

GIRLZ UNPLUGGED®

A YWCA MUSKOKA PROGRAM

A fun, welcoming space, where girls connect, learn, and grow together



At A Glance



Grades
5–8



Weekly during
nutrition/
recess



Small groups
(8–12
participants)



12–14
week
program



Facilitated by
trained YWCA
Muskoka staff



\$25 fee
(subsidies
available)

What Happens In Girlz Unplugged?

Every week, girls take part in engaging discussions, games, creative activities, movement, and role-playing that help them build confidence, friendships, and practical life skills.



Understanding
Emotions &
Coping



Building
Self-Confidence &
Positive Body Image



Healthy
Friendships &
Relationships



Communication,
Conflict Resolution
& Consent



Goal
Setting



Digital &
Online Safety



Inclusion,
Diversity &
Equity



Boundaries &
Personal
Safety

What Does A Session Look Like?



DIGITAL SAFETY

Girls discuss realistic online situations and work together to decide what is safe, unsafe, or something that depends on the situation.



CONSENT

Youth practice asking permission before borrowing belongings, taking photos, giving hugs, and other everyday situations.



BODY IMAGE

Participants create artwork celebrating what makes them unique while exploring confidence and self-worth.



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Girls learn practical ways to recognize stress and build healthy coping skills.

WHAT MAKES GIRLZ UNPLUGGED DIFFERENT?



CHOICE

Girls have the right to pass, ask questions, and participate at their own comfort level.



SUPPORTED

Our facilitators create respectful, welcoming spaces where every voice matters.



EMPOWERED

We help girls build skills, confidence, and critical thinking so they can make informed choices.



ENGAGING

Activities include art, games, discussions, movement, and hands-on learning—not lectures.

WHAT GIRLS & FAMILIES SAY

“I can talk to other people freely, and I should be kind and proud of how I look.”

“I can do anything if I put my mind to it.”

“My daughter felt very comfortable and supported. It gave her a safe space to talk freely, have fun, and make new friends.”

OUTCOMES GIRLS BUILD

- ✓ Greater confidence & self-esteem
- ✓ Stronger communication skills
- ✓ Healthier friendships
- ✓ Better emotional regulation
- ✓ Boundary-setting skills
- ✓ Safer online habits
- ✓ Increased resilience

WHY THESE TOPICS MATTER

Childhood and early adolescence are important years for building confidence, communication skills, healthy friendships, emotional regulation, and respectful relationships.

Research shows these skills can help reduce vulnerability to unhealthy relationships and other forms of gender-based violence later in life.



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

refers to harmful behaviours that happen because of someone's gender. This can include bullying, online harassment, unhealthy relationships, dating violence, sexual violence, and other forms of abuse.

WE FOCUS ON PREVENTION, NOT VIOLENCE.

Girlz Unplugged does NOT teach about violence through graphic or fear-based discussions. Instead, we focus on age-appropriate activities that help girls build protective factors like confidence, communication, and healthy relationships.



EVIDENCE-INFORMED PROGRAMMING

Girlz Unplugged continues to evolve based on current research and community needs. Recent research in Muskoka highlighted the importance of addressing factors that influence youth well-being. These findings have strengthened our curriculum while keeping the program engaging, interactive, and developmentally appropriate.

UPDATES TO OUR PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- Trauma- and violence-informed approaches
- Relationship-centred, strengths-based programming
- Youth-centred and culturally responsive practices
- Holistic models that consider various youth needs
- Expanded focus on digital technology & online safety



Questions? Please Contact: Amy Jones, Director of Youth Services.



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