



International Women's Day *A Nova Scotia challenge*

This challenge will be available for the month of March to honor IWD which is celebrated annually on March 8



International Women's Day

A Nova Scotia challenge

International Women's Day is an opportunity to celebrate women and reflect on women's economic, political, cultural and social achievements.

However, progress towards gender equality has slowed and gender inequality is an issue faced by girls around the world, even in Canada.

The World Economic Forum estimates that the economic gender gap won't be closed until 2157. It's time for us to make a difference!

2157?!

This challenge is designed to raise awareness of issues affecting girls and women in every community. By exploring individual, community, national, and global issues, you will:

- Be able to define gender equality.
- Understand your identity as an individual.
- Know your rights as girls and women.
- Understand how gender inequalities differ around the world.
- Identify current barriers to gender equality.
- Understand historical and current issues affecting women and girls.
- Be motivated to advocate for change.

The challenge consists of four sections:

**Considering Myself,
In My Community,
Thinking Nationally, and
A Global Perspective.**

We designed this for girls in Guides, Pathfinders, and Rangers. We suggest that all age groups should complete:

- one core element (e.g. A, B, or C) in each section, and
- one optional activity in each section.

Crests can be ordered at: [NS Provincial Challenges](#)

Please note the Challenge and Crest is only available annually during the month of March.





KEY FACTS and TERMS

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/>

Education of girls and women is important

A study using data from 219 countries from 1970 to 2009 found that, for every one additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreased by 9.5 per cent.

Women spend more time taking care of households

A study of time and water poverty in 25 sub-Saharan African countries estimated that women spend at least 16 million hours a day collecting drinking water; men spend 6 million hours; and children, 4 million hours.

Women earn less for the same work

Globally, women are paid less than men. In 2020 Canadian women earn, on average, earned 0.89 cents for every dollar a man earned. That is equivalent to a \$3.52 hourly wage rate gap (or 11%).
<https://www.payequitychrc.ca/en/about-act/what-pay-equity>

Women are poorly represented in government

The 44th Canadian Parliament includes a record number of female Members of Parliament, with 103 women elected to the 338-member House of Commons of Canada (30.5%) in the 2021 election. Of those 103 women, 22 were elected for the first time in the 2021 election. Girls and women are the most affected by violence.

In 2018, 44% of women reported experiencing some form of psychological, physical, or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetimes (Statistics Canada, 2021)

Gender equality

Providing the same opportunities to men and women. One example of equality is paying men and women the same wage for the same work.

Gender equity

Recognizing that men and women may have different needs and face different challenges. Equity means men and women can be treated differently in order to overcome unfair barriers or obstacles. One example is reserving a certain number of leadership positions in an organization for women, because women may face barriers to advancing in the workplace based on their gender.

Empowerment

Women's empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally.

Not every suggested activity will be suitable for every unit. Use your judgement and best practices to adapt these suggestions for the girls in yours. For example, a Guide unit may have many first years who are more comfortable with activities suitable for younger girls or might have many third years who are more comfortable with activities suitable for older girls.

Just keep the learning objectives in mind and have fun making a difference!



Considering Myself

CORE ELEMENTS

A

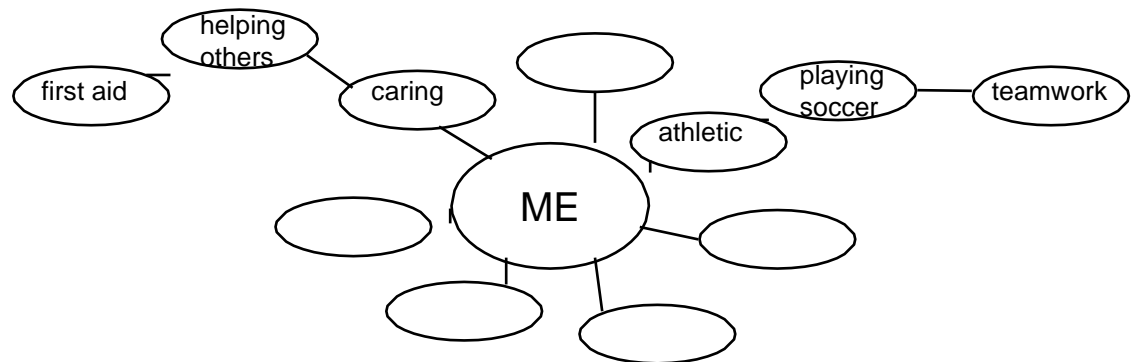
G P R

Explore your identity with personal asset mapping. Use a mind-map to visualize yourself, your qualities, your skills, and your knowledge.

