

Research Tool: the Girl-Driven Program Index

The Girl-Driven Program Index (GDPI), like all the measures in the Tool Kit, can be used simply as a tool for evaluation or it can be incorporated into program practice as a tool for self-reflection and assessment. The GDPI was designed to be a one-time assessment of program philosophy and the degree to which a program involves girls in leadership and decision-making. However, program staff report that it provides a useful tool for self-reflection and to determine whether the program participants share staff perceptions of the opportunities available in the program. The GDPI provides a simple means of assessing how responsive a program is to the youth involved. The GDPI can be a useful tool because it inventories a wide range of ways that girls can be involved in program development and leadership.

Purpose of the GDPI

By comparing staff and girl responses, it is possible to see whether girls recognize the opportunities that staff feel are available. This facilitates self-assessment and reflection on how girls experience being in the program. For example, in the Collaborative's findings, girls said that they were more often formally involved in program leadership and development than staff said they were. This may indicate girls' sense of inclusion in leadership, or it may be an indication of leadership opportunities they would like to have, or it may indicate both of these. By discovering these differences on the GDPI, programs can identify important issues for discussion.

Administering the GDPI

The GDPI was designed to be completed by the program director. There is also a part for girls to complete – the Girls and Young Women Index. For this, we suggest three girls with different levels of involvement with the program.

There are no particularly innovative ways of administering the GDPI: staff must fill out the checklist and so must the girls. Filling out the GDPI is fairly self-explanatory, and directions are provided for each section. Since the girls' portion is short, it shouldn't be too time-consuming or taxing for them to do. Girls should be asked to complete the checklist on their own without

conferring with others. They will need a quiet place in which to do this.

Creative Applications

While *doing* the checklist is a relatively inflexible task, there are many different ways that the GDPI can be used:

- *Self-assessment:* The GDPI can be taken once each year as a self-assessment. For one program in the Collaborative the GDPI provided a framework for developing more ways to include girls in program leadership and development.
- *Staff development:* A group of staff might complete the entire GDPI and compare their responses to see if there is a shared understanding of program assumptions and practices.
- *Exploring girls' experiences:* The entire GDPI might be given individually to girls in more of an interview format so that more of girls' understanding and experiences of the program can be explored.
- *Program construction:* The GDPI can also be used to guide the construction of a program for girls. The different elements presented in the GDPI provide a framework for understanding what needs to be thought through and included in any girls program.

Guidelines for Interpreting GDPI Data

Data from staff and girls in individual programs can be compared with one another to see where similarities and differences are. Keep in mind that differences in responses are not a problem; they can open up discussion and deepen the program's impact.

Program staff will need to think through issues of confidentiality of girls' responses. One way to deal with this is for girls' responses to be tallied together so that each individual girl's responses are not identifiable.

Thoughts on Preliminary Statistical Analysis

- *Using the GDPI to develop program models:* Across a group of programs (like those in the Collaborative), the GDPI can be used as a way of developing different program models. Indices for various components of the GDPI can be developed. Index scores can be related to the forced choice questions that reveal program assumptions and

philosophy.

- *The Safe-Space Subindex:* For the Collaborative, an index was created to assess how the program creates safe space for girls. Girls' scores were averaged and compared with staff scores on the same sections of the GDPI. In this "Safe Space Sub-Index," the greater the similarity between staff and averaged girl scores, the higher the safety level indicated.

Girl-Driven Program Index

*Program Director Assessment
Girls & Young Women Index*

Program Director Assessment

Date: _____

Name of Program: _____

Name of Person completing Survey: _____

Title: _____

Ages of Girls/Young Women completing Survey: _____, _____, _____

Length of Time with Program: _____ mos., _____ mos.,
_____ mos.

Name of Organization where Program Resides (if any): _____

Age of Program: _____

Age of Parent Organization (if any): _____

Describe Parent Organization or Organization(s) with which you share programming space:

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: For each section, you will find directions for completing the items in that section. Some of the questions ask that you select only one response from a list; others have you respond to each item. You should answer based on what your program *actually* does directly with participants. Even though this is in checklist form, please feel free to make comments in the margins if you would like to clarify your response.

A. Program Structure

The format of the questions in this section varies. Sometimes you need to answer all the parts of a question. Sometimes you are asked to select only one.

