



Parent/Guardian Information

AB GIRLS and
American Baptist
Women's Ministries

So Your Daughter Wants to Join the NLT...!

Congratulations! You have much to be proud of when your daughter tells you she would like to participate in something like the national leadership team of AB GIRLS. That shows that she wants to follow Christ's call to serve, and that she wants to be part of something that will have impact upon the lives of girls across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, and even the world. You have raised her well!

The NLT is an exciting opportunity for each girl and woman chosen to serve on the team. Youth and adult NLT members alike are stretched in many ways, growing their leadership skills, their self-confidence, and their understanding of the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Many

girls and women who serve on the team discover gifts, talents, and interests that they didn't know they had before. And we cannot forget to mention the deep and meaningful friendships that are formed on the team through shared experiences, shared work, and a shared faith.

But serving on the NLT does not come without its challenges—and those challenges aren't only for the members of the team! Being on the NLT is a commitment of time and energy on the part of members, and it's a commitment on the part of parents/guardians as well. Please read the information in these pages carefully, and *only allow your daughter to apply if*



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you are also fully committed to the guidelines that appear here. There are things we need to rely upon for the team to function as it needs to, and you are an important part of that equation. Your signature on your daughter's application form indicates your understanding of, and willingness to abide by, these guidelines.

We look forward to the possibility of working with your daughter!

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NLT Communication

The NLT communicates primarily online or through email. Strong and regular communication is a must!

If your daughter joins the team, *she would have to be able to check and respond to email or online communication tools on a*

daily basis or several times a week. You would need to be sure your daughter has email and online access; if you have parental controls set, you would need to make sure to "allow" all email addresses related to the NLT.

If your daughter's email address changes, we need to be notified immediately.

Please do not respond to messages on your daughter's behalf unless under special circumstances—it is her responsibility to do the work of the team, not yours!



NLT members get used to being on planes!

“This is probably the most exciting aspect for the girls. This is probably the most scary aspect for the parents/guardians!”

Travel Tips

- Make sure your daughter has a working cell phone and plenty of travel money—a temporary credit card for emergencies may be helpful.
- Assure that both you and your daughter have the information she received from our office about what to do in case of delayed or cancelled flights.
- If your daughter is stuck overnight, it may be safer for her to sleep in the airport than to try to make her way to a hotel, or check to see if there is a hotel physically attached to the airport.
- Remind her not to be embarrassed to ask someone in uniform for help!

See New Places—Meet New People! NLT Travel

The NLT travels. A lot. We have to travel to our meetings, we travel to the national events for girls that we host, and sometimes we travel to speaking engagements or other opportunities.

This is probably the most exciting aspect for the girls. This is probably the most scary aspect for the parents/guardians! It’s hard to put a girl on a plane by herself. But in the 20 years of the existence of the NLT we haven’t lost a girl in an

airport yet!

Below are some helpful tips and guidelines for facing the travel that is required of every NLT member.

Please note that, again, you need to be comfortable with this in order for your daughter to be on the team.

The Costs of Travel

AB Women’s Ministries pays for travel expenses of NLT members within certain guidelines. If your daughter joins the NLT, she will be given specific financial guidelines of the organization.

AB Women’s Ministries reimburses drivers at 14 cents per mile (the IRS rate for volunteers) up to the cost of a round-trip coach airfare.

AB Women’s Ministries will also reimburse coach airfare tickets made in a timely fashion. If an NLT member delays unnecessarily in purchasing her tickets (without prior clearance from the executive director of American Baptist Women’s Ministries) and incurs a higher airfare, it will be the responsibility of the NLT member and her family to pay the difference in the

ticket cost. We will reimburse Amtrak or bus tickets up to the cost of a coach airfare. We *do not* reimburse the cost of checked baggage.

We will not reimburse costs for extra or overweight luggage (unless given prior approval by the executive director of AB Women’s Ministries for bringing supplies to an event), or seat upgrades.

Traveling Alone

Yes, serving on the NLT means that teenage girls are often asked to make their way through airports or train stations alone.

The NLT girls have been traveling to meetings alone for over 20 years now. It’s easier now than it used to be—the adult members of the NLT are just a cell phone call away and can help talk girls through an airport if necessary (and have done so)!

Learning how to navigate travel by themselves builds tremendous confidence in the

girls. This can be an important step in their maturing process.

Teach your daughter what to do if something goes awry: who to talk to if a flight gets cancelled or delayed, where to go for help, safety issues in airports or train stations, etc. Making a “dry run” with her (perhaps on a family vacation) is a great idea. If you aren’t an experienced traveler, find someone in your church who is and ask them to train your daughter.

If you’re still worried, explore the “unaccompanied minor”

regulations for your airline. (There are age restrictions, and may be extra costs which ABWM will not reimburse.)

We will send out necessary information well in advance of each meeting, and we also help train the girls in travel skills.

The ability to travel alone is a requirement of serving on the team. We are not able to accommodate requests for parents/guardians to travel and stay with their daughters during meetings.



Meetings Are a Must! Part 1—School Matters

Typically the NLT has meetings three times a year: early fall, mid-winter, and immediately preceding a summer national event for girls (as needed). It is crucial that girls and adults on the NLT attend all of these meetings in their entirety.

This means girls may miss a few days of school through the year. We do our best to keep the number of days to be missed as minimal as possible—it is typically only two days in the fall and one day in the winter. Girls who join the NLT receive the

meeting dates well in advance and can make appropriate arrangements with teachers and coaches.