For example (this activity works best with some facilitation from an adult):

1. Each youth member takes a sheet of paper and writes their name in the center.
2. The first layer of the mind map includes personal qualities. For example, “caring,” “athletic,” “curious,” etc. Write these qualities around your name and connect them to your name because they describe you.
3. The second layer of the mind map includes skills. Think of a skill that you have that connects with a certain quality. For example, “helping others” could be attached to “caring” and “playing soccer” could be attached to “athletic.” Write these skills around your qualities and connect them to the qualities that make them possible.
4. The third and final layer of the mind map includes knowledge. Think of something you know how to do because you have a certain skill. For example, “playing soccer” means you know teamwork and “helping others” might mean you know first aid.
5. Debrief with questions like: What does your mind map show? How are personal qualities, skills, and knowledge connected? What new personal qualities would you like to gain? What new skills would you like to learn from your personal qualities? What new knowledge would you like to learn from your skills?

Source: Adapted from the Dalhousie Sustainability Leadership Certificate.



B

G P R

Use another activity to explore your identity. Share your activity on social media and describe it on your evaluation form.



Considering Myself

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

1

G

Using toy catalogues, cut out and group toys as being sold to boys or sold to girls. Discuss the context of the picture: if there are children playing, if they are alone, or if they are together. Discuss some of the following questions:

- Who is being more active (running, jumping, moving) in the ads (boys or girls)?
- Who is being more quiet and calm in these ads?
- Who is playing outside more?
- Who is playing in the house/ kitchen more?
- Who is taking care of babies/ cooking things/ shopping?
- Who is fixing/ building things?
- Who is wearing pink/ blue?
- Who is playing with weapons?
- Who is making art?

Create your own ad that shows how toys are for all children. Ask your Guider to share this with others on social media.

2

G

Who do you admire? Identify female role models in your life. Why do you look up to them? What makes them special? Do you have qualities that people can look up to?

3

G P R

How does language relate to gender equality?

a. Consider the following words and whether they are masculine or feminine: water, stone, bullet, oak, glass, machine, willow, and pillow. Are there other words you can add to the list that you think of as being masculine or feminine? Why have you divided the words this way?

b. Think of words that are used to describe men and women in the following categories. Are they positive or negative?

- men as food (e.g. meat & potatoes) / women as food (e.g. cupcake)
- men talking (e.g. debate) / women talking (e.g. gossip)
- men as animals (e.g. lion) / women as animals (e.g. kitten)

c. List as many words and phrases you can think of that use the word 'man'. Find an equivalent non-gendered word for each word that you came up with (e.g. chairman --> chairperson). Try to catch yourself when you use words with 'man' and try to use the alternatives instead.



Considering Myself

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

4

G P R

Watch the [Always 'Like a Girl' ad](#). Reflect on the things you can do like a girl. Does this mean you are better or worse at an activity than anyone else? How do your perceptions change as you grow older?

5

P R

The media can influence how we feel about ourselves. Develop a list of '10 Tips for girls' to protect yourself from the media surrounding you every day. Make a poster to share this with other girls at your school or on social media.

6

G P R

Learn about the importance of self-care. Self-care "refers to all the things we do to keep our bodies safe and healthy" (Kamloops Children's Therapy, 2011).

For younger members:

Discuss the question: why is it important to take care of yourself? Make a "Feel Good List." Add five things to your list that you do every day to be safe and healthy. For example: brush my teeth, eat fruits and veggies, go outside, go to school, and make my bed. Add two things to your list that you do every day because they make you happy. For example: play with my friend and read a book. Decorate your Feel Good List, take it home, and put it on your fridge. For the next week, try to do the things on your Feel Good List. At your next meeting, talk about how doing the things on your list made you feel. Did you feel safe and healthy? Does taking care of yourself make you feel good?

