

At 1,500 program sites across the nation and in Canada, Girls Incorporated affiliates serve thousands of young women, empowering them to be strong, smart and bold. Girls Inc. programs strive to spark girls' learning and development and support families to help girls achieve their dreams. With roots dating to 1864 and national status since 1965, Girls Inc. has continuously sought to respond to girls' changing needs. "Strong families create the foundation for girls to build successful and fulfilling futures," says Joyce M. Roché, president and CEO of Girls Inc. "By supporting families, we are supporting girls as they reach their fullest potential."



GIRLS INCORPORATED OF CARPINTERIA

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Award-winning program: Latina Moms

Sonia Rodriguez, Teen & Middle School Program Coordinator

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CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2007 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

LATINA MOMS: MEETING THEM WHERE THEY ARE

Recognizing the need to support underserved Latino families in Carpinteria, Calif., Girls Incorporated of Carpinteria began the Latina Moms program in 2004. “It’s always been a goal for Girls Inc. to reach out to the underserved,” says Ruthie Tremmel, executive director. “In Carpinteria, we have many Latino families that are not adequately connected to community supports.” Girls Inc. began offering weekly classes in Spanish for new immigrant mothers to learn about issues relevant to their families, such as obtaining affordable health care and finding tutoring services for their children. To better reach mothers with limited transportation, last fall Girls Inc. moved the classes to a local mobile home community where many of the families live. Since relocating there last fall, about 20 women have gathered weekly.

“We serve many mothers who do not have daughters in Girls Inc.,” says Development Director Pam Knitowski. “But through our outreach with our Latina Moms group, we’ve increased access to our programs and scholarships so that girls can benefit from our summer and after-school offerings.”



TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN WHAT WE DO HERE,
WE HAVE TO EDUCATE, INVOLVE AND MEET
THE NEEDS OF THE PARENTS. THE MORE PAR-
ENTS LEARN, THE MORE THEIR DAUGHTERS
WILL BENEFIT FROM THE SUPPORT BOTH AT
HOME AND AT GIRLS INC.

—Ruthie Tremmel, executive director of Girls Incorporated of Carpinteria

A COMMUNITY FORMS AROUND A PICNIC TABLE

Moms meet every Wednesday evening around a picnic table in the middle of the neighborhood. Through group discussions, field trips, guest speakers and crafts, moms learn about the comprehensive range of community resources available to their families. Thanks to the Latina Moms program, mothers have found English classes, established relationships with their children’s schools and secured affordable health and dental insurance through local community agencies. “Many of our moms did not know how to use available resources, such as banking,” says Sonia Rodriguez, who leads the Latina Moms program. “We took them on a field trip to a bank, showed them how to open an account and write checks. By learning how to access services, they have become empowered to strengthen their families.”

Most of the moms, who know little English, have limited education and little confidence in their abilities to navigate the public school system. As an established partner of the public school district, Girls Inc. acts as a liaison for the mothers, helping them identify Spanish-speaking staff so that mothers can effectively communicate with their children’s schools.

As a result of the Latina Moms group, mothers in the neighborhood also have developed their own social support network. “Even though they lived in the same community, many of our moms did not know each other,” Rodriguez says. “By coming to the Latina Moms group, women have bonded and built their own community resource.”

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Girls Incorporated, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Girls Incorporated affiliates with outstanding programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.