



# G.A.I.N. Program

Presented by Tristan Eddy, Justice for Girls Program Coordinator  
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Girls  
Advocacy &  
Impact  
Network

# JFG Introduction & Background

## Who Are We?

- ❖ JFG is a non-profit organization with members across WA

## What Do We Do?

- ❖ JFG seeks to improve the status of girls\* in WA state, address the underlying conditions that perpetuate the adversity they face, and pave pathways for a better future
- ❖ We engage in advocacy and training to promote practices, programs, and legislative policies tailored for girls facing adversity

## Why Girls?

- ❖ Visible gender and gender identity affect girls' treatment in systems
- ❖ We need to address the racialized, gender-biased pathways pushing girls out of school and into court involvement

# GAIN

***The Girls Advocacy & Impact Network equips girls\* with the tools, support and skills they need in order to capably amplify their collective voices and effectively influence the policies that directly impact them. We envision a world where every girl actualizes her inherent power, realizes her own self-worth and confidently pursues opportunities that positively influence her development.***

*\*“Girls” refers to gender expansive youth (cis girls, trans girls, non-binary youth, gender non-conforming youth, gender queer youth, and any girl-identified youth).*

# WHO

GAIN seeks to support youth in Washington state who meet these eligibility requirements:



- G Identify as female
- G Be between 13-20 years old
- G Follow the strict norms and behavior guidelines to allow for an atmosphere of safety, anonymity, respect, and dignity for all members
- G Attend as many monthly meetings as possible
- G Commit to serve a one-year term (yearly cohorts)



## WHY

GAIN seeks to address the different needs of girls by providing a space where girls can proffer solutions to the main issues that are impacting their daily lives.

G Drivers of the change

G Builds confidence -> Leadership opportunities

G Community awareness





# Program Structure

G 3 Chapters (*initially*) in **Yakima**, **King** and **Pierce**

G 1.5-hour monthly meetings per Chapter

G Goal of **3-8** girls per Chapter

G Members are compensated \$25 per meeting and community service hours are given if the requirements are met





## HOW

**6** online meetings per year are **Individual Chapter Meetings** (internal empathy-building); ex. Issue and Solution Statement building with the other chapter members


**2** online meetings per year are **Group Trainings** (external skill-building), ex. Train on topics such as Storytelling for Advocacy and Civics

**JFG Engagement Coordinator** and **Adult Ally** are present and the **JFG Youth Intern** co-facilitates the meeting with the **Chapter Leader**





# Program Goals

- G To ensure female identified youth have skills to do policy advocacy and train in girl-centered practices alongside Coalition staff
  - G To provide female identified youth with adult role models who they trust and admire
  - G To allow girls shared common experiences and to make connections across communities
  - G To build community will in awareness about issues that affect girls
- 



# Meeting Structure

- **Introduction** [Icebreakers]
- **Springboard Activity**
- **Work Section**
- **Summarize** what was learned
- **Evaluation** of the meeting





*"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.  
I am changing the things I cannot accept."  
- Angela Davis*



Girls Advocacy & Impact Network



*Justice for Girls*  
COALITION OF WASHINGTON STATE

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Pronouns: she / her / hers

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## Girls Advocacy & Impact Network

**WHAT** - The **Girls\* Advocacy & Impact Network** provides girls in Washington state an opportunity to address issues related to juvenile justice, mental health, child welfare, housing and homelessness, education, and more. Girls leverage the collective influence of policymakers based on the prioritized needs identified by the chapter members. This could include speaking at events, testifying in a public hearing, appearing at fundraising engagements, writing, traveling, and training alongside Justice for Girls Coalition staff.

*\*youth who identify as female*

**MISSION & VISION** - GAIN equips girls with the tools, support and skills they need in order to capably amplify their voices and effectively influence the policies that directly impact their lives. Our work, over the long term, contributes toward a world where girls and young women are no longer criminalized for the trauma they have experienced. We address the root causes of poverty, violence, racism and sexism and engage girls as drivers of policies, programs and practices directly impacting them.

**DEI** - We value diversity, equity and inclusion in all JFG programs and challenge power imbalances in the change process as adults and youth work together. This program is open to any individual who meets the eligibility criteria and especially those who experience intersectional identities (race, gender and sexual identity, etc.), crossover youth (child welfare system-involved), and those who live in under-resourced households.

**WHO** - GAIN is supported by The Justice for Girls Coalition, a non-profit organization with members from across Washington state. In 2015, JFG gained 501c3 status, formed a board and expanded the scope to include advocacy and training across multiple systems including school, mental health, health, housing, child welfare and juvenile justice. The org seeks to improve the status of girls in WA state, address the underlying conditions that perpetuate the adversity they face and pave pathways for a better future. Born out of that mission, the GAIN program gives girls a platform to be heard by offering avenues to engage in advocacy and train community stakeholders alongside JfG staff.