For older girls:

Introduce the idea that everyone has mental health. Discuss the question: how are self-care and mental health related? Create a self-care box for days that are stressful or overwhelming. Decorate the box. Include items that allow you to relax and process your situation. Try to include at least one item for every sense. Many items you could make yourself for example:

- Touch: silly putty, stuffed animal, puzzle, stress ball, small candle, bubble wrap, origami paper and instructions
- Scent: hand lotion, bath bombs, perfume samples
- Taste: a favorite treat, tea, lip balm
- Hear: calming music, small bells, ear plugs
- Sight: photos, compliments from friends, coloring pages and pencil crayons, quotes, cards from loved ones, bubbles

They can customize it so that it includes whatever makes them feel better. Also include a journal with a list of **prompts** (like [THESE](#)), a list of **self-care activities** (like [THESE](#)), and a card with important phone numbers like the Kids Help Phone.

Sources: Kamloops's Children's Therapy; HowToMakeALife.com.



Considering Myself

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

7

G P R

Your personal life experiences are not just affected by your gender. The idea that you have other influences that contribute to your circumstances and that can impact your personal power is called intersectionality. Education, religion, occupation, age, citizenship, economic circumstance and many other attributes can all affect your experiences.

Play the 'Intersectionality String Game' to discover your commonalities and your intersections. Participants gather in a circle. The leader holds a ball of yarn starts by describing their self. "My name is... and I go to school at ... I moved to Halifax when I was ... I love going to the movies ..." When someone identifies something, they have in common with the person speaking, they should interrupt (for example, by clapping) and carry on by describing themselves. The leader throws the ball of yarn to the new speaker and keeps the end. The game is over when everyone has had a chance to speak (perhaps asking those who have already spoken to allow others to share). Point out the complex and interwoven network you have created, and that there are many intersections where the yarn overlaps. We all have identities and experiences that make us unique individuals.

8

G P R

Complete an activity of your choice that reflects on your individual identity.



IN MY COMMUNITY

CORE ELEMENTS

A

G P R

Discover supports and services for women and girls in the community. Consider shelters, health services, non-formal education programs like Girl Guides of Canada, and supports for women in non-traditional roles (STEM, business, entrepreneurs). Play a game that matches services & supports to people looking for help. Adapt these services as appropriate for your age group.

For example:

- 1. Matching game.** Make nametags with supports and services for girls in the community on them. Make other nametags that describe who might need those supports. Have the members match themselves with the appropriate support? Discuss why they think a woman or girl needs a particular support, why the same woman or girl might need several supports, and why several woman or girls might need the same support.
- 2. Connections game.** Make nametags with supports and services for women and girls in the community on them. Include one nametag that represents a girl in the community, and several other nametags with other aspects of the community on them: parents, school counsellor, teacher, police officer, engineer etc. Have the members stand in a circle with the nametags on. Introduce a ball of yarn and have them make connections between themselves. For example, they might talk to their guidance counsellor at school. The guidance counsellor might recommend that they join Girl Guides. An engineer might join a women's STEM organization. See if you can connect the member, their community, and the supports and services for women into a web that includes everyone in the circle. Discuss ways that those in the circle might connect to each of the people in their community, and how they might access the services and supports.

B

G P R

Identify influential or nontraditional female figures in your community. Invite someone to your meeting to give a talk or participate in the challenge with your unit. Ask them about community supports for women that supported their career, and brainstorm ideas for new supports which can benefit women and girls in the future.



Thinking nationally

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

1

G P R

Arrange an event to celebrate women in your community. Who will you invite? Think about local leaders, service providers, and families.

OR

Arrange an event (other than for Mother's Day) to celebrate mothers and maternal figures in your community. Ask the girls who they would like to invite and consider that not every family includes a mother.

2

G P R

Attend an event in your community celebrating International Women's Day, commemorating the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, or a similar event.

3

G P R

Invite a woman working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) to help complete one of the STEM badges from your program. Ask their what advice she would give to girls interested in STEM.

