



**“Girls in the Game”©
Play Book**

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Sports Dreams, Inc.**

**Welcome to Girls In the Game,
an empowerment fitness program designed for adolescent school girls.**

This collaborative effort between Sports Dreams, school systems, and community volunteers is a successful intervention that promotes a healthier lifestyle for preteen aged girls. We target elementary and middle school girls who face intense peer pressure and hormonal and other changes at this life stage. Media influence in regards to body image impacts girls so strongly that risky behaviors such as eating disorders, promiscuity, smoking and drug use have become more common place.

Sports Dreams, Inc developed **Girls In the Game** to provide a safe and nurturing environment where girls can try new activities, become more comfortable in their bodies and learn important life skills to carry them into their futures. The program is preventative in nature, seeking to improve overall health, and avoid the health risks associated with obesity and a sedentary lifestyle. This twenty-four session holistic program is brought to your location twice weekly for twelve weeks. University interns and other community volunteers monitor progress and help mentor the girls registered in the program. Paid or volunteer staffers oversee **Girls In the Game**, helping the girls discover new ways to move their bodies and explore the world of physical fitness. Healthy snacks are always provided along with bottled water. Nutritional information, journaling and discussion of life skills are important components of the program.

The **Girls In the Game** program is adaptable to many situations and environments. For example, it can (and has been) partnered with after-school tutoring and homework assistance; or it can concentrate on one physical activity or provide fewer or more than twenty-four sessions. **Girls In the Game** responds to the national epidemic of obesity by providing this program in schools, public housing communities, community centers or civic groups. Pre-teenage girls are “saplings in the hurricane.” We hope that you will consider including **Girls In the Game** in your curriculum. Your girls will love it.

Sincerely,

Miche Franken
Executive Director
Sports Dreams, Inc.

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Rules/Guidelines

Girls In the Game Guidelines

Arrive on time- ready to play.

Respect yourself and each other.

No yelling or screaming.

Keep your hands & feet to yourself.

Stay with the group.

Do not use equipment until advised.

No soft drinks, candy, gum etc allowed.

Keep your valuables with you.

Listen and respect guest speakers.

Be considerate of the site/location.

Helpful Tips for Positive Results

- ❖ Always lead by example- model good judgment
- ❖ Keep it fun- model creativity, positive energy
- ❖ Always be prepared for the unexpected- model flexibility & resiliency
- ❖ Paperwork should be user friendly- model building trust
- ❖ Give lots of praise- model confidence & support
- ❖ Go over the “Norms” until it sticks- model commitment & consistency
- ❖ Use incentives & rewards for being punctual, respectful, brave, or helpful

Identity:

- ❖ Learn everyone’s name and use it often
- ❖ Send reminders, invitations & note cards by mail, phone or e-mail
- ❖ Personalize with custom name tags & journals
- ❖ Introductions to the group- use games, partnering, circle discussions

Communication:

- Remember that many girls **do not like to speak out** for fear of judgment from peers- model acceptance
- Others **do not like to write** for fear of criticism of spelling, grammar etc.
- Talk one at a time- model respect
- Scatter adults amongst the girls – model civility

Equality & Teamwork

- Meet girls on their level
- Ask for their input about norms, incentives, food choices, field trips
- Everyone helps set up, tear down, teach, assist and contribute

Girls In the Game will give you a chance to explore new options in food, friendships and fitness.

WARM UPS

Flexibility

- Twisters: Girls will be divided into pairs and will stand back to back while one partner will have a ball. When the music starts the girl with the ball will do a quarter turn to the right while their partner does a quarter turn to the left and they exchange the ball. The girl with ball then does a half twist and her partner twists the opposite direction and then they exchange the ball again.
- Sit and reach

Strength and muscle mass

- Partner Sit-ups – Girls will be divided into pairs, lying on their backs with feet facing in and connecting ankle to ankle, making sure that knees are bent in a crunch position and they are lying on their backs. Each pair is given a ball; when the music starts the girl with the ball over her head does a curl up. The girl without the ball is curling up to receive the ball from her partner. The partners exchange the ball and then they proceed to do the same movement until the music stops.

Push-Up Pitch and Catch- Objective of activity is to increase muscular strength and endurance, balance, eye- hand coordination and cooperation. This is a challenging version of the traditional push-up. Girls are in the traditional push-up position and partners have a fleece ball. Girls will pass the ball back and forth using the right hand seeing how many times they can successfully “pitch” and “catch” the ball back and forth. Variation: Have girls use their left hand. Add an alternating right hand, left hand sequence. Switch partners often.

Team Builder Activities

Introduction

These Team Builders are numbered but do not have to be used sequentially. Leaders should explain to the girls:

Through out our 12 weeks together, we will be learning about what it means to be a member of team. One way to think of a team is as *a group of people who are working together to accomplish a common goal*. It's easy to recognize a team in the context of sports, but we are all members of teams in different areas of our lives – at school, in the workplace, in our community, in our families, and in our recreation. **We have control (FLC Asset #37) over what kind of team player we will be in all of those situations. An important part of being a successful team is for team members to know each other well.** The following activities will help us get to know each other better so that we can create and enjoy a successful team.

