during the school year and at 7 a.m. during the summer for parent/guardian inquiries and information.

- **DROP-OFF & 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. There will be a \$10 fee for girls dropped off and not escorted into the building. Once in the building, **all** girls are required to sign-in at the membership computer.

Any members that will be walking to the centers, “walkers,” must have written permission on file from the parent or guardian.

- **MEMBERSHIP ID CARDS**

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 an ID card to attend any outside field trips or camps or to purchase Snack-a-licious. Lost or damaged cards **MUST** be replaced for a fee of \$5. Parents may elect to put \$5 on account to replace a card as soon as it is lost or damaged.

- **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 (unless your member is indicated as a “walker”).

Adults picking up girls from our centers may be asked to show photo 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 sign-out at the membership computer.

If you would like someone that is not on the membership application to pick your child up, **YOU** must come to the Girls Inc. front desk and add the name of that person. Upon the discretion of the Girls Inc. staff, added names may be accepted via fax.

If your child is not picked up by closing time, we will first call you 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 girl. Please make all efforts to pick your daughter up by the scheduled closing time.

- Any members that will be walking home from the centers must have written permission on file from the parent or guardian. For those girls who attend the Katherine Fletcher Center in North Omaha, Girls Inc. does not recommend letting your child walk to and from the Centers for safety reasons.

At the Emma Lozier Center in South Omaha, transportation for Southside Terrace residents will be provided during extreme weather and during the short days of the winter months.

- PARKING

At the Katherine Fletcher Center in North Omaha:

Please use the parking lot located on Corby St. For additional parking, feel free to use 45th St. on the west side of the building. Do not park on the north side of Corby St.



At the South Omaha Emma Lozier Center: Parking is prohibited in front of the Girls Inc. garage. Please use the lot located across the street from the center.

- TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a privilege. Girls who do not follow transportation rules and etiquette may lose transportation privileges.

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 save on our gas budget! If our transportation stops at a designated school and no girls 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. if your daughter does not need to be picked up from school.

Summer school van/bus routes will be posted on the large television monitor at the Front Desk. Fall transportation routes will be posted by mid-June.

- TEACHING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

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

Girls may receive a counseling referral.

Teens behavioral issues are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.



- PERMISSION SLIP POLICY

Additional permission slips may be required for participation in special programs, activities, or field trips; as well as for program evaluation purposes.

- PRE-MEMBERSHIP VISITS

Girls may attend one time as a visitor during regular after school 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. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit too. Visitors must sign in at the Front Desk. Visitors do not attend field trips.

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 Centers. Girls Inc. follows the Omaha Public



School guidelines for extreme weather; if OPS is closed, Girls Inc. will be closed.

Parents/Guardians must complete the weather/emergency cancellation procedure form in the Membership Application. This form lists instructions for your girl in the event 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. We share your completed forms with the schools so they will know, too.

If bad weather occurs during programming hours, emergency procedures will be followed based on the weather condition. During a tornado warning, girls will remain in designated areas of the building. We strongly discourage parents from removing girls from shelter during tornado warnings. Parents are welcome to take shelter in the building with the girls and staff during storm warnings. During a tornado warning, all staff will take cover in the parking garage along with the girls. The front desk will not be covered and you may not be able to enter the facility. At the Katherine Fletcher Center, there will be access to the FEMA-rated storm shelter in the parking garage through a door on the north east corner of the building.

- CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents/Guardians must keep address, phone, 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 Front Desk in person to update this information or make any additions or changes.

- FIRE & TORNADO DRILLS

Each Center will have periodic drills so everyone is prepared for emergency situations.

FEES

- MEMBERSHIP FEES

Girls Inc. membership is \$100 for any portion of a calendar year. Your fees cover a small portion of programming, transportation, and meal costs. The remaining costs are paid for through the generosity of community donors, corporations, and foundations. Membership fees are not refundable.

- LATE FEES

Girls must be picked up by closing time. Parents/Guardians picking up a girl after closing will be assessed a fee: \$10 for the first 1-10 minutes late and \$10 for every portion of 10 minutes thereafter. If late fees are not paid within two weeks, we will no longer provide transportation to our Center and a meeting between parent/guardian and the Center 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 are issued. 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 especially on the weekend, or an educational camp, and do not show up.

