

United Way of Massachusetts Bay Today's Girls... Tomorrow's Leaders

Guidelines and Guiding Principles 2008-2009

United Way of Massachusetts Bay
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Today's Girls...Tomorrow's Leaders

Guidelines and Guiding Principles

Mission

The mission of the Today's Girls...Tomorrow's Leaders (TGTL) initiative is to support out-of-school time programs and providers through a network of community-based organizations and resources to effectively meet the needs of girls. We hope to build nurturing relationships for girls that will foster academic success and increase their ability to develop into responsible, involved members of society.

Goal

The goal of TGTL is to increase girls' ability to access programs that meet their unique needs through a variety of programming options. TGTL seeks to build cooperative, working, community-based relationships focused on meeting girls' needs. The vision of United Way of Massachusetts Bay (UWMB) is to fill the void of too little gender-specific or gender-sensitive programming for girls, to focus on the positive aspects of girls' experiences, and to support and enhance girl programming.

Guiding Principles

It is our desire that TGTL resources and outcomes will:

- Be used to promote and support the healthy development of girls
- Be gender-sensitive and recognize the unique needs of girls
- Be appropriate and sensitive to the unique differences of girls based on culture, ethnicity and race
- Address the inequities that create barriers for girls
- Recognize girls as part of a larger family and community structure

Overview

In 1996, UWMB began to address the lack of gender-specific and gender-sensitive dollars available for community-based organizations serving girls in Greater Boston. In response, UWMB created TGTL to ensure that girls ages 7-18 are an integral part of the community structure, engaging in positive social and intellectual pursuits and developing critical life skills.

UWMB is pleased to offer grants available to girl-specific or co-educational, gender-sensitive programs (programs that take into account differences between males and females in their program design and delivery). Organizations in the UWMB service area may apply for a TGTL grant to support **existing** girl-specific or co-educational, gender-sensitive programs for girls ages 7-18.

TGTL supports girl-specific and co-educational, gender-sensitive programs that focus on advancing academic achievement, physical health, mental health, and/or leadership

development of girls. TGTL awards grants to agencies that demonstrate a successful track record of measuring new knowledge, increased skills or abilities, changes in behaviors or attitudes, and/or improved conditions of girls, as they relate to the program goal(s). All programs, especially co-educational programs, should clearly demonstrate how they promote gender sensitivity and work more effectively with girls in a co-educational setting.

TGTL increases assets for the positive development of girls by:

- Increasing resources to support programs that create mentoring relationships and nurturing environments for girls which focus on helping girls to succeed
- Broadening providers' capacity to deliver effective approaches to programming for girls, in both girl-specific and co-educational settings
- Leveraging organizational and community support by expanding our outreach and access to girl-serving programs

There is strong scientific evidence that if we surround girls and young women with a network of supportive, nurturing relationships we can positively influence the development of personal and educational assets. Within UWMB's strategy for increasing youth opportunities, we promote the positive development of girls by linking school and after-school programs, empowering community-based organizations, and providing professional development for after-school staff. We believe these strategies are interdependent and will help steer us toward our long-term vision that *all youth graduate from high school with options for the future and as responsible, involved community members.*

UWMB's Rationale for TGTL

Through TGTL we seek to ensure:

Equity of access - This means that a program provides women and girls equal opportunity with men and boys to participate in programs and activities. Programs will not necessarily achieve equity of access simply by opening the door to both genders. They must ask (and answer) several hard questions. For example: What are the subtle and overt messages that invite and encourage women and girls? What messages keep them away? Is the program located in an area where females are comfortable traveling? If the program works with mothers, does it respond to the childcare issues these women face on a daily basis?

Equity of treatment – This means that a program offers the same level and quality of attention and resources for girls as well as boys. Some co-educational programs may argue that they make equal resources available to boys and girls, but that boys take better advantage of those resources. They may need to ask whether the same treatment is enough if there are unequal groups to begin with. How do we ensure, for example, that girls have the opportunity and support to become interested and skilled in nontraditional areas such as computers and working with tools, or sports? "'Average' girls are two years behind 'average' boys in team sports skills due to differences in informal practice

opportunities." (Nicholson, 1992, p. 16) The result of this gap is that co-educational sports opportunities typically prove to be ineffective.

