



BECAUSE I am a GiRL

Speakers' Bureau

What is advocacy?

Advocacy means telling a story to someone, usually a decision-maker, with the goal of inspiring that person to take some sort of action. You can advocate for yourself (e.g.: convincing your parents to raise your allowance), or for someone else (asking your parents to increase your brother's or sister's allowance). Staff, volunteers and supporters of Plan advocate for the protection of children's rights all over the world. Keep in mind: you don't have to be a professional to be an advocate – you can influence the world in your own way by making your voice heard at the dinner table, at school, in your neighbourhood, etc.

What is *Because I am a Girl*?

Because I am a Girl is Plan's global campaign to improve the lives of girls around the world. With the help of girls here in Canada we are reaching out to government and members of the public so people living in Canada can get involved in this vital effort to recognize the value and importance of girls everywhere.



Part of getting the word out about girls' issues has been putting out reports about the situations of girls around the world. Every year the *Because I am a Girl* campaign is publishing a report on a different area of girls' lives that needs attention. In 2007, the report, called *The State of the World's Girls 2007*, was about the situation of girls and it started a 9-year study called "Real Choices, Real Lives". Every year researchers will visit the same 135 girls in 9 countries from birth until their 9th birthday to talk to them and their families, to see how being girls impacts their lives.

In 2008 the report was called *In the Shadow of War*. It looked at the lives of girls and young women growing up in war and conflict. It showed that there are 200 million girls living in conflict-affected countries. The way girls experience conflict can be by losing their childhood, having to move away from their homes, experiencing sexual violence and missing school. What's next for 2009? The *Because I am a Girl* report will focus on Girls' Economic Rights and Empowerment in the Global Economy.



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What is the Speakers' Bureau?

It starts with a team of girls with different life experiences coming together. This team will then get public speaking and media training to tell their stories with impact. Then they will use their stories to connect with audiences, break down divides, and reach other girls in Canada.

What should you expect?

Once you're a part of the *Because I am a Girl* Speakers' Bureau, there will be training sessions held for you to attend. You can expect to put in about 4 to 8 hours each month for meetings, events, conferences or school visits. We will cover costs for travel within Toronto to meetings and events. If you are outside of Toronto, you can still participate through online chats with other members and conference calls during meetings. As a member, you can also definitely expect to have a large say in what you want to do and get out of the Speakers' Bureau.



What will you gain?

As part of the Girls Speakers' Bureau, you will gain public speaking and media training, to practice and use at advocacy events and school visits. These skills and experiences will stay with you and be useful long after the *Because I am a Girl* Speakers' Bureau is just a fun memory. You will also meet other strong girls just like you, and learn a lot about the situations faced by girls around the world.



Your participation as a girl is a very important part of advocacy on girls' issues!

Questions? Feel free to email Youth@planCanada.ca anytime.

To get started, fill out and send in the application form in this package or go online to www.BecauseIamAGirl.ca for the online application