

Hot Tips for leading IFG



This resource is provided for you as leaders in this new initiative. We believe this will excite you and enable you to run fun filled, creative weekly programmes for girls in your Church and Community.

Coach's Tips

We will provide simple suggestions "Coach's Tips" throughout this curriculum outline. Check them out because they will help you with the sessions you run.

Here are the first ones:

1. Did you know that young people tend to ask 3 questions:
 - A. Who's in charge?
 - B. What are the rules/boundaries?
 - C. What happens if they are broken? (What are the consequences and will they be fair for all?)
2. Girls' are complex creatures ranging from tomboy through to ultra-feminine.
3. Use experts to help run your programme, it's easier for you and your leaders. Brief them well and give your girls a WOW programme!
4. Never cancel a programme because of "bad" weather, make sure you have an alternative, or go regardless; take good clothing. (Warm, waterproof, lots of towels and flasks of hot milo) this avoids confusion re-scheduling problems and messed up programmes.

Relationships:

Successful programmes don't just happen, they require careful planning, strategy and above all they are based on relationships between you and Jesus, your leadership team, the girls and the parents and their families.

- If your faith is weak or ineffective then it will be difficult for you to model a positive relationship with Jesus to your girls.
- Work is always more fun when you get along well with the people you work with.
- As you run your programme, be deliberate in the way you communicate with the girls and their parents, keep the communications to a high standard and frequency.

Programme:

This curriculum takes away the need for you to brainstorm every term or during the holidays to find new ideas of what activities you might be able to do for the next term. The activities set out in the programme are designed to suit girls in your age group. They will be as keen as ever to come along and they will want to bring along their friends.

The meetings you run will not always be at your regular "base", some sessions will be away from your regular meeting venue. A known fact in teaching is you can have your classroom anywhere-life is a classroom.

Planning:

Read through this curriculum plan and take note of the events that will require prior planning like booking of venues, inviting visiting speakers, prior notification for transport or resources for teaching or construction.

- Write the information onto *creative notices* at the beginning of the term along with leaders' names, addresses and phone numbers, overviews of the programme and dates.

- Keep sending out weekly reminders if possible. In spite of all the communication you will still find parents forget things.

Keys:

- Chat to the girls a minimum of three times every programme night.
- Use their first name.
- Find out and memorise as much as you can about each child.
- Memorise parents' names and greet them personally every programme night.

The smooth running of the programme for the first three weeks is vital to retain the enthusiasm of the girls. The result then will mean their continued attendance in the programme and raise the likelihood of them bringing their friends along. The programme for the first few weeks is designed to help you establish and get to know the group. It is important to do this prior to going on any off base activities. This will assist in your risk management and control of the group.

During the early days:

- Create teams of girls with natural links, ie keep friends and school mates together where possible.
- Study the games and other activities prior to the night and make sure you are familiar with the whole night's sessions.
- Make any necessary bookings and re-confirm in plenty of time.
- Do invitations and notices in advance.
- Camps and sleepovers need to be planned at the beginning of the year, and parents advised in plenty of time as to when these are happening. A RAMS form needs to be completed prior to the event events - a copy of this is under Resources at the back of this book.

Coach's Tip

- Send out a notice on the first night to parents /care givers thanking them for allowing their girls to come to the programme and outlining the events for the whole term.
- Highlight variations to the normal meeting place or times so that there's no confusion.
- When meeting at alternative venues always get parents to *drop off and collect* from the same location if at all possible. This eliminates confusion and girls being taken to the wrong place or at the wrong time.

Documents

Keeping records from day one is vital to the smooth running of your programme. If you fail in this area, don't stress, just appoint a person who is gifted to take that responsibility on for you. Included with your Leaders pack, there is a resource where we have forms to assist you to keep records for attendance, contact details, parents names and details, payment and collection of fees, uniforms issued and paid for, and keeping track of awards earned.

Nametags and Team Formation

The following is a simple way of putting girls into teams of even numbers:

- As each person enters for the first time, at the beginning of the first few evenings, she will be issued with her coloured nametag.
- Assemble the piles of different coloured cards on a table inside the door ready to hand out when they arrive.

- As they arrive, welcome them personally and write their names onto the card using the permanent marker.
- When distributing the tags, alternate the colours in the same sequence each time, so the colours are evenly distributed.
- Prepare the corresponding larger coloured cards and stick them onto the wall in opposite corners /ends of the hall. Therefore, when you want the girls to gather in their teams, all you need to do is instruct them to assemble in front of the card that is the same colour as their nametag and automatically all the teams will contain the same number of members.