Equity of outcome – This is perhaps the most important but also the most elusive measure. To assess this, programs must ask: What is the gap between females and males in achievement, knowledge, confidence, persistence and participation? Due to gender discrimination and inequitable treatment, girls may require more time and resources or different strategies to break through barriers and become equal contributors to society. *Source: Mead, M. (2001). Gender Matters: Funding Effective Programs for Women and Girls*

Gender-Specific and Gender-Sensitive Programming for Girls Defined

Research demonstrates that these components are important and should be considered to implement a successful girl gender-specific and gender-sensitive program. Information addressing the following will be considered during the review process:

- Space that is physically and emotionally safe and provides girls with opportunities to address their needs and desires (space conducive to developing projects, writing poetry, playing games, etc.)
- Opportunities for girls to talk and voice their ideas, feelings, challenges
- Opportunities to learn how to develop and maintain healthy relationships (modeling behavior of program staff and peers)
- Opportunities for empowerment and self-growth beyond the experience of victimization
- Education about women's health including female development and sexuality
- Opportunities for girls to understand their culture and appreciate and respect the cultures of others
- Mentors who share experiences that resonate with the realities of girls' lives and who exemplify survival and growth
- Adequate funding for providing comprehensive programming across the continuum of care

(Source: Principles adapted from the Valentine Foundation's Report: A Conversation with Girls from the Rhode Island Girls Coalition (1990))

What We Fund: Four Priority Areas

TGTL seeks to support organizations and programs designed to eliminate barriers and challenges for girls and young women. Our **four priority areas for our 2008-2009** season are:

I. Academic Achievement (Math, Science and Technology)

A growing body of research provides evidence that participation in *quality* out-of-school time programs does have a positive impact on school-age youth, contributing to their overall development and academic performance. In building viable options for the future, we need to prepare girls for self-sufficiency. Therefore, in 2008-2009, we will prioritize funding to programs that deliver positive results in Math, Science and Technology such as:

- *Programs delivering structured year-round programs built on a math, science or technology curriculum that can deliver quantifiable results*
- *Programs inspiring girls to enter careers of, or tutoring girls in any derivative of, Math, Science and/or Technology and delivering measurable results*
- *Programs that encourage girls to engage in structured independent research in the areas of math, science and/or technology*

II. Physical Health (Fitness and Nutrition)

Childhood obesity has become a national epidemic as a result of poor eating choices and a lack of physical activity in the lives of girls who are not getting the support they need. Inadequate public and private resources are directed to support and expand necessary programming, and there is a lack of awareness on the part of girls and their parents about what resources are available and what behaviors are healthy for development. Therefore, in 2008-2009 we are prioritizing funding to programs that deliver positive results in physical health such as:

- *Comprehensive, year-round physical educational and nutrition programs that help girls make positive nutritional and behavioral choices with measurable results that can be duplicated*
- *Programs that change perceptions of “what it means to choose a healthy lifestyle” and can deliver quantifiable results*
- *Programs concentrating on a comprehensive system of capacity building for gender-focused community-based activities for girls (e.g., intramural sports and/or activities)*

Free Athletic Equipment!

Programs addressing this impact area are encouraged to apply for the UWMB grantmaking program that awards sports and fitness equipment, apparel and supplies to after-school programs that serve youth.

See <http://www.uwmb.org/getactive/backgrounder.htm>

III. Mental Health (Social Emotional Wellness)

A growing body of research indicates that girls with strong supportive adult relationships:

- Are motivated to learn and do better in school
- Have a better sense of themselves and their future
- Accept responsibility for themselves and others
- Are more resilient and have better relationships with their parents

Recent advances in neuroimaging demonstrate that significant brain growth and changes occurring during late childhood and again during the late teen years are connected to some of the behavior patterns characteristic of school-age youth such as risk taking and novelty seeking. Therefore, in 2008-2009, we will prioritize funding to programs that deliver positive results in social emotional wellness such as:

- *Programs that provide social emotional support to girls to enable them to engage in positive intellectual and social pursuits with measurable outcomes*
- *Programs that are able to address multiple social emotional barriers with quantifiable results*

- *Programs that provide self-affirming behaviors that lead to a greater sense of self-worth regarding culture and values for the surrounding community with measurable results*

IV. Leadership Development (Increasing Gender Sensitivity)

Although girls have made significant progress in the past decade, many continue to struggle with issues of identity, the trivialization of their leadership skills, and social expectations that limit their options and opportunities. Therefore, in 2008-2009, we will prioritize funding to programs seeking to enhance the capacity of girl-serving programs to make a positive difference in how girls see themselves and how they move forward in the world, such as:

- *Programs that raise the level of understanding of girls' social and cultural competency and civic participation/leadership in their community or at-large with measurable results*
- *Programs that focus on defining and building girl leadership in co-educational settings that challenge gender norms and create a balance of power between boys and girls with quantifiable results*
- *Programs that identify non-traditional leadership skills and roles to actively engage girls in their community and/or school with measurable results*

Please Note: A program may choose more than one priority area, but we are interested in the quality of the program, not the quantity of priority areas. We will hold programs responsible for measurable outcomes in their chosen area(s) for the application submitted. Please choose your impact area(s) carefully.

General Eligibility and Funding Criteria to Consider

The Grant Review Panel will be guided by the following detailed criteria in making funding decisions and recommendations for TGTL grants. Please note that the bulleted items are illustrative of considerations for each criterion.