4

G P

Imagine a new community for girls. Complete Activity 3: Journey to a New Planet from *UNICEF Teaching for Children's Rights: Rights, Wants & Needs* available [HERE](#).

5

G P R

How many composers of classical music can you name in 5 minutes? Spend another 5 minutes and use Google to identify as many more as you can. Now see how many women are on your list. Can you find some female composers to add? Listen to a piece of music composed by one of these women. Why do you think male composers are so much more prominent? What other roles are there in classical music? What is the gender ratio for composers or musicians in your local orchestras or symphonies?

6

G P R

Gender inequality starts before a girl is born. Create a timeline exploring how girls in your community can be disadvantaged throughout their life. Include maternal health, nutrition, access to water, education, housework. What else can you add?



Thinking nationally

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

7

G P R

Learn about the history of women in theatre. Why were only men allowed to be actors in early plays (Greek, Shakespeare, etc.)? Has this changed? Why are men more likely to be cast than women today? Create a visual timeline.

8

G P R

Learn about female writers and their history with male pseudonyms (pen names). Why do female writers use pseudonyms? What are some examples of female writers who used pseudonyms (e.g. George Eliot, J.K. Rowling, the Brontë Sisters, Louisa May Alcott, P.L. Travers) Why did they choose to use a pseudonym? What are some examples of early female writers who did not use a pseudonym (e.g. Jane Austen)? What was the public's reaction? Did their books sell as well as those of male writers?

9

P R

Read a biography (at home or as a unit) of a woman working in a STEM field. Identify some barriers that she faced. If she is a historical figure, consider whether those barriers still exist today. What different challenges would she face in today's world? If she is a modern figure, consider what needs to happen for those barriers to be eliminated.

10

G P R

Complete an activity of your choice that reflects on how you fit into a community (local/regional, interest-based).



Thinking nationally

CORE ELEMENTS

A

G P R

Learn about the Famous Five and the women's suffrage movement in Canada. For example, read all or part of the story Famous Five: Five Canadian Women and their Fight to Become Persons by Nancy Millar. You might learn when women were allowed to vote in Canada and create a timeline to share important events in the women's suffrage movement.

B

G P R

One way of measuring gender equality is by examining the participation of women in politics. How many Girls of Parliament are female? Has this always been the case? Come up with a way to visually represent these changes over time.

For example:

1. **Dots.** Divide the unit into groups and give them each a different statistic: women vs. men parliamentarians in a particular year. Don't give them the year, only the statistic! Give each group a large diagram of the House of Commons in which the seats are visible, and two different kinds of colored dot stickers (women and men). Have them put the dots on the seats so that their diagram visually shows the gender ratio. Then, have the groups guess what year their statistic is from and line up according to their years. Are they right? Why has gender equality increased? Do we have far still to go? You can also do this activity with the cabinet.

2. **Hand Up/ Hand Down.** Have the group sit in a circle. Using statistics from different years, have them raise their hand and lower down according to the gender ratio. For example, if 1/4 of the parliament was female, have 1/4 of the girls raise their hands. Do this for several years/decades over time. Why has gender equality increased? Do we still have far to go? You can also do this activity with the cabinet.



Thinking nationally

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

1

G P R

What is the #CoverTheAthlete initiative? Do you think there are questions that should be asked only of female or only of male athletes? Role-play how you could respond to silly questions like those that female athletes are often asked.

2

G P R

Play a game of charades using non-traditional occupations. Some suggestions are: construction worker, plumber, veterinarian, physical education teacher, computer analyst, dentist, police officer, firefighter, NASA technician, astronaut, security guard, custodian, lawyer, gardener, automotive technician, carpenter, truck driver, architect, professional athlete, computer programmer. Add your own!

3

G P R

Canada has a Minister of the Status of Women. Who is the Minister? What duties and responsibilities does the Minister have? Write a letter to the Minister about an issue you have identified as important for Canadian women.

4

G P R

Discuss gender in music videos. Consider what personality traits you can assign to the females and males appearing in the videos. Is this an accurate representation of each gender? What message does that send and who does it benefit? Do some of your favorite music videos represent women inaccurately or negatively? Does that change your perspective on the song or the artist?

