

Sister Circles for Girls: Addendum ©

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This is an addendum and companion document to Sisterhood Agenda's [Ultimate Guide to Starting Your Own Sister Circles](#). It should not be used as a stand-alone facilitator guide. Use it when you are doing circle work with girls; it is not applicable to circle work with adult women.

1. Structure

Sisterhood Agenda utilizes evidence-based, well-researched strategies to maintain program interest, flow, and engagement with its curricula and program guides for girl programs such as [A Journey Toward Womanhood](#) and [SisterCamp](#). Our knowledge and experience gives us a foundation from which to make these recommendations. One of the most important aspects of girl empowerment services that most successful programs have in common is structure.

While Sister Circles for adult women can be open-ended and self-facilitated, Sisterhood Agenda has found that this approach is NOT the best strategy for a younger group of girls. When implementing Sister Circles for Girls, specific themes, components, and activities that are adult-facilitated by a trained professional are most successful for active participation and maximum impact.

Specificity often provides structure for youth. Specific themes, components, and activities at a specific meeting time and place will provide structure for your Sister Circles group. Remember when you were a young girl? You were likely easily distracted and your psycho-social development favored the ego. It was all about you and how you were feeling. Your attention span was probably significantly shorter than it is now. Today, younger generations regularly exposed to technology have even shorter attention spans than you had when you were younger. Structure and limits regarding activities and timing will lead to greater engagement for girls.

2. Themes

Once a safe space is established, the girls in your group will likely be very open to sharing a lot about the issues that are on their minds. (To learn more about how to effectively establish a safe space, see Sisterhood Agenda's [Ultimate Guide to Starting Your Own Sister Circles](#).)

To keep your group on track and on topic, Sisterhood Agenda recommends themes when doing Sister Circles for Girls. You are free to create your own based on the needs and interests of the girls in your circle. Sisterhood Agenda's Top Ten Themes for Sister Circles for Girls:

1. Self-Esteem
2. Mean Girls
3. Relationships

4. Sex
5. Beauty
6. Role Models
7. Meditation
8. Social Media
9. Anxiety
10. Depression

3. Training

Unlike Sister Circles for adults, specialized training is recommended for Sister Circle for Girls. Specialized training will prepare the facilitators for issues that typically arise, including but not limited to: self-disclosure, time management, confidentiality, and trauma.

Sisterhood Agenda provides Sister Circle training. There are small strategies that can make a big difference in setting the tone and mood. For example, here is a tip: even if you are a teacher and accustomed to instructing from a desk, sit with the girls in the circle to facilitate so that you become part of the circle. Do not allow anyone else in the room to assume any traditional position of power (like sitting at the desk) when you have Sister Circles with Girls.

The circle process encourages high levels of self-disclosure and sharing. This high degree of sharing requires preparation. When one of your circle members bares her soul, training helps you be prepared by knowing what to say and do. In addition to emotional and mental processes at work, there are also legal ramifications that may be specific to youth in your geographical area.

4. Integration

This one is very important: Sisterhood Agenda further recommends that you integrate a Sister Circle group for girls with an existing girl empowerment strategy rather than use Sister Circles as your only youth strategy. Ideally, your girl empowerment program can act as a primer for Sister Circles for girls and, even better, they can be integrated into a more comprehensive girl power strategy.

This Sisterhood Agenda recommendation requires that you have a girl empowerment program in place first before your group of girls participate in Sister Circles. Why?

Sister Circles for girls should not be the first girl program that you implement, nor should it be the only girl program that you have in place. Girls who have participated in programs like [A Journey Toward Womanhood](#) and [SisterCamp](#) are much more further evolved in gender consciousness and self-awareness than girls who have not.

In addition, their communication skills, including active listening, are usually better. These programs prepare them for Sister Circles participation where they can reap maximum therapeutic benefits.

There are many ways to integrate Sister Circles. Sister Circles can act as a mechanism for shifting gears as a “break” in your standardized set of activities, in the middle or towards the end of programming. Sister Circles may also be announced as a new program for girls who have completed/graduated from the primary girls program. In this way, your Sister Circle for girls can function as vital therapeutic add-on. In this capacity, it does not replace the main program, but enhances and stabilizes it.

In addition to providing continued self-development opportunities for girls, Sisterhood Agenda has used add-on programming to keep track of program participants while continuing to serve them. This is a practical application for long-term tracking and longitudinal evaluation. We have also used add-on programming for leadership development; girls who meet regularly can elect officers to have ownership over their own group.

5. Final Thoughts

Sisterhood Agenda prepares you for success with this uniquely powerful circle approach to sisterhood and healing for girls. Instead of relying on the age and maturity level of its group members, be prepared to accept girls where they are, allowing them to express themselves and reap the benefits of Sister Circles.

Good luck and let's stay connected to each other in sisterhood!