General Eligibility

Organizational Capacity

- Has a track record of program operation and demonstrated capacity to measure its outcomes
- Demonstrates human resource and financial management capacity necessary to manage grant
- Has designated a staff person with at least six months of experience with the organization as the primary contact for UWMB for this grant

Alignment with TGTL Priorities

- Program clearly identifies the concerns that it is addressing within the priority area chosen for girls with limited resources
- Program is clearly addressing the need(s) or concern(s) that it has identified

Sources of Funding/Relative Financial Need

- Demonstrates financial need and appropriately seeks other resources

- Has a resource development plan

Applicants seeking TGTL funding must:

- Be a community-based organization that is currently offering girl-specific or gender-sensitive, co-educational programming for girls ages 7-18
- Be incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency, or have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency serving as its fiscal agent
- Submit a completed application

Review Criteria

Program Description: Vision and Goals

- Program evaluates its vision and programming in light of changes in community and environment as they pertain to advancing the development of girls and/or gender sensitivity work
- Program goals are clearly articulated and consistent with the priority area chosen
- Program has a clear understanding of its strategies to maintain its girl-focused agenda

Asset Assessment: Assets/Strengths of the Girls and Community Served

- Program has positive expectations of girls based on their assets
- Program can identify and articulate positive assets in the community served that the TGTL program will draw upon to serve its girls

Supportive Relationships: Building and Nurturing Positive Relationships

- Program includes components that will build supportive bonds with girls it is serving
- Program promotes and nurtures girls' social emotional development

Increasing Gender Sensitivity

- Program has successfully used formal or informal sources to stay abreast of new information to think critically about the unique needs of girls it is serving
- Program challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes to improve the condition of girls
- Program demonstrates how it promotes gender sensitivity and works effectively with girls (*especially applicable to co-educational programs*)
- Programs that have received TGTL support for three years or more must demonstrate the value-add of TGTL funding on the organization.

Program Goals and Outcome Measurement

- TGTL program goals are clearly articulated
- Program outcomes are aligned with specific TGTL priorities (specified by each priority area)
- Measurement practices are appropriate, relevant and capable of tracking the TGTL program's progress (including indicators, tools and methods)

Evaluation

In 2010, UWMB wants 60% of out-of-school time programs to be using research-based tools to measure youth outcomes. UWMB wants to increase the use of the research-based tools identified in the Youth Outcomes Measurement Directory, available at www.toolfind.org. However, other research-based tools that are not listed in the Directory may satisfy this measure if they have: 1) undergone reliability and/or validity testing, 2) been extensively field-tested, 3) and been widely used.

For TGTL purposes, we are interested to know what tools you are using to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of your program. Please note that for the current year programs will not be eliminated based on this information. This question is designed to get information on the tools you use to evaluate your gender sensitive program. We are also interested in knowing the percentage of our TGTL programs using research-based tools to measure outcomes for girls.

Program Collaborative Capability

- Program has the ability to partner and/or collaborate with other community-based organizations
- Program is a leader in the community it serves

Grant Period

TGTL grants are for a one-year period, July 15, 2008– June 30, 2009

Size of Grants

A competitive grant review and decision-making process will determine grants in the range of \$20,000-\$40,000 each for 2008-2009 season. Priority will be given to programs that are offered 9-12 months of the year.

Role and Responsibilities of Grantees

The primary role and responsibility of grantees is to use grant funds to achieve outcomes as defined in the grant request. In addition, UWMB will request that grantees:

- submit a six-month program and financial progress report by **February 2, 2009**
- implement program as described in the grant application
- provide a year-end report documenting outcomes measured as they relate to advancing the chosen priority area(s)
- participate in future UWMB evaluation efforts
- acknowledge UWMB support through the TGTL initiative in publications and at appropriate events

How to Apply

- Submit **7 (seven)** copies of your completed application to UWMB postmarked by **April 25, 2008** to the attention of:

Bithiah L. Carter
Director, Community Impact
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
51 Sleeper Street
Boston, MA 02210-1208

- Due to security reasons, deliveries **will not** be accepted.
- **Only hard copies will be accepted** - please do not submit applications via email or fax.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted, and **extensions will not be granted past the April 25th deadline.** If there are questions regarding completion of the grant application, please contact Bithiah Carter at bcarter@supportunitedway.org.
- **Please do not** submit additional materials that are not requested in the RFP, such as letters of support, newsletters, pictures, and etc.

Timeframe for Grants Process

UWMB staff will review all applications received by the postmarked deadline for completeness and consistency with RFP guidelines. Those considered acceptable will be forwarded to a volunteer Grant Review Panel for review, guided by funding criteria. At the discretion of the Grant Review Panel, a program site visit or a meeting with representatives from the organization may be required for proposed TGTL grantees. All applicants will be notified of funding decisions no later than July 31, 2008.

Additional Information

Potential applicants or others with questions should direct their inquiries to:

Bithiah L. Carter
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bcarter@uwmb.org