5

P R

Identify artists taking a stand for feminism and gender equality (e.g. Adele, Beyonce, Jennifer Lawrence, Emma Watson). Find out what issues are important to them. Write your own speech to share an issue that's important to you.

6

P R

In 2014, only 3 of the top 100 CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) in Canada were female. What reasons do women give for this gender gap? How can organizations encourage a workplace that reflects gender equality? What are affirmative action hiring policies? What are the benefits of diverse workplaces? How can women advocate for themselves in the workplace? Relevant Canadian information may be found [HERE](#).



Thinking nationally

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

7

P R

What is a wage gap? Research the wage gap in Canada and in at least one other country. How does a wage gap reflect on national gender equality? What is the difference between pay parity and pay equity? You may find relevant Canadian statistics [HERE](#). Sometimes women are hesitant to ask for a pay raise. How can women advocate for themselves in the workplace? Role-play a scenario where you ask a manager for a raise.

8

G P R

Complete an activity of your choice to reflect on the issues facing girls and women in Canada.



A global perspective

CORE ELEMENTS

A

G P R

Malala Yousafzai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 by advocating for the importance of education for girls. How many girls around the world don't go to school? What prohibits these girls from accessing formal education? Consider both legislative, cultural, and practical issues such as how much they have to eat, how far away the school is, what other chores they must do at home, whether there are appropriate bathrooms at school, how far they have to go to get water, or anything else you can add.

How can we help girls in other countries go to school? Use art to share this with others. You might draw or paint, act out a skit, create a diorama, or write a poem.

B

G P R

Do some research to identify what are considered some of the best countries in the world for women to live in. Why do these countries have this distinction? Which countries are considered the worst? Why is that? Consider legal and cultural barriers or supports for education, employment, property rights, etc.

C

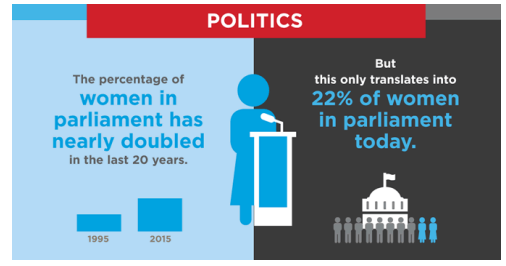
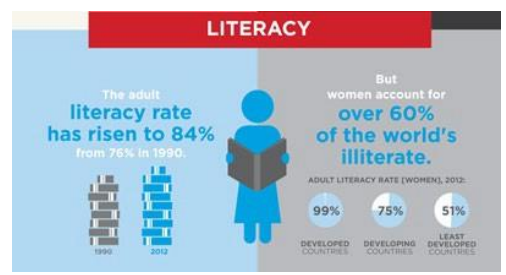
G P R

Infographics are a popular way of visually sharing complex data and ideas. Create an infographic using a computer or by hand to represent at least five statistics about girls in education. You might want to research other examples of infographics to inspire you.

Remember:

- Make sure your data is current and reliable.
- Use visually appealing graphics using color, words, figures, and images to tell the story of your data.
- Cite all the sources you use.

When you are done, ask yourself if you have introduced bias into the data by your graphics.





IWD CHALLENGE

OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

1

G P R

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) advocates for the empowerment of girls and women. Research one WAGGGS initiative and incorporate it into your unit meeting. 2022 theme is gender equality and climate change, some other examples might be 'Stop the Violence' or 'Free Being Me'.

2

G P R

Participation of women in sports can challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. When were women allowed to compete at the Olympics? Are there Olympic sports that are only for men or only for women? Why might this happen? Find out about a woman who is currently advocating for gender equality in sports.

3

G P R

Identify and explore issues that affect girls' access to basic needs and services. How do these issues compare among countries? Do girls and women have the same rights around the world?

4

P R

Research the proportion of women who hold seats in national parliaments around the world. The information is available from the World Bank [HERE](#). Did the information surprise you? In which countries are more than 50% of seats held by women? What factors contribute to the gender balance in those countries? Can we learn anything from those countries that we could use in Canada to create gender balance?

5

P R

On a map, identify countries whose current primary leader is a woman. Do these countries have anything in common?

6

G P R

Complete an activity of your choice to reflect on issues facing girls and women around the world.