

24 April 2023

Dear Girl Guiding Volunteers,

In February, then Chief Commissioner, Rosemary Derwin, wrote to all parents, carers and guardians of our Youth Members outlining the commitment of Girl Guiding in Australia to providing girls and young women with an environment where they are safe, protected, and respected. You can find a copy of this letter on the [GGA website](#).

Today I am writing to you, as our wonderful volunteers, to acknowledge those actions and behaviours you take to ensure our ongoing commitment to being a Child Safe Child Friendly Community.

1. Child Safe Child Friendly Framework

Our Girl Guide Promise and Guide Law are the foundation of the expected behaviour of all those in Girl Guiding, as is our Code of Conduct. When was the last time you read the [Code of Conduct](#)? Is it displayed in your meeting place? If you are a Unit Leader, does your Unit have Unit or camp rules that guide everyone's behaviour to provide a safe and respectful environment?

2. Girl-led Guiding

Our philosophy of girl-led Guiding offers Girl Guides the opportunity to acquire leadership skills, become self-reliant and develop a sense of wellbeing and self-worth. Listening to girls, seeking feedback on all aspects of their experience, talking about the "Tell Us What You Are Worried About?" Form for Youth Members gives agency to our youth to speak up.

3. Supervision Ratios

It is extremely important that adult: youth ratios are adhered to when undertaking any Girl Guiding activity. These ratios depend on what the activity is, where it is being held, the age of the youth involved, the abilities of individuals and is applicable whether the youth are Girl Guides or others such as friends or siblings. An easy reference is available on the [Ratio at a Glance page](#).

4. Girl Guiding Events

In offering Girl Guide members lots of opportunities we need to remember that any event that is held under the banner of Girl Guides must adhere to the [Girl Guides Australia Child Safe Child Friendly Framework](#). As Leaders, we don't think twice about

safety and risk management during normal Unit meetings and activities such as overnight stays and camps.

However, Girl Guiding events also include activities such as a Girl Guide stand at the school fete, a fundraising disco where friends and siblings are invited, participating in your town Anzac Day march, and centenary celebration of the local District. All Girl Guiding activities require Leaders to pro-actively identify and manage the risks of the activity and abide by adult:youth ratios. Risk assessment plans are required for any adventure-based activities and activities that are not routine or predictable.

5. Respecting Boundaries

Girl Guides provides a great space where girls can be themselves and is different to home and school. Boundaries with Youth Members must be maintained at all times, both during and outside of Girl Guide activities. The [Guidance Note - Boundaries When Interacting With Others in Guiding](#) is a great resource to remind ourselves of ways to respect boundaries and interact positively with all youth. This respect includes ensuring at least two adults are present, making affirmative comments to redirect behaviour, minimising physical contact when rendering first aid or providing comfort and limiting sharing personal or adult information with youth.

6. Digital Platforms

Social media provides lots of different ways for us as volunteers to share and connect with our Guiding families. Girl Guiding promotes the safe use of the internet and social media by Youth Members and it is important to bear in mind that Adults in Guiding must not engage with Youth Members through social media personal profiles.

Girl Guides Australia has produced a range of resources to promote and support Girl Guide Leaders and Volunteers to provide a safe, protective, and respectful environment for all Girl Guides and other youth that engage in Girl Guiding activities. These can be found on [Guide Lines](#).

Many thanks for the amazing job you do in providing opportunities for girls and young women to experience fun, friendship and adventure throughout their Girl Guiding journey.

Yours in Guiding,



Helen Reid
Chief Commissioner
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