



Girls First Launch Party Toolkit

In September 2018, Girl Guides of Canada is launching our [brand new program](#) for every branch of Guiding – and we want you to take the lead in planning the ULTIMATE celebration event for girls in your unit or community. Nationally- sponsored events are happening in Moncton, Vancouver and Toronto on September 29. We’re encouraging girls, units and Districts/Communities to plan their own events for that date or anytime this fall.

This toolkit will support you in creating a one-of-a-kind launch event for girls that showcases our amazing new girl-driven program. The toolkit will help you plan event logistics, activities, entertainment, budgeting and ensure your Girls First celebration is the ULTIMATE in fun for girls. You can totally customize your event so it’s unique to your community.

Ingredients for a GREAT Launch Party

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Overview

Three reasons to throw a Girls First launch party!

- 1** To celebrate with other girls the *new* Girls First program – a program that’s totally girl-driven
- 2** To invite the community to join in a girl-driven party and showcase what Guiding has to offer
- 3** Above all – to have F-U-N!

Party Date

Nationally- sponsored events are being held on **Saturday, September 29**. Find a date that works well for you and those involved in your launch party.

Party Agenda

You can include a mix of Girls First activities, fun speakers and maybe some entertainment and food. Think about the age of the girls attending and what length of time would be most appropriate.

For a sample agenda, please see [Appendix A](#).

Girl- Driven

Your Girls First launch party should be just like the new program – totally girl-driven. That means girls should be in the driver’s seat in terms of deciding the kind of party you want to plan and all of the key party elements, as well as hosting the event.

Along the way, girls will develop skills such as:

- ★ Public speaking
 - ★ Time management
 - ★ Teamwork
 - ★ Budgeting

Tips for adult allies working with youth coming soon to member zone.

Building your Launch Party Squad

The first step in creating a dynamic girl event team is to go get your girls!

See who would like to be involved in a team that will plan and run a fun party. (You'll want to give everyone an idea of what tasks they'll be doing and the time commitment involved, so they know if it's a good fit for them.)

Choose a fun, creative party planning team name that will say a little about what the role is. The National Youth Council picked the name 'Launch Leaders' for our national events, which you can totally use, too.

Our girl team name is:

Girl- Adult Alliance

The girl event team will play a starring role in planning key elements of your launch party, but they'll need some adult facilitation and mentorship along the way. Girls should be empowered to really own their tasks, while an adult ally, such as a Guider, can be there to offer support, provide some timelines and budgets, and check-in to make sure everything is going smoothly. Girls can then decide amongst themselves how they will divvy up the tasks involved (though it's not a bad idea to check in and ensure that no one feels left out or over-burdened).

Tip: Asking the team open-ended questions, such as "have you considered what you will do if..." will help guide them in the right direction, while allowing them to solve any problems themselves. If a problem has arisen, an ally should encourage them to brainstorm solutions rather than solving it for them.

A good place to start is by setting some goals of what girl planning team wants to accomplish with this event. Coming up with a party theme and budget is also good to do early on.

Divvying up the Tasks

Girls should be front and centre in planning your Girls First launch party. Check the list below for different options for girls' involvement:

- Finding a stellar venue
- Creating a fun, girl-friendly menu (maybe by organizing a potluck or making the food themselves)
- Finding party furniture and decorations
- Selecting the best Girls First program activities to offer at the party
- Creating an app or setting up registration software for the event (Tip: Eventbrite lets you create a free registration system and Guidebook has free options for making your very own party app!)
- Promoting the party on social media
- Selecting girl-positive speakers or cool entertainment to have onsite
- Preparing to serve as hosts and MCs

Other: _____

Think back to the skills everyone on the girl team might want to practice or develop through their leadership of this event. Use these skills as guidelines for selecting who does what on the team.