Starting the Night with a SetUp

The purpose of the SetUp is to bring the girls together and to indicate the start of the evening programme.

One idea for a SetUp format is to use a horseshoe shape with three teams facing inwards.

The Senior Unit Leader would ask the Team Leaders to fall in first, followed by the teams.

The expectation is that the girls will stand in lines in an orderly manner and the evening's programme can begin. It may take a couple of weeks for the girls to get used to this SetUp.

Coach's Tip:

Start firm, relax later. Whenever necessary it is easy to go back to being firm. It doesn't work the other way round.

Training parents

- Advise parents to keep checking the programme (let them own the responsibility to check notices and/or find out what is happening and what the girls need to bring).
- Always run your programme as advertised, never cancel, then parents soon learn that it is always on. This eliminates confusion, rescheduling difficulties or programme problems.
- Train parents to get their girls to bring the correct gear e.g.: raincoats, towels, warm gear, correct footwear, hats and sun block.
- Remember there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing.

Discipline & Control Issues

Rewards

- One of the best ways of maintaining control of your group is to reward teams and individuals for positive actions.
- This can be done quickly and easily with a team points system where the leaders can award set point rewards which are recorded on the roll cards.
- Announce and start the rewards system from the first night of the year.
- Award points throughout the evening and announce the weekly team winner at the end of the night, and/or the beginning of the next week's programme.
- Each team competes for the team of the week.
- At the end of term, the team with the most weekly wins is awarded the team trophy or given a special treat like a visit to a fast food outlet or movies, video and popcorn party night, or other appropriate reward.
- Keep the consistency of the rewards through the whole year.

Consequences

All children's ministries need rules because we are dealing with humans! Girls will always push boundaries to see if you mean what you say; therefore rules and consequences need to be outlined clearly from the beginning. If new members join the programme part way through the term, they need to be told of the expectations by their group leader. This can be part of the leader's/marker's responsibility to the new members.

A good idea is to get the girls to come up with their own rules - this way they own them, and ensure that everyone adheres to them.

Suggestions for steps in dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

- Warn of the consequences
- Carry out the consequences: miss a game, a treat or loose points for their team.
- Call parents of girls with consistent poor behaviour
- If girls are regularly spoiling everything for the others, send them home with parents (but only as a last resort).

People management (Control)

- To settle the girls in a large group situation you may:
 - Blow a whistle.
 - Place your hand up in the air
 - Clap your hands in a set sequence (three short & two long claps etc
- To settle a small group you may:
 - Place your hand on the shoulder of the person you need to settle. (Be careful here and observe cultural sensitivity).
 - Insert the person's name into the sentence you are using with an emphasis.
 - Stare/glare at the person you need to settle, while you continue talking (or without changing your activity).
 - Stop what you are saying & look at the girls you need to settle.
 - Whisper in a soft voice so they will pay extra attention so they can hear.
- When Giving Instructions, always give the instruction AFTER you have set the boundaries. For example:
 - Say: "When I say move, I want you to", instead of: "I want you to..." because they will start moving into the activity before you have completed the instructions.
- Attention Spans are short (about 1 minute per year of age)
 - So keep using different methods/strategies of delivering your message so you keep them focused.
 - If you notice girls fidgeting, wriggling and generally causing a disturbance, then you have lost their attention and it is time to change your method of delivery or focus.

Leadership Structure:

Examples of Leadership structure are given below, use which best suits your unit.

Senior Unit Leader

The Senior Unit Leader is:

- Responsible for organising the weekly programme, planning and prayer meetings,
- Heads up outings, camps and other activities.
- Co-ordinator of the evening's activities or alternatively delegates that responsibility.

Alternative to Senior Leader: The Collective Leadership Concept

One issue that can be a stumbling block to initiating new children's ministries is people's reluctance to take on the time commitment and overall responsibility of the Senior Unit Leader's position.

This Collective Leadership concept allows:

- The group to function effectively by breaking down the Senior Unit Leader's responsibilities into small chunks and spreading the load between all leaders and/ or parents.
- The end result is the all leaders working together to make the Unit work without having to overload one person.