MEMBERSHIP POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- **CLOTHING & PERSONAL PROPERTY**



For both safety and programming reasons, girls must wear tennis shoes to Girls Inc. during the summer programming. Flip flops are not allowed. Some activities, such as art classes, gardening, and cooking classes are messy. Clothes should be comfortable and allow for physical movement.

Members wearing clothing too short/tight or revealing will not be allowed on Girls Inc. transportation. Members dropped off at the Center wearing inappropriate clothing will be required to change or be picked up from the center.

Girls **must** leave valuables (including but not limited to: iPods, mp3 players, electronic games, etc.) at home. Because many of the girls have identical coats, jackets, backpacks, etc... it is important that personal items are clearly marked. Girls Inc. is not responsible for lost or missing items. Girls under 13 are not allowed to bring purses. Tampons and sanitary napkins are available at the Front Desk.

- **HEALTH & MEDICATION**

Girls with a significant temperature, 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. 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 it in at the Front Desk. All medications must be sealed in a Ziploc baggie clearly marked with the girl's name and include:

- The medication in its original container
- Any additional item necessary to administer the medication (i.e. 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 Centers cleared of lice, from time to time, Girls Inc. staff may do head checks. Girls with lice will be sent home for treatment.

- 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 schedule is not a hardship.

- TELEPHONE

Teens may use cell phones during free time in appropriate areas. Younger girls are not allowed to use cell phones.

- INSURANCE

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

PARENT/GUARDIAN POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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.

- NOTICES, ANNOUNCEMENTS & INFORMATION

At the North Omaha Katherine Fletcher Center:
Important announcements such as closings, payment reminders, etc. are posted on the large television monitor by the front desk. Activity announcements, field trip permission slips, and consent forms for surveys are located by the television monitor.



At the South Omaha Emma Lozier Center:

All information, announcements, and permission slips are posted at the Front Desk.

- ORIENTATION

In order to become a member of Girls Inc. a parent/guardian must attend a yearly orientation session. Enrollment applications of 5 year olds must be accompanied by a birth certificate. Girls Inc. will make a copy of the birth certificate for our records.

- STAFF MEMBER CONCERNS

If you have a concern about one of our staff members, ask to speak with the Center Director, Director of Operations or Executive Director.

- VOLUNTEERS

Parents/Guardians, grandparents, and other interested adults are encouraged to get

involved in Girls Inc. programs. Volunteers are needed to assist with homework activities, serving meals, field trips, job shadowing, programming, and more. For more information, contact the Front Desk or the Director of Operations.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT & AGREEMENT

Parents/Guardians are required to fully complete the PARENT / GUARDIAN CONSENT & 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 your child's Immunization Records
- ◆ Consent for emergency medical treatment
- ◆ Release of Girls Inc. from any and all claims or causes of action
- ◆ Consent for your child to ride on Girls Inc. busses 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



INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

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 taken 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/guardians 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.

TRANSPORTATION

Girls Inc. transportation is a privilege. Girls that do not follow bus and van guidelines may lose transportation privileges.

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

OTHER RULES

There are special rules for specific programs and areas of the facility that include: the gym & fitness center, computer labs, the education kitchen, the wood shop, science labs, and the media lab. These rules will be posted on the Girls Inc. website before the beginning of the 2016 Summer Programming. Rules will be reviewed with the girls.



GIRLS INC. IN CYBERSPACE



Visit our website (www.girlsincomaha.org) to learn about our events, read our most recent news releases, or download documents such as the Girls Inc. membership application or a copy of this Membership Handbook.

The Girls Inc. Gossip Blog features photos, quotes, and video clips from girls, staff, program partners, and volunteers.



“Like” the Girls Inc. of Omaha page on Facebook. Facebook provides an opportunity for our fans to participate in a virtual community of support for Girls Inc. Learn more about day-to-day programs, see pictures of the girls, leave comments, and hit the “Like” button if you like what you see.



Follow Girls Inc. of Omaha on Twitter (@GirlsIncOmaha). Twitter offers on-the-spot information about daily programs such as basketball game scores or party events. It also provides links to articles and information about girls, gender equity, political advocacy, and more.

If you don't have a computer or Internet access at home, ask the Girls Inc. staff for help accessing one of our computers to catch up with Girls Inc. news.



GIRLS INCORPORATED OF OMAHA

LOCATIONS:

KATHERINE FLETCHER

CENTER

2811 NORTH 45TH STREET
OMAHA, NE 68104
(402) 457-4676

EMMA LOZIER

CENTER

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