1. *Complete all of these.* Are current program participants formally involved in/as:

- | | | |
|--|-----------|----------|
| program planning? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| developing activities? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| program implementation? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| the board? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| an advisory board to the program? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| strategic planning? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| fundraising? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| staff – paid? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| staff - volunteer? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| funder site visits? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| budgeting? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| advocating for the program? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| leading training - internal? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| leading training - external? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| evaluating sessions as participants? | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| evaluating the program as researchers? | Yes _____ | No _____ |

2. For the questions below, “participants” are the girls/teens/young women who participant in the program. “Older teens” are between 16-19 years old, “young women” are women between the ages of 20-30 and “women” are over 30. Please indicate the age range of the participants in your program: _____.

a. *Complete all of these.* We have the following explicit mentoring relationships within our program (that means that the older member of the pair is definitely called a mentor and that there are program activities devoted to making mentoring relationships work):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| participants with older teens | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| participants with young women | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| participants with women | Yes _____ | No _____ |

b. *Complete all of these.* The following intergenerational pairings are an important and intentional part of our program but they are not formally a mentoring component:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| participants with older teens | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| participants with young women | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| participants with women | Yes _____ | No _____ |
| participants with parents/guardians | Yes _____ | No _____ |

c. *Choose only one:* Between the generations, the persons who learn and benefit most are:

- participants (that means the younger person)
- the older member of the intergenerational pairing
- both generations benefit equally

d. *Choose as many as apply:* In our program, we have structured ways where:

- participants learn from older teens, young women or women
- participants learn from parents
- women or young women learn from younger participants
- parents learn from participants
- participants learn from community members
- community members learn from participants
- participants learn from institutional partners
- institutional partners learn from participants

3. *Select the one that is most often true:* In the last year, when we have changed our program or its activities, we have usually done so because:

- participants made suggestions for other activities that they wanted
- there was a process for participants to give feedback that staff then used to make changes
- lack of participation suggested that changes were needed
- a process is in place where participants and staff assess what's working together
- we needed to meet specific funding criteria
- parents had concerns that we felt we had to address
- staff felt that the program wasn't having the effects desired for participants

4. After a girl/young woman has been in the program long enough to master the basic skills that our program offers, she might then move on to the following positions of greater responsibility and leadership in the program or connected with the program: Please list:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

B. Program Content

In this section, check off as many responses as apply to your program. You are also invited to write in additional responses.

1. In our program, we have developed program activities so that participants (age range: _____) can learn to be able to:

- do well in school
- conduct research
- speak powerfully in public
- negotiate
- avoid violence
- improve their communication skills
- stand up for themselves
- experience opportunities outside their communities
- train others
- be advocates for themselves and others
- develop their own program activities
- understand group dynamics
- attend and participate in board meetings or other meetings of adults
- facilitate meetings and groups

Please list other specific skills that participants develop through program activities:

2. In our program, we have created ways for participants to learn about:

- their cultural heritage
- the history of the community
- women's history or history of the movement for social justice of their people
- how different institutional power structures work
- violence against women and girls
- poverty
- capitalism and class differences
- sexism
- spirituality
- body image
- homophobia/heterosexism
- sexuality and reproductive health
- racism and prejudice against different ethnic communities

Please list any other areas of knowledge that help participants understand and negotiate the complexities of their lives and link their own experience with larger social issues:

Please **circle those items** above for which you have created structured (rather than organic) opportunities for participants to learn. For example, conducting actual training or discussion

groups are structured activities. Having issues come up in conversation and being discussed as a result is organic.

3. In our program, participants learn to see themselves as being a part of a process of change in which they can make a difference because:

a. In their individual lives, they learn to:

- communicate better
- be more patient
- take better care of themselves
- be reflective
- have greater understanding of people and issues
- seek help and resources
- provide community service
- be more self-protective
- strategize and develop campaigns
- research and find evidence for their perspectives
- ask authorities to be accountable
- organize with others to make demands

b. In their social networks (peers and families), they learn to:

- communicate better
- be more patient
- be reflective
- have greater understanding of people and issues
- seek help and resources
- provide community service
- strategize and develop campaigns
- research and find evidence for their perspectives
- ask authorities to be accountable
- organize with others to make demands

c. In their communities, they learn to:

- communicate better
- be more patient
- be reflective
- have greater understanding of people and issues
- seek help and resources
- provide community service
- strategize and develop campaigns
- research and find evidence for their perspectives
- ask authorities to be accountable
- organize with others to make demands

d. In institutions (such as schools), they learn to:

- communicate better
- be more patient
- be reflective
- have greater understanding of people and issues
- seek help and resources

- _____ provide community service
- _____ strategize and develop campaigns
- _____ research and find evidence for their perspectives
- _____ ask authorities to be accountable
- _____ organize with others to make demands

C. Program Assumptions

Please select *only one response* even though you may feel that there are several responses that apply. Pick the one response that you feel *best* captures your program.

