**THE GIRLS’ BRIGADE NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED**

(including Girls’ Brigade and iconz4girlz)

**GBNZ CODE OF CONDUCT**

*Please read this document before signing the GBNZ Code of Conduct Declaration Form*

**WELFARE, SAFETY AND CONTINUING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

We have a duty to provide an environment in which girls and leaders feel valued and secure, where they are safe at all times and where they are protected from physical and emotional harm.

IFG must be in a place where girls can develop a sense of self worth and can grow as individuals. Any adult behaviour, which is not supportive of this, is inappropriate.

In our programme this duty is exercised through respectful, caring relationships.

In physical activities this duty is exercised through sensible risk management.

***The primary responsibility of all adults in GB/IFG is the welfare of the girls.***

The welfare, safety and personal development of girls will be promoted by:

* Appointing leaders only after consideration of their personal standards, character and ability to develop healthy relationships
* Creating a positive, supportive and loving environment in all IFG activities
* Respecting each girl’s individual rights including her rights to be safe, to have her own beliefs and opinion, to express herself, to choose who she associates with, to have privacy, to express her culture, to feel secure, to be treated fairly, to learn in her own way and to be protected by the law
* Encouraging each girl to achieve her own potential
* Not showing favouritism or concentrating only on girls who cause trouble
* Never putting down or belittling a girl
* Maintaining good discipline by caring relationships and relevant programmes
* Giving positive reinforcement for good behaviour
* Exercising sensible withdrawal of privilege for bad behaviour
* be firm but fair
* Redirecting inappropriate behaviour into healthy activity
* Never physically punishing a girl (any physical blow of force is assault, a criminal offence.)
* Never allowing unhealthy relationships to develop
* Exercising discernment when providing comforting or consoling cuddles
* Never prolonging physical contact
* Reporting conduct which appears to be inappropriate to a suitable adult leader
* Taking a personal interest in each girl so that she feels special
* Communicating clearly and openly
* Respecting and dealing with any complaints from girls
* Maintaining an appropriate age difference between leaders and girls
* Complying with all legal requirements

**PARENTS /CAREGIVERS**

Parents/caregivers have a right to know about anything affecting their daughter. Their wishes must always be respected and specific requests actioned in good faith.

Good communications with parents/caregivers will be aided by:

* Talking individually with parent/caregivers when a girl joins the Unit.
* Explaining what theGB/ IFG programme is all about.
* Showing that you are always concerned for their daughter’s welfare.
* Demonstrating competence, reliability and high standards in everything you do.
* Ensuring that all activities are safe.
* Earning their respect and trust.
* Dealing with issues proactively and answering questions openly.
* Keeping then informed about everything affecting their daughter.
* Explaining your role as a leader.
* Explaining that most GB/IFG leaders are volunteers and that membership fees are for the running of an effective programme.
* Explaining the training you have received.
* Taking a personal interest in each girl.
* Getting to know the parents/caregiver and their family situation.

### THE GOOD NAME OF GBNZ, GB AND IFG

We all have a responsibility to promote and protect the good name of GBNZ, GB and IFG.

This means that all leaders will present a true and positive image of GBNZ, GB and IFG and its personnel, policies and practices through their examples, words and actions.

GB and IFG leaders will also exercise wisdom and sensitivity in situations where their reputation could be harmed and the good name of GBNZ, GB or IFG compromised.

For leaders, promoting and protecting the good name of the IFG includes:

* Respecting each girl’s individuality and privacy.
* Respecting each girl’s physical and intellectual abilities and limitations.
* Knowing their own limitations.
* Always staying within their own capabilities.
* Maintaining openness in all communications.
* Ensuring all activities are open to parents/caregivers.
* Not being completely alone with a girl in a private or confined place.
* Remaining within sight of others if working one-on-one with a girl.
* Not demonstrating first aid on a girl.
* Not assisting girls with personal hygiene or dressing except where health or disability requires it.
* Never touching a girl in a way that could be misconstrued negatively.
* Never ridiculing, isolating or rejecting a girl.
* Never mistreating a girl in any way.
* Discussing the situation with a leader if a girl appears to have a ‘crush’ on that leader.
* Withdrawing from the situation if a girl appears to a have a ‘crush’ on them.
* Withdrawing from the situation if they are emotionally disturbed or distressed or feels an abnormal affection for an individual girl.
* Not being involved in any overtly sexual behaviour.
* Dealing with any accusations of impropriety in an open, honest way.
* Not allowing suspect situations to continue just to protect a leader’s rights.
* Never exaggerating or trivialising possible abuse.

**CHRISTIAN STANDARDS**

Girls are strongly influenced by the role models provided by leaders. The example provided by leaders should always demonstrate Christian standards.

This includes:

* Seeking the best for each girl.
* Respecting each girl’s individuality.
* Showing regard for God, prayer and the Bible.
* Respecting the Church and its ways.
* Never using bad language.
* Respecting the environment.
* Being positive and encouraging.
* Being thankful to God and others.
* Being willing to point out inappropriate behaviours with caring concern.
* Being willing to accept advice and correction from others.
* Being a good role model, as an adult and as a Christian.