

# Guidance Note: Developing Unit and Camp Rules



## About this document

This document is provided as a supplementary document to the Girl Guides Australia (GGA) Child Safe Child Friendly (CSCF) Policy. In particular, it supports the Procedures for Element 2 – Becoming a Girl Guide: Clause 7: Youth Members and Element 10 – Girl Guiding in Practise: Clause 8 Digital Platforms.

## UNIT RULES

Unit Leaders should include in their Unit Program at least one meeting every year which focuses on the development of Unit Rules. Leaders might also consider revisiting the Unit Rules when a large group of new girls come into the Unit.

Unit Rules will help provide the foundations for building a friendly and cooperative Unit and is a way to demonstrate everyone's commitment to a Child Safe Child Friendly organisation. Girls participating in the development of their own Unit and Camp rules promotes girl-led development of safe and welcoming spaces aligning with Principle 2 of the National Principles of Child Safe Organisations, that is "Children and young people... participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously".

Unit Rules should be displayed in the meeting place for everyone to see if possible and a copy sent to the Region manager for information each year.

A good starting point for Unit Rules is the GGA Code of Conduct. Leaders will need to adjust the content of the GGA Code of Conduct to the age of the Youth Members in the Unit.

The Leader's Handbook is a valuable resource to support a Leader in her role. In particular, Chapter 6 has a section titled 'Your Unit – a special place for your Guides'.

All ideas for developing Unit Rules can be used to develop Camp Rules.

## Why have Unit Rules?

Unit Rules are important so that all members of the Unit, whether they are an Adult in Guiding or a Youth Member, know the expectations of them while involved in any Unit activities. Rules that have been developed by the Unit together allow Guides and Leaders to understand what behaviour is expected of them at a Unit meeting and what behaviour they can expect from others. They also provide Leaders with a reference point to speak to girls about their behaviour.

## Why get the Guides involved in developing Unit Rules?

Girl Guides is all about being girl-led and the development of Unit Rules is no different. The best rules are the ones created by the Guides themselves, their ideas, not just something imposed by the Leaders. Guides will need to work together; problem solve and connect to make their Guiding space

one that feels safe and positive for them. If they have developed them, they are more likely to follow them.

### **What makes good Unit Rules?**

- Positive: make the rules about what Guides should do, not what they shouldn't do
- Specific: the more specific a rule, the easier it will be for Guides to follow it
- Consistent: all the rules should work together and not contradict each other

### **How to get started**

1. Talk about the Girl Guide Promise and Guide Law and how these help guide our behaviour and thinking.
2. Talk about what rules are and why they might be useful. What rules are we expected to follow at school, in the community, or at home?
3. Brainstorm ideas of what behaviours are expected at Guide meetings and activities – they can do this in Patrols and then share with the whole Unit. Ask Guides for some words that describe what it feels like being a Girl Guide. e.g. fun, respected, safe.
4. Identify what rules might address these behaviours, group them together.
5. Work together to have a core list.
6. Discuss what behaviour looks like if you follow the rules.
7. Ensure all members come to a consensus about the list they have created and reflect if these will be understood by the Unit.

### **How many rules should you have?**

A total list should be around 5-6 but think about what works for your Unit. There may be more for camps/overnight stays as this could be a new environment for girls and rules help set expectations for all. See Camp Rules section below.

### **Are there any required Unit Rules?**

Unit Rules should include safety in the digital space. Things for the Unit to consider include:

- Will you allow mobile phones or other digital devices to be used at Guides – if and when might it be appropriate?
- Do you need a rule about communicating with each other via social media, personal emails and/or mobile phones? (Remember: the Australian Government has placed bans on some online platforms preventing access to young people under the age of 16.)

Please refer to Element 10. Clause 8 of the Child Safe Child Friendly Framework for more guidance on Guiding in the digital space.

### **How to make the Unit Rules work?**

- Display the Unit Rules prominently in your meeting place

- Talk about the Unit Rules regularly including what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour
- Provide positive reinforcement when the Unit Rules are followed
- Reflect on the Unit Rules as required

### What happens if Guides don't follow the Unit Rules?

Ask Guides about what they think should happen if the Unit Rules aren't followed. Remind them that these are the rules that the Unit agreed on. Discuss with the Guides any behaviour that may need attention and review the Unit Rules if required.

### CAMP RULES

The development of Camp Rules should be part of the planning undertaken before every overnight stay or camp.

This can be done at a Unit level for a Unit overnight stay/camp. For larger camps, the Leader in Charge will determine how Camp Rules will be developed.

All girls and adults attending the Camp should be aware of the Camp Rules before they arrive at camp.

It is good practice for Camp Rules to be sent out with the *Activity Consent and Health Form For Youth Members* (ADM.27). It is important that parents/guardians are aware of the Camp Rules and the expectations Girl Guides has around the behaviour of their daughter at the overnight stay/camp **before** their daughter attends. When communicating the Camp Rules with parents/guardians, they must be informed that by sending their daughter to the overnight stay/camp they are agreeing to support the enforcement of the Camp Rules.

Due to the nature of overnight stays and camps it is necessary to have some Required Camp Rules for all Guide overnight events that the Leaders and girls can then add to themselves.

### Required Camp Rules

- Guides will not touch others or their belongings without permission and will keep their own belongings as neat as possible
- Guides will be respectful of others and not intentionally cause hurt, distress or worry to anyone else
- Guides will listen and follow directions given to them by the Leaders and other adults at camp
- Guides will treat the campsite, equipment and surrounds properly and with care
- Guides will not consume, be under the influence of, or bring to the overnight stay/camp: alcohol, cigarettes, vapes, or illegal drugs. They will not bring any weapons or knives unless approved by the Leader-in-Charge
- Guides are not permitted to leave the camp site without the permission of the Leader-in-Charge (or Sub-Camp Leader in the case of a larger camp).

Begin with these Required Camp Rules and then the Leaders and the Guides can add their own that suit the group and the environment of the camp/overnight stay.

Also include a rule about the use of electronic devices (e.g. Phones, iPad etc) which should meet the needs of the age of participants and the aim of the specific camp - e.g., Phones are permitted to be used 7am-7pm but will be locked away at night OR This is a device free camp, phones are only permitted in cases of exceptional circumstances.

Please refer to Element 10. Clause 8 of the Child Safe Child Friendly Framework for more guidance on Guiding in the digital space.

### **Where to get further support?**

If you would like further support on developing or working with Unit or Camp Rules, consider discussing this with your District Manager or at your next District meeting or Region meeting.

## Examples of Unit Rules



Merri Bek District Girl Guides

### Code of Conduct

The code has been designed by the Guides and leaders of 1<sup>st</sup> Pascoe Vale South Girl Guides

We endeavour to abide by this code so that all members have the opportunity to have a positive Girl Guide experience

### Wear Uniform

Guide top, Sash, Navy/black ponca/shorts, closed in shoes, hair tied back

### Respect each other and equipment

Active listening, raise your hand, one person talking at a time, arrive on time

### Try your hardest

### Model expected behaviour

### Be inclusive

### Appropriate use of personal devices

### Listening to all instructions and others' opinions

### Bring appropriate materials

### Challenge yourself

### Have fun