1. Our program is based on an understanding:
 - a. _____ that girls have strengths that can be built on
 - b. _____ that girls need help to understand and overcome the risks and problems that they face
 - c. _____ that girls can develop strengths by learning how to deal with the risks and problems in their lives
 - d. _____ that girls have strengths but they need support to learn how to deal with the risks and problems that they face in their lives

2. Our program is unique because we believe that:
 - a. _____ adult staff who care about girls see and provide what they need to grow into a productive life
 - b. _____ girls' parents or caretakers, and their hopes for their girls, are critical to include in developing the program
 - c. _____ girls understand what they need most and have the capability to direct program development
 - d. _____ adult staff and girls have to come together to explore what girls want and need

3. Our program was created by:
 - a. _____ the founders assessing what girls need based on what they saw in the community
 - b. _____ input from parents/caretakers and other leaders in the community
 - c. _____ women and girls coming together to find out what girls need in the community
 - d. _____ systematically assessing what girls in the program and community need

4. Our program is currently developed by:
 - a. _____ adult staff assessing what program participants need based on what they see happening in the program
 - b. _____ input from staff, parents/caretakers and others in the community
 - c. _____ informally assessing what girls need in the community and program

d. ____ systematically assessing what girls need in the program and community

5. In our program and organization, we believe that the most important function that staff performs is to:

a. ____ teach girls skills and provide them with knowledge and opportunities that will allow them to have greater options

b. ____ provide girls with the care and intimacy they don't often get at home

c. ____ provide girls with an example of mature, competent womanhood

d. ____ create an atmosphere where girls are treated equitably and they learn not to compete with each other

D. Program Environment

Please note the directions for each question.

1. *Choose one:* In our program, we keep what girls or young women tell us in confidence:

- strictly confidential, unless we let the girl know that, by law, we have to notify someone
- generally confidential because we have a responsibility by law to parents or guardians
- we assume that parents have a right to be kept aware of what's happening with their child

2. *Choose as many as apply:* Girls confide in staff about:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> what's most important to them | <input type="checkbox"/> what they are afraid of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> exciting new things that they are doing | <input type="checkbox"/> family troubles and conflicts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> their hopes and doubts about the future | <input type="checkbox"/> survival issues (housing, safety, food) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> concerns about weight or appearance | <input type="checkbox"/> sexuality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> positive relationships they are developing | <input type="checkbox"/> faith/spirituality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> drugs or alcohol use | <input type="checkbox"/> violence in their lives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conflicts with teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> conflicts with friends/other girls in the program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conflicts with others outside the program | <input type="checkbox"/> dating relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> concerns about school | <input type="checkbox"/> problems with other staff or persons connected with the program |

3. *Choose as many as apply:* In our program, we do the following to deal with girl-on-girl conflict:

- have discussion groups where girls learn to know and trust each other
- teach girls to control their anger and be more polite with each other
- have a process of team building
- explore with girls why girls fight and who benefits
- meet with parents of girls who fight
- conduct conflict resolution training
- have peers address the issue
- create groundrules for fair fighting and respectful interactions
- don't allow girls who fight to be in the program
- suspend girls who fight from program activities
- have a no-tolerance policy for girl/girl conflict in the program
- have a no-tolerance policy for girl/girl conflict anywhere

4. *Choose as many as apply:* In our program, girls learn about differences by:

- exploring different cultures
- exposure to different racial and ethnic groups of girls
- creating ways for girls of different backgrounds to spend time with each other

- _____ learning to be more tolerant of others
- _____ working on issues together
- _____ talking about differences
- _____ realizing that we share being girls and women together
- _____ understanding systems of power and the ways they divide us

5. *Choose as many as apply:* In our program, staff members:
- bring participants home with them
 - develop close personal relationships with participants
 - see participants in their free time, outside of program activities
 - take participants places, not during program activities
 - give and accept gifts from program participants
 - typically develop a unique relationship with one special girl
6. *Choose as many as apply:* Within the program, we feel:
- supported by the organization that sponsors us
 - supported by parents of the participants
 - that there are leaders in the community who will go to bat for us
 - that we are looked to within the community for leadership
 - that we have significant credibility with institutions in the area
7. *Please circle your response:*
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Our programming space is exclusively ours: | Y | N |
| We share physical space in our programming with men and boys | Y | N |
| We conduct co-ed activities: | Y | N |
| How often? _____ | | |
8. List the outside institutional pressures that affect the program:

Example:

THANK YOU!!

Girls & Young Women Index

This is a checklist that is an easy way to tell some things about your experience in the program. Read each question and check off your answers. Some questions ask for only one check and some you give as many answers that are true for you.

If you have any questions or if something is confusing, ask about it.

If you want to add something or make a comment, you can write it in the margins.

