



# GIRLS INC. FACT BOOK

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**girls  
inc.**

Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>LETTER FROM PRESIDENT &amp; CEO</b>	1
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
<b>GIRLS IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY</b>	2
<b>STRONG</b>	
HEALTHY DIET	4
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	5
SPORTS TEAM PARTICIPATION	6
BODY IMAGE	7
MENTAL HEALTH	8
SUBSTANCE USE: CIGARETTES	9
SUBSTANCE USE: ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES/VAPES	10
SUBSTANCE USE: ALCOHOL	11
SUBSTANCE USE: MARIJUANA	12
SUBSTANCE USE: PRESCRIPTION DRUGS	13
HEALTHY SEXUALITY: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE	14
HEALTHY SEXUALITY: CONTRACEPTIVE USE	15
HEALTHY SEXUALITY: TEEN PREGNANCY RATE	16
HEALTHY SEXUALITY: TEEN BIRTH RATE	17
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: SEXUAL HARASSMENT	18
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: SEXUAL ASSAULT/ FORCED INTERCOURSE	19
HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE/ SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE	20
<b>SMART</b>	
SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT	22
EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION	23
EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES	24
EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: COLLEGE ENROLLMENT	25
WOMEN IN STEM: GIRLS AND STEM	26
WOMEN IN STEM: DEGREES IN STEM FIELDS	27
WOMEN IN STEM: DEGREES IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING	28
<b>BOLD</b>	
LEADERSHIP	30
MEDIA LITERACY: SOCIAL MEDIA USE	31
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: WOMEN RUNNING FOR ELECTED OFFICE	32
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: WOMEN IN CONGRESS	33
CAREER READINESS: FEMALE CEOS IN THE UNITED STATES	34
ECONOMIC LITERACY: GENDER-BASED WAGE DISPARITIES	35
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: BULLYING	36
CONFLICT RESOLUTION: FIGHTING	37
<b>REFERENCES</b>	38

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

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We are pleased to release the 2025 edition of the Girls Inc. Fact Book. Girls Inc. is committed to providing accurate and timely information related to the state of girls, and we believe that you will find this Fact Book to be a useful in helping advance the opportunities and success of girls and young women.

With a legacy of over 160 years, Girls Inc. is the preeminent girls' leadership organization and is unsurpassed in our expertise on girls. We are proud to be shaping the new generation of girl leaders who are making meaningful contributions in their schools and communities today and are poised to influence the future of our society.

The role of Girls Inc. Headquarters is to provide technical assistance to our Network of Affiliates so they can focus on delivering quality services to girls. We provide them with essential resources to deliver the research-based programming that is proven to help girls grow up to be healthy, educated, and independent adults. Headquarters also provides thought leadership and ongoing training, to equip staff to meet girls' evolving needs.

The Fact Book will provide you with the latest statistics and data, along with guidance on how to use this information effectively and accurately.

Thank you to our excellent Research & Evaluation team and to all those involved in producing this important document. Thank you as well to the dedicated supporters and partners who believe, as we do, in inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold.

**Stephanie J. Hull, Ph.D.**

Girls Inc. President & CEO

# INTRODUCTION

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## ABOUT THIS FACT BOOK

Girls Inc. strives to provide accurate and up-to-date information on what girls experience today. This US Fact Book contains statistics about the lived experience of girls and young women, and aims to help readers develop a clear, evidence-based picture of what matters in girls' lives. Statistics included here relate to key elements that Girls Inc. addresses through its mission and girl-focused programming.

## HOW TO USE THIS FACT BOOK

The information presented in this Fact Book consolidates a wealth of publicly available research on key issues impacting girls, offered in accessible and easy-to-consume topical summaries. Where possible, comparison points from national datasets are provided to offer further context into what it is like to be a girl today.

Audiences may find many selections from this Fact Book beneficial for use in grant writing or other fund development opportunities, to develop and share impactful messages about the Girls Inc. Experience, or for making important program implementation decisions. Additionally, each topic includes an example program statement, demonstrating how the Girls Inc. approach to working with girls creates positive outcomes in the lives of girls.

When using a statistic from this Fact Book in a printed or web-published document, it is important to provide a citation using either the author's or publishing organization's name and date of publication or an asterisk or other symbol that directs the reader to a full citation.

You are encouraged to use the wording provided and may use the reported statistic exactly as it is presented in this Fact Book. Make sure to include the source of the statistic, along with a link to its source if appropriate. Both appear near the bottom of the page. If you would like to phrase a fact differently or compare statistics in a way not presented in this Fact Book, please consult the [Girls Inc. Research and Evaluation Department](#) before disseminating your rewritten version.

This fifth volume of the Fact Book includes separate versions for the United States and Canada. Feel free to consult the Girls Inc. Research Team ([research@girlsinc.org](mailto:research@girlsinc.org)) if you have any questions about a statistic, its source, or how to incorporate this information into your materials.

We'd love to hear from you! If you are familiar with a recent, reliable source of statistics that relate to girls' strengths and needs that is not cited in this Fact Book, please tell us about it at [research@girlsinc.org](mailto:research@girlsinc.org).

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# GIRLS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Girls Inc. is proud to inspire *all* girls to be strong, smart, and bold members of their communities. In 2024, Girls Inc. provided approximately 120,000 girls across the U.S. and Canada with meaningful life-changing programming and experiences. The Girls Inc. 2021-2025 Strategic Plan renews Girls Inc.'s commitment to positive impact through organizational resiliency and innovation.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 Population Estimates, girls under the age of 18 make up over 20% of the total female population ([US Census Bureau, 2023](#)), which translates to over 35 million young girls in communities across the United States. They represent not only a sizeable population but also a population characterized by a myriad of differences in cultural, social, and economic experiences. Girls Inc. girls reflect this growing diversity with 74% of Girls Inc. service provided to girls from backgrounds, including Black, Hispanic/Latina, Indigenous, Middle Eastern/North African, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial girls (according to 2024 Annual Affiliate Survey data).