Who does what on the Big Day

During your launch party, the girl event planning team should be front and centre, to showcase all of the hard work that they put into making this **an awesome party!** Some suggestions include:

- ~~~~~ Hosting the main “stage” (whether or not there is an actual stage)
- ~~~~~ Greeting attendees, volunteers and talent as they arrive
- ~~~~~ Handling registrations/check-ins at the door
- ~~~~~ Leading or introducing the activities
- ~~~~~ ‘Crowd pumpers’ and GGC ambassadors – get creative in building a positive vibe at the event!
- ~~~~~ Interviewing girls on site to get their feedback or to make a video
- ~~~~~ Backstage support

Girls should be involved in a way that is most comfortable for them. In some cases, that will be speaking in front of an audience, and in others, lending back-of-house support. It's best to get an idea of everyone's comfort level at the start of planning to ensure that there are enough girls to fill the various roles and that everyone is happy with their role.

Girl Talent

Depending on what style of event you're planning, you might want to add some entertainment and/or inspiring girl-positive speakers. To have the whole day reflect the Girls First vibe, you can even go straight to the source for your onsite talent, and have local girl members perform and/or speak at the party.

You may wish to hold auditions for those interested, so you can get an idea of what your launch party will look like. Try to find speakers with an inspirational and up-lifting Girls First-inspired message. (You are throwing a party, after all!)

Tip: Consider the set-up you have to work with before asking girls to perform/audition. Maybe you can easily host a hip-hop dance duo, singer-guitarist or spoken-word artist, but not so easily an eight-piece band. Be clear about any limitations.

Girls First Activities

New Girls First programming content will be ready by September, in plenty of time for you to pick your favourites to demonstrate onsite at your local event. You can choose a few different activities from different Program Areas and Themes – it's a great way for everyone at the launch party to sample and test drive the new program!



Planning the Essentials - Budget

A good place to begin with any event is by establishing a budget. The key costs to consider include:

Venue: It's always good to start by seeing if you know of any locations that will let you use their space for free.

Menu: You may want to provide some food onsite. If you do, think about offering fun party foods and snacks that girls can have on the go.

Cake: What party would be complete without a cake? Is there something you can offer that's inclusive to everyone (e.g. peanut-free, gluten-free cupcakes)?

Laptops and speakers and screens, oh my!: If you want to play any videos or music, ensure you have a sound system to support this. If your venue doesn't include things like speakers, a screen, laptop, and anything else you may need, such as a microphone or fun mood lighting, you should look into borrowing or renting some equipment.

Crests: GGC will be developing a special crest for the Girls First launch parties. Stay tuned to hear how and where you can get some.

Other potential costs: Any swag or giveaways you'd like to include.

Miscellaneous: There'll likely be a few items that don't fit into any of the above categories.

It's great to have a good idea of what your expenses will be while also building in a little buffer room for unexpected costs that pop up.

Category	Resources needed	Cost	Notes
Venue			
Menu			
Cake			
Audio Visual			
Rentals			
Crests			
Other			
Miscellaneous			
Total:			

Ensure that the total in your chart does not exceed the amount available.



Planning the Essentials - Venue, Accessibility, and Inclusivity

Venue

Planning a party means creating a fun space to hold it in. Give some thought to the environment and the tone you're setting:

- What do you want the space to say? Try narrowing down an ambiance theme (think: campsites, glitter and glam, neon glow, Guiding colours).
- Girls might enjoy a casual set-up rather than a more traditional floor plan (think: sitting on carpets and bean bag chairs, eating at picnic tables).
Work with what you've got! If you have an old canoe and some camp chairs, why not include them on site?
- Above all, remember that this is YOUR Girls First launch party and it should reflect your local community. What is unique to your group that you'd like to highlight?

Accessibility & Inclusivity

When choosing your venue, you should look for a space that's inclusive to everyone's accessibility needs. [Appendix B](#) is an accessibility checklist you can use to help you plan. You may find that it isn't possible to check off all items on the list. In this case, consider whether you should mention these items when communicating to attendees. You may also wish to collect any special accessibility needs from attendees in advance, to ensure you're able to accommodate everyone.

Of course, making an event inclusive goes beyond just the venue. Other things to plan for include inclusive language in your forms and presentations, inclusive promotional materials, ensuring dates of your event do not fall on religious or cultural holidays, dietary restrictions, supporting those with diverse learning needs, and ensuring you are offering an LGBTQ2+ positive space.