Team Builder #1: Who am I?

The leader will have a list of topics that they will have written on overhead or poster board on a variety of topics. When the music starts the girls will find a partner and discuss the item that was displayed. Examples of these are favorite activity to do when not in school, hobbies, number of brothers and sisters, participation in any sports, favorite food, vacation spot, favorite school subject etc. When the music stops they stop discussing and when the music starts again they find another partner and discuss the next predetermined subject.

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Team Builder #4: Back Snatching

This is an icebreaker and mixer with a lot of action and movement. Tape an index card with the name of a cartoon character or well - known person to the back of each girl. Each person is given an additional index card and pencil. When the music starts girls attempt to write down the names of others while trying to keep others from seeing and writing down the name on their own back. When the music stops the person with the most names written down of other girls is the winner.

Team Builder #5: I Got Your Back

The group is divided into pairs. They sit on the floor back to back with arms linked. When the music starts with a little cooperation and teamwork the pair stands up still connected. Variation- Have two pairs sit back to back and link arms and on the music they all stand up. For an added challenge and laugh keep adding pairs until the giant amoeba can't stand up anymore.

Girls in the Game” Curriculum

SESSION 1

Welcome & Introduction of the Girls

Complete & collect all registration forms.

Baseline surveys

- Conduct Psychological Survey approved by Director & Program Committee

This will be the baseline for the social-psychological metrics and should be completed before the other activities to ensure there is minimum influence on the answers given.

HEALTHY SNACK

Note to leaders: We will provide healthy snacks every day. No soft drinks, Kool-aid, candy, chips, etc. will be allowed in the class. Explain that the food choices we make are an opportunity to be good to our bodies by providing:

- what is needed for sustained energy (as opposed to “highs” and “lows”)
- healthy growth (i.e., calcium for bones, protein for cell production)
- disease prevention/healing (vitamins and minerals).

Throughout the 12 weeks, continue to reinforce to the girls that **good nutrition** is a choice we can make. Sports Dreams believes food choices are about personal power and strength. There are influences we should be aware of – like the marketing by soft drink and candy companies and peer choices. Part of the personal power and control we have in our lives is to make our own intelligent choices – based on the facts – about what we eat.

Bottled water will be the beverage of choice for the Girls In the Game Program.

Program Overview – Executive Director

- **Introduction of Staff, Volunteers & University Interns**
- **Rules**
- **Schedule**
- **Goals**

Wrap Up

For Next Time: Think about what motivated you to sign on to this program and what you would like to get from our time together?

Session 1 continued:

Getting to know your team

Welcome to “Girls in the Game!” We look forward to getting to know each of you and having a lot of fun together. Over the course of this year, we will try a lot of different sports and learn a lot about our bodies. To be healthy, we all need to get plenty of fun activity, fresh air, rest, and make the best choices we can about what we eat. We’ll talk a lot about how to do all that and have lots of fun together.

There are a few rules we all need to follow in order to build a great team:

1. Be on time and ready to play.

Our program will start at 3:45pm sharp.

2. Participate

Whether our activity is a team or an individual sport, or a group discussion, we all need you to be in the game. You will always be a winner if you TRY!

3. The team is a safe place

Every member of our team has the right to feel safe and respected. Many times we will share our opinions with each other, ask questions, and say what’s on our minds. Even if we don’t agree with something a team mate says, we can always agree to let her express herself and know that she will not be judged. Every one of us is worthy and important.

4. Have Fun

Getting fit is fun! Even if we’re trying a sport you don’t think you’re good at – so what? The most important thing is to enjoy yourself. Smile! You’re doing something great for your body, mind and spirit!

5. R-E-S-P-E-C-T

For each other and most importantly, ourselves. Don’t interrupt your team mates, listen to the lessons, and follow the golden rule: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.”

Activity – Team Building

This year we will be learning about what it means to be a member of a team. One way to think of a team is as a group of people who are working together to accomplish a common goal. It’s easy to recognize a sports team, but we are all members of teams – at school, in our community, in our families, and with our friends. We have control over what kind of team player we will be. Will you choose to be a helping member of the team? A leader of the team? It’s up to you.

An important part of being a successful team is for team members to know each other well. The following activities will help us get to know each other better.

The Human Knot:

Groups of 8-10 people get in a circle. You can't grasp the hands of the person next to you. You must grab one person's right hand with your right hand and another person's left hand with your left hand. At no time can you let go of hands. The group must communicate, cooperate, and work together to get their group "untied" and back in a circle.

Me, Myself, and I:

Take some time to complete the following questions about your favorite subject, yourself! When everyone is finished, we'll circle up and share some of our responses. How much or little you share is up to you, but remember:

1. The circle is a safe place to share; you can count on being respected for your opinions.
2. The more you share about yourself, the better your teammates can get to know the real and wonderful YOU!