In the rare occasion that a girl on the team is in the situation that she absolutely cannot miss a day of class due to borderline grades or an exam that cannot be rescheduled, parents/guardians can discuss the situation with the AB GIRLS coordinator in advance and possibly make alternative arrangements.

If it is helpful for AB Women's Ministries to provide a letter to the teacher or school

principal proving that this is a legitimate absence, we are happy to do so.

On occasion, service on the NLT can provide extra credit opportunities with teachers—we encourage girls to ask!

If your daughter joins the NLT, you will need to be comfortable with her missing school.



NLT meetings are hard work, but fun and educational, too! (Here the 14-15 NLT meets Martin Luther King Jr's sister, Christine King Farris, after worship at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia.)

Tips for School

- Consider whether the NLT meeting location has historical or cultural significance. A girl could do a photo essay or report for a class.
- Serving on the NLT means public speaking, planning programs, leading worship, perhaps musical performance, and so forth. Ask teachers about extra credit for any of these.
- Many schools or clubs have service requirements. Serving on the NLT, or service projects that we do as part of the team or at national events, may fulfill these requirements.
- Let the school principal know about your daughter's work on the NLT—it may lead to interesting opportunities!

Meetings Are a Must! Part 2—Family Matters

Missing a family reunion or family events may be necessary in order to serve as a member of the NLT

Several years ago, an NLT girl was invited by her family to attend a family gathering during one of our weekend meeting times—our meetings happened to be held near where she had relatives living. We hesitantly gave permission

and the girl left our meetings for a few hours. At the end of our weekend together, she shared with us that she wished she had never done so. Not only had her departure disrupted our meeting "flow" as we missed her input in several key discussions that couldn't be set aside to accommodate the time she was gone; likewise, she felt

like she never entirely caught up with what she had missed. Even months later, she reflected that her absence for those hours made her subsequent work on the team much more difficult.

Family calendars should be carefully reviewed before making this commitment to serve.

Meetings Are a Must! Part 3—Attention Matters

Although we encourage girls to be immediately in touch with their parents/guardians upon arrival at meetings and there is ample time for check-ins during breaks or after sessions are complete, we otherwise require that all cell phones be turned to airplane mode during meeting sessions. As you

can well imagine, cell phones are a tremendous distraction.

We're serious about this. We even confiscated an adult's cell phone during one meeting when it rang incessantly!

There will always be a designated cell phone left

on at all times, with that number distributed to parents/guardians ahead of time in case of emergencies.

Otherwise, if your daughter joins the team, there will be times when she is simply out of touch!



Cell phones are a "no go" during meetings, but at lunch, okay!

Vital Partners for a Vital Ministry

1075 First Ave STE C-210
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Phone: 610-768-2288

E-mail: info@abwomensministries.org
www.abwomensministries.org

Questions?

AB GIRLS Coordinator: Deneen Ray,
mypurpose2911@gmail.com

Executive Director of AB Women's Ministries:
Rev. Gina Jacobs-Strain
Gina.Jacobs-Strain@abwomensministries.org
(610) 768-2284

Service on the national leadership team of AB GIRLS will

- enrich your daughter's life through service to God, fellowship with others, and the important tasks to be accomplished;
- enrich the lives of your daughter's co-workers through her presence and contribution;
- enrich the lives of girls and women in your local church as your daughter shares information with them and seeks their input;
- enrich the lives of girls and women across the United States and in Puerto Rico as your daughter collaborates with members of the team to envision ministries with girls.



Developing leadership skills is an important part of being on the NLT

AB GIRLS Covenant

Remembering the words of Christ, who said,
"I am the light of the world," and also
"You are the light of the world"
I promise

to grow in Christ
to share my gifts of time and money, talents and
prayer, and
to serve with others in God's world,

So that the Light of Life may shine through me.

Summary: What You Will Be Agreeing to by Signing the Application

Please note that when you agree and sign this document that we are united in our efforts and actions so that we make every effort to ensure that each NLT member's experience is meaningful and productive. Therefore together, and especially parents/guardians agree and acknowledge that you will encourage and:

1. You will allow your daughter to use an email account, the Internet, and texting (if you have a plan) regularly to communicate with the team. You will adjust her parental controls as needed to accept any emails from team members, national staff, and online communication methods.
2. You will refrain from doing

your daughter's work for her and instead allow her to live up to the responsibility of the task. You will, however, encourage her to do so!

3. You will allow your daughter to travel alone as needed for meetings, helping her to build confidence in herself by helping her gain necessary life skills and tools.
4. You understand that your daughter may not be able to communicate with you at all times while she is attending meetings; rather, if you leave messages in her voice mail or by text she will be able to return your calls as soon as she is on a break or after meetings are concluded for the day.
5. You understand that she

will miss three to five days of school spaced through the school year. You will ask her to be sure she has her meeting schedule at the beginning of the school year and will communicate with teachers about her scheduled absences in a timely fashion.

6. You understand that she will be unavailable for family events or other non-NLT-related engagements or concerns during scheduled meeting weekends and national events of AB GIRLS.
7. You will be warmly encouraging and supportive of your daughter's involvement with the NLT, asking her about her experiences, letting her

know how proud you are of her, sharing with your church about her work, and otherwise recognizing what hard work she will be doing!

AB Women's Ministries also has responsibility for the members of the NLT. We run background checks on any adults (including staff) who serve on the team and we have policies regarding housing arrangements and other circumstances during meetings and at national events for girls (sponsored by AB Women's Ministries) for the safety of the girls. We provide information and training to NLT members for their responsibilities, and engage in intentional, healthy, mentoring relationships.