Additionally, you may wish to research which traditional lands or treaty lands your venue is on and begin the event with a land recognition statement. You can use GGC's [Land Acknowledgement Template](#) for your event. Please see GGC's [FAQ - Indigenous Land Acknowledgement page](#) for more information.

For further reading on making spaces inclusive of transgender people, The 519 has developed a document called 'Creating Authentic Spaces,' available [here](#).

Planning the Essentials – Health and Safety

Following Safe Guide will help you identify any gaps in your plan. To guide your safety plan, ask these questions. Based on your answers you can determine what safety planning need to be put in place.

Who is coming? This determines the ratio and supervision requirements.

When is the event happening? Make sure you have enough time to plan and complete all the safety steps. It will also ensure that participants have the information well ahead of time and can mark their calendars.

What are the activities? The answer to this will help you take steps to make plans for the safe management of activities and prepare your emergency response plan.

Where will the event be? Ensure you are familiar with the space and can set up an emergency plan for the venue.

If non-member children will be attending without a parent/guardian, follow the guidelines in Safe Guide (Permission for Participation by Guests).

At registration, ask the parent/guardian for a cell phone or other emergency contact number during the event; ask for relevant health information such as allergies or accommodations.

Insurance > Your venue may ask that a contract be sign and for proof of insurance.

Adult allies: contact your Commissioner for information about how to get a contract signed if you don't know.

- To provide proof of insurance, adult allies should complete the Request for Insurance form (INS.01) and follow the instructions on the form for sending it to the GGC insurance broker.

Onsite Volunteers

Volunteers make the world go round. Where would we be without them?

If your event is larger than just your unit, you may find it helpful to have additional girls and Guiders as volunteers onsite. Some roles may include:

- ★ Set up
- ★ Handling registrations or check ins at the door
- ★ Leading the activities
- ★ Maintaining Safe Guide ratios
- ★ First aiders
- ★ Ensuring girls are met at a drop-off point
- ★ Working with venue staff to make sure everything is running smoothly
- ★ Acting as a media point person (if you plan on having media attend)
- ★ Assisting girls onsite as needed
- ★ Helping performers and speakers get ready backstage (and calming nerves)
- ★ Acting as an adult ally onsite – you may even want to pair an adult volunteer with each girl volunteer to act as a personal support network. This also takes the strain off of having one individual responsible for all girl volunteers onsite.

Ensure that your volunteers have a clear idea of what their role(s) will be. Giving them a detailed list of their tasks for the big day will help to paint a clear picture.

Finally, all hard work deserves to be appreciated, so don't forget to thank your volunteers (hello, thank-you cards!) for their help in making this event a success. Don't forget, this includes you, as the event planning team.

How would YOU like to be acknowledged (recommendation letters, sharing media that highlights your achievements, etc.)?

Evaluations

Don't forget to check in on what everyone thought of the experience.

Event Team

Once the event is over, take some time to reflect on your experience as an event planning team.

- Do you feel the event was a success (i.e. did you meet the goals you set for yourselves)?
- How did you find the planning process?
- Was it a reasonable amount of work?
- Did you feel supported?
- Do you feel that everyone contributed evenly?
- What would you suggest to change for the next time?

Attendees

What did your attendees love about your launch party? What were they not-so-keen on? It's a great idea to provide a short survey after the event to get some feedback from your attendees. See if you can collect everyone's email onsite or in advance, so you don't need to use paper surveys (save the trees!). See [Appendix C](#) for some sample survey questions.

You may want to provide an anonymous feedback option, such as Survey Monkey (free) so that everyone can be very candid with their opinions.

After the event, GGC wants to hear from you! Feel free to share highlights, photos, videos and testimonials to events@girlguides.ca, so that we can spread the **love**.

Girls First Key Messages

At your launch party, you may be asked questions about Girl Guides of Canada or our new Girls First program. The following key messages should help you confidently answer any questions that come your way.

About Girl Guides of Canada

Girl Guides of Canada (GGC) empowers every girl in Guiding to discover herself and be *everything she wants to be*. In Guiding, girls from 5-17 meet with girls their own age in a safe, inclusive space to explore what matters to them.