Specifically, GAIN seeks to support youth in Washington state who meet these eligibility requirements:

- Identify as female
- Be between 13-20 years old
- Follow the strict norms and behavior guidelines to allow for an atmosphere of safety, anonymity, respect, and dignity for all members.



## Girls Advocacy & Impact Network

- Attend as many monthly meetings as possible; Attend the events/meetings in which attendance is required
- Commit to serve a one-year term (yearly cohorts)

**WHY** - Data show that many girls and young women in Washington are on a path for prosperity and well-being with the supports, connections, and resources they need to thrive. However, when the data are pulled apart by race/ethnicity and other factors it shows that some young women endure a disproportionate share of hardships and face barriers that often arise at the intersections of structural inequalities such as gender, race, locality, poverty, ability and sexuality. There is also growing understanding of the developmental needs of girls. Yet across multiple systems, including schools, courts, child welfare, mental health/health, housing and law enforcement, many of the policies in place are not designed to support the healing and healthy development of girls and young women, and can perpetuate the biases that systems have historically held. As a result, a new approach to gender equity in policymaking is needed.

GAIN provides a space where girls work toward developing solutions to the main issues that are impacting their daily lives. They become the drivers of the change they wish to make and help inform the policy agenda built by the coalition's Advocacy Member Group. This program builds the confidence of members and advances their leadership roles as they gain more skills. Additionally, it builds community will in awareness about such topics as intersectionality, implicit bias and girl-centered best practices.

**HOW** - Our program mobilizes a state-wide network of girls in the form of geographically separated chapters who can rely on each other for support, create a sense of community and allow for the development of healthy girl culture. We work with chapters over the course of 10 months (September to June - *excluding December*) to develop issue and solutions statements that reflect the elected aims of the girls using the following methods:

- **6** meetings per year are **Individual Meetings** (internal members); ex. Issue and Solution Statement building with the other chapter members
- **2** meetings per year are **Group Trainings** (external guests/trainers), ex. Bring in outside trainers on topics such as storytelling for advocacy, civics and voice development
- **1** annual, **Overnight Retreat** with all chapter members and adult facilitators

Each Chapter is facilitated by an **Adult Ally** (a representative of the partner organization), a JFG youth intern, the JFG Program Coordinator and eventually, a **Youth Chapter Leader** who will be hired to co-facilitate after the Chapter has been established. During monthly meetings, these individuals will guide the members in learning how to advocate for key policy changes across



## Girls Advocacy & Impact Network

systems and sectors as well as how to work together with Coalition staff during events and in trainings to community stakeholders.

### **PROGRAM STRUCTURE** - GAIN's programming is structured as the following:

- 1.5-hour monthly meetings per Chapter
- Goal of 3-8 girls per Chapter
- Facilitated by 1-2 Adult Allies; JFG Youth Intern; JFG Program Coordinator; and 1-2 Youth Chapter Leaders per Chapter
- Meetings are held online via the Zoom platform
- Members will be compensated \$25 per meeting for their time; Community service hours are also given, if needed

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

- To ensure female identified youth have skills to do policy advocacy and train in girl-centered practices alongside Coalition staff
- To provide female identified youth with adult role models who they trust and admire
- To allow girls shared common experiences and to make connections across communities
- To build community will in awareness about issues that affect girls

### **MEETING STRUCTURE** - Interactive meeting format

- **Introduction**
  - Warm up questions [*Moving Beyond Icebreakers*]
  - Practice names
  - Review Agenda
- **Springboard Activity**
  - Helps get toward purpose of the meeting and is interactive and fun
  - *What did you notice/feel/think/take away?*
- **Work Section** [*Liberating Structures*]
  - Brainstorming issues to create issue and problem statements
    - Break down problems into specific terms
    - Vote on issue that people feel most strongly about
    - Create Problem Statement:
      - Cause & Effect
      - Scope
      - Prevalence
      - Relevance
      - Goal





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- Pick one solution that will best address the chosen issue
  - Compile both problem and solution statements that can be presented at Beyond Pink
    - Help inform policy agenda through intersectional lens based on identified issue (may be in tandem with Coalition Advocacy agenda), etc.
- **Summarize** what was learned
- **Evaluation** of the meeting
- Not evaluating the facilitators/how effective the meeting was to reaching goals

**MEETING GOALS** - The Individual Chapter meetings are structured as the following:

- To provide a digital space where girls can confidently participate, collaborate together and have equitable footing to contribute to discussions
- To pass along the skills necessary to achieve program mission
- To allow girls the time to connect with trusted adults as mentors and role models
- To effectively work through the meeting agenda and end on-time
- To achieve positive evaluations from members of how the meeting went

**More information:** Contact Tristan Eddy, Program Coordinator [teddy@jfgcoalition.org](mailto:teddy@jfgcoalition.org)

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