Key words:

"program" means the organization or project that you and other girls and young women come to afterschool, on weekends or in the summer

"staff" means the women who are leaders and who have as their job to run the program

1. At this program, I can...

- | | | |
|---|---------|--------|
| help plan activities and events | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can create activities for us to do | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can make our plans happen | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can be on the board of directors | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can be an advisor to the program | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I am part of long-term planning | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I do fundraising | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can work here for pay | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can be a leader as a volunteer | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I participate in funder site visits | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I develop budgets for projects | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I speak to groups and others about how important the program is | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can lead training in the program | Yes ___ | No ___ |
| I can lead training in other places | Yes ___ | No ___ |

I give feedback to staff about things Yes _____ No _____
I can be a researcher and evaluator Yes _____ No _____

2. Pick the one that is most true for you.

When I tell a secret to a staff person,
_____ it is kept very secret, unless they say they have to tell
someone
_____ sometimes told to my parents or guardian
_____ it isn't kept a secret

- 3. I tell the staff what's most important to me** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell staff all the exciting new things I do** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell them what I hope for or doubt about my future** Yes ___ No ___
- I speak to staff about worries I have about weight** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell them about good, new relationships** Yes ___
No ___
- I talk with them when I take drugs or drink** Yes ___
No ___
- I talk to them about fighting with teachers** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell them about fights with others** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell staff about worries I have about school** Yes ___
No ___
- I talk to staff about things I'm afraid of** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell staff about troubles in my family** Yes ___
No ___
- I share with staff my worries about living** Yes ___
No ___
- I talk with staff about my sexuality** Yes ___
No ___
- I speak with staff about religion and faith** Yes ___
No ___
- I tell staff about violent things that have happened** Yes ___
No ___
- I talk to staff about conflicts with girls in the program** Yes ___
No ___

I talk with them about dating relationships Yes ___
No ___

I speak with them about problems with other adults in the program Yes ___
No ___

4. Check all the ones that are true for you. In our program, I've learned how to handle conflict and fights with other girls because

- We learn to know and trust each other by discussing things** _____
- I've learned to control my anger and be polite** _____
- We're learning how to build a team** _____
- We talk about why girls fight and who benefits** _____
- I know that staff will meet with my parents if I fight** _____
- I've had conflict resolution training** _____
- We work things out together** _____
- We have groundrules for fair fighting and respect** _____
- Girls who fight aren't allowed to stay in the program** _____
- Girls who fight are suspended from activities here** _____
- We have a no-tolerance policy for girl/girl conflict here** _____
- We have a no-tolerance policy for girl/girl conflict anywhere** _____

5. *Check as many as are true for you.* In this program, I've learned about differences between girls (like race, ethnicity, class, religion) because:

- We explore different cultural traditions** _____
- We meet different racial and ethnic groups of girls** _____
- I get to spend time with girls who are different from me** _____
- I've learned to be more tolerant of others** _____
- We all work on issues together** _____
- We talk about our differences** _____
- We realize that we share being women/girls** _____
- We understand how society works to divide women** _____

THANKS A LOT!

Girl-Driven Program Index
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Acknowledgments:

We are grateful to Shelley Gaines, Director of the Girls Resiliency Program, Branch, WV and Diane Brown, Director of the STAR Program at Research for Action, Philadelphia, PA for comments on several drafts of the measures and for their leadership as Co-Chairs of the Learning & Inquiry Workgroup for the Ms. Foundation for Women's Healthy Girls/ Healthy Women Collaborative Fund. Beth Richie of the University of Illinois at Chicago, Deborah Tolman of the Wellesley Center for Research on Women, Lyn Roberts of Hunter College, and Rhoda Linton of the Union Institute all gave valuable comments that clarified the instrument significantly. Additional thanks to Margaret Brennan, former Director of the AIDS & Adolescents Network of New York and to representatives of White Buffalo Calf Woman Society in Mission, SD, Mi Casa Resource Center for Women in Denver, CO and the HOPE program of Asians and Pacific Islanders for Reproductive Health in Long Beach, CA for participation in reviewing a version of this measure as part of the Learning & Inquiry Workgroup. Crucial feedback on the measure came from Amara Perez of Sisters in Action for Power, Portland, OR, Lateefah Simon of the Center for Young Women's Development, San Francisco, CA, Grace Kong of the Asian Pacific Environmental Network, and Maria Castro of Mi Casa. We also owe a great deal of thanks to Cydney Pullman, Director of the Labor Institute's Girls Project, New York City, and Kim McGillicuddy, of Youth Force, Bronx, NY, for bringing together groups of girls and young women from their programs to pilot test this instrument. Their responses were invaluable in giving us an on-the-ground understanding of what it would be like for organizations to use this instrument as an assessment tool. Finally, thanks to the staff of the Ms. Foundation for Women and to the staff and participants of the organizations funded by Ms. Foundation Healthy Girls/ Healthy Women Collaborative Fund for their enthusiasm, practicality and interest in changing the lives of girls and young women.