GGC's Vision is "a better world, by girls"

GGC's Mission is "to be a catalyst for girls empowering girls"

Guiding has long played a leading role in helping girls develop the skills that will take them far in life. Programs focus on self-esteem, mental health, financial literacy, healthy relationships and outdoor experiences

About Girls First

In September of 2018, we're launching our new Girls First program in every branch of Guiding. Units will have the choice of transitioning to this new program at any time throughout the Guiding year.

Girls First puts girls in the lead with a girl-driven approach. With Girls First, girls will be in the driver's seat as they shape their Guiding journey. Each girl will choose what she wants to learn and do through a range of programming options that are fun and exciting – and that align with her world.

Looking for more? GGC's PR Toolkit on Member Zone is full tips for taking great photos, creating effective social media posts and more.

Go to: <https://bit.ly/2EmQgrC>

(Girl members – your Guider can help you connect to this document)



Appendix A: Agenda

(Based on a Two-Hour party)

Opening (approx. 25 mins)

- Land Recognition
- MCs welcome everyone and share some excitement (5 mins)
- Girl speaker shares an inspirational story related to Guiding (5 mins)
- Girl talent performs (song, dance, etc.) (5 mins)
- Girl talent performs (song, dance, etc.) (5 mins)
- MCs thank the talent and give instructions for activities (break into smaller groups, etc.)

Break (5-10 mins)

- Girls can use the washroom or get some refreshments

Activities (approx. 30 mins)

- Test out some Girls First activities and HAVE FUN

Break (5-10 mins)

- Girls can use the washroom or get some refreshments

Closing (approx. 15 mins)

- MCs rally the group and introduce the next segment (2 mins)
- Girl speaker shares an inspirational story (5 mins)
- Girl talent performs (song, dance, etc.) (5 mins)
- MCs thank everyone for being a part of this event and invite them to have cake (3 mins)

Cake cutting and informal time (approx. 20 mins)

- Girls can unwind after a fun event by sharing cake and some free time

Appendix B: Accessibility Checklist

- Does the event have full wheelchair access to all areas?
- Does the location have fully accessible toilets?
- Are there planned spaces for people who use wheelchairs/power chairs during any presentation or performance?
- Is the event area large enough and has it been arranged to allow people to move around easily?
- Have those with disabilities been considered in case of a fire emergency and has this been made clear to staff and volunteers as well as when doing any 'housekeeping' announcements?
- Is there good lighting (bright without glare)?
- Do you have paper copies of any presentations available in an accessible format for those to read during any presentations? Are all other handouts and materials available in an accessible format?
- Do you have signs for your event? Are they clear?
- Do you have a hearing loop (sound system for those with a hearing aid) and is it working and switched on? Is there someone available who can use this?
- Will your event include speeches or performance? If so, will there be signing for people with hearing difficulties? Do all speakers know they need to speak clearly, not too quickly and face the audience?
- Where possible, have you eliminated or reduced background noise during the event?
- Is there a quiet area for those needing 'time out'?
- Have you asked about specific requirements on any registration forms and actively welcomed any queries about access?
- Did you include a map and /or public transport/parking information at registration?
- If people need assistance, will they be able to find volunteers/staff easily?

Appendix C: Sample Survey Questions

Thank you for attending our Girls First Launch Party! Please help make our next event even better by completing our quick survey:

What was your favourite part of the party? (List all components)

Did this party meet your expectations?

Yes

Somewhat

Not Really

Don't Know

Did this party get you excited for the Girls First program?

Yes

Somewhat

Not Really

Don't Know

(note: this might help Guiders with their approach to the new content within their units)

Did the hosts do a good job of making everything clear and easy to understand?

Yes

Somewhat

Not Really

Don't Know

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being the best possible answer):

How would you rate this party overall? 1 2 3 4 5

How would you rate the activities that you took part in? 1 2 3 4 5

Appendix C: Sample Survey Questions

Thank you for attending our Girls First Launch Party! Please help make our next event even better by completing our quick survey:

Please rate your overall experience on a sliding scale, below:

Boring	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Fun
Uninspiring	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Inspiring

Open Ended:

What did you feel was missing, if anything?

Do you have anything else you'd like to share?

Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