This concept allows all leaders to have 'buy in'. Parents can be included in the process also. This style is very Biblical. In 1 Corinthians 12: 12-26, it tells us we are all parts of the Body of Christ and have been gifted with different skills & talents to use for the glory of God and to "make the body work smoothly". (1 Cor 12:25)

The various leadership roles can include the following:

- Communications:
 - Parent/Church Liaison.
 - Writing up notices and handing out every week.
 - Media (photography etc).
 - Promotions in the Church.
- Prayer.
- Up front MC style leading.
- Weekly and Term Planning.
- Games planning and fronting.
- Devotional planning and delivery
- Finance and records:
 - Invoicing.
 - Receipts/banking
 - Awards ordering & recording etc.
- Uniforms.
- Special events i.e. camps, Sleepovers and Away trips.
- Materials and Resources.
- Person to convene the next leader's meetings and set the agenda etc.

The role definitions could also be broken down to the following personnel:

- Co-coordinator: Administration and planning.
- A Front Person.
- Devotions deliverer/organiser.
- Convener to convene the next leader's meetings and set the agenda etc.
- Communications.
- Resource person.

Note:

- If the situation arises where there are too many leaders in the team, some of these leaders could start a new group in the same city at a different location/night.
- Leadership meetings could take on a corporate style where the leaders meet at a coffee bar or restaurant, instead of at a home.

Senior Unit Leader/Unit Leaders:

- Leaders work directly with each of the teams assisting them in activities, maintaining order, ensuring their safety etc.
- It is usual to have one Unit leader per team of up to about eight. (Teams of over 10 tend to reduce the quality of the experience.)
- In Units with large numbers there will be two Unit leaders per group.
- Leaders ideally should pray for their girls regularly.

Assistant Unit Leaders & Helpers

Their responsibility is to provide back up for the Unit Leaders and the Senior Unit Leader.

Team Marker:

The Markers are the peer leaders of each team and their responsibilities are:

- To assist the Unit leaders in setting up, team control, distributing of notices and or equipment, clean up.
- The Markers can be appointed by the Senior Unit Leader or a Unit Leader because of their age (the oldest) or because they show the most leadership potential, initiative or other character traits suitable for the role.

Assistant Marker:

This role is ideal to assign to either the smallest team member (to boost her confidence) or a team member who is by nature "good" at distracting the team. The added responsibility generally will encourage those girls to behave and be a role model.

Administration Committee:

It is preferable to appoint people outside the Leadership Team for these administrative roles:

- Uniform co-ordinator.
- Treasurer
- Secretary

The Christian Education Committee of your church may be able to advise or appoint/take on these roles.

Leading an IFG Unit is not a difficult thing. It is a team effort.

- There are lots of different jobs to be done.
- Each Unit leader may have an upfront role, rotating on occasions if you agree.
- The Senior Leader shouldn't always need to do the "up front" leadership of every part of the programme.
- The responsibility of running a successful Unit does not lie on the solely on the shoulders of the Senior Unit Leader.
- I.F.G. leading is a team effort and the whole team needs to pull together with each leader adding her own strengths to ensure the overall success of the Unit.

Fees:

As with all organisations, there are membership fees to be paid. It is suggested that Units charge each member between \$80 and \$130 per year. Of this, \$45 will be paid to the National body. This is in keeping with what BB are charging their ICONZ Units. There will also be a charge for badges earned.

Assessment of your programme:

You can use the Big Kiwi FROG model to ask yourself if the programme you are running at any time is balanced between the five SPACI components which is the basis for our Awards. The programme has been written based on this.

SPACI means -

Spiritual, Physical, Adventure, Community, Interest.

Big Kiwi FROG is an acronym for:

Balanced between all the SPACI components

Kiwi adventure and culture

Fun

Relevant

Objectives

God centred

Points to ponder:

- Are the girls having fun and enjoying themselves?
- Is the programme and/or sessions relevant to their age group or interests?
- Are we meeting the objectives of our programme?
- One of the objectives of IFG is to bring girls to Christ, therefore we need to continually ask ourselves if our programme is *God centred* enough to point the girls in that direction.

Suggested timeframe for the weekly programme:

Pre set-up arrival time and games - arrive at least 15 minutes before the programme commences, and until commencement time, a leader can take the girls for games as they arrive.

Set-Up - 10 minutes, this is the formal start to the evening's programme when the teams will come together for opening prayer, roll call etc.

Devotions 10-15 minutes.

Games 10-15 minutes

Badge work main activity 40 - 50 minutes

Clean up 5 minutes

Home Zone 5 minutes - gather together for final prayer and handing out of notices

If at any stage you need extra help, guidance or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the IFG Resource Centre who will pass on your request on to one of the Ministry Team.

The contact details for the Resource Centre are:

Telephone:

09 442 5055

Email:

info@iconz4girlz.org.nz