Girls Inc. is committed to advancing the rights and opportunities of girls and young women, to reduce and eliminate the barriers girls face, and to reform systems that impede their success. Informed by the lived experiences of girls in our network, Girls Inc. has developed a network-wide [Policy & Advocacy Platform](#) to provide information on key issue areas facing girls in the U.S. today.

Girls in the United States face many challenges to their well-being, success, and safety. Girls also have strengths, positive experiences, and potential to build their knowledge and accomplish their goals. From health and academic indicators to career outcomes, this Fact Book provides evidence-based snapshots of just some of the obstacles and opportunities girls face. Girls Inc. is dedicated to addressing these complex challenges while embracing the many capabilities of girls today.

# **STRONG**

GIRLS INC. FACT BOOK

# STRONG

## HEALTHY DIET

---

### 56% of high school girls eat vegetables one or more times per day

#### Importance:

Vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. It is recommended that girls ages 9-18 eat 2-4 cups of vegetables per day. Eating vegetables provides many nutrients and health benefits. Vegetables contain potassium, which can help regulate blood pressure, dietary fiber, which helps reduce cholesterol and may lower risk of heart disease, folate, vitamin A, which keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps protect against infections, and vitamin C which helps heal wounds, keeps teeth and gums healthy, and helps the body absorb iron. Eating vegetables may also reduce the risk for heart diseases including heart attack and stroke and may protect against certain types of cancers ([MyPlate, 2025](#)).

#### National Comparisons:

- 59% of male students
- 52% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 46% of Black female students
- 62% of White female students

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. Mind+Body program supports the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls identify a strategy for healthy eating that works for her body, circumstance, budget, home life, culture, and activity level.**

#### How can I say this?

Slightly more male students report eating vegetables at least once a day

While Hispanic or Latina female students eat vegetables at about the average rate, Black female students report eating vegetables at a lower rate than average and White female students report eating vegetables at a higher rate than average.

#### Statistic Source:

The main Healthy Diet statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbbs>.



# STRONG

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

---

**Only 36% of high school girls were physically active for at least 60 minutes on five or more of the past seven days.**

### Importance:

Children ages 6-17 should participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day, including aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities each week. Physically active youth have improved cardiorespiratory fitness, stronger bones, improved cognition, reduced symptoms of depression, and are more likely to have a healthy adulthood ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018](#)). In addition to the health benefits of physical activity, physical activity in the form of play is associated with a variety of positive outcomes for youth, including improved intellectual, social, and emotional development ([Shafer, 2018](#)).

Girls with less access to financial resources have fewer opportunities for safe play and physical activity than their financially secure peers ([Chang & Kim, 2017](#)). Due to lack of opportunities to be physically active, girls from less-resourced communities may not be experiencing the benefits of physical activity as frequently as their more affluent peers.

### National Comparisons:

- 56% of male students
- 30% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 26% of Black female students
- 44% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. Sporting Chance programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls build a foundation for enjoying sports, adventure and physical activity throughout their lives.**

### How can I say this?

High school girls are much less likely than their male peers to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity five or more days per week.

Black and Hispanic high school girls are less likely than their White female peers to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity five or more days per week.

### Statistic Source:

The main Physical Activity statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.

# STRONG

## SPORTS TEAM PARTICIPATION

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**Almost half (48%) of high school girls played on at least one sports team in the past year.**

### Importance:

Sports participation provides many benefits for youth and adolescents. Girls who participate in sports are also more likely to exhibit skills critical to success in school and in the workplace, such as leadership, teamwork, and goal-setting ([Women's Sports Foundation, 2016](#)). While there are many benefits for girls who participate in sports, not all girls have the same access to sports and other physical activity opportunities. Girls with less access to certain educational and social resources especially experience unequal access to both sports teams in their schools, as well as opportunities to be physically active in their communities ([National Women's Law Center & The Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 2015](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 56% of male students
- 42% of Hispanic or Latina students
- 42% of Black female students
- 55% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. Sporting Chance programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls build a foundation for enjoying sports, adventure and physical activity throughout their lives.**

### How can I say this?

High school girls are less likely than their male peers to participate on a sports team.

Black and Hispanic high school girls are less likely to participate on a sports team than their White female peers.

### Statistic Source:

The main Sports Team Participation statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbbs>.

# STRONG

## BODY IMAGE

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### According to parents, 73% of teen girls are insecure about their appearance

#### Importance:

Body image during adolescence has a profound impact on the way youth experience these crucial years of development. High body esteem is associated with increased likelihood to participate in social engagements, increased confidence to assert personal opinion, increased likelihood to complete important health tasks like doctors visits, and decreased pressure to look like images of females seen in the media ([Diedricks, 2017](#)).

#### National Comparisons:

- 69% of teen boys are insecure about their appearance
- 57% of girls ages 8-12 are insecure about their appearance
- 49% of boys ages 8-12 are insecure about their appearance

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. Mind+Body program supports positive body image for girls ages 6-18 by helping girls of all shapes, sizes, weights, and capabilities know they have the right to feel good about their bodies and appreciate the bodies of others.**

#### How can I say this?

Almost three quarters of teen girls are insecure about their appearance

While parents report younger girls are insecure about their appearance at a lower rate than teen girls, over half of young girls are still insecure about their appearance

Parent reported body insecurity is similar among girls and boys with the reporting for girls being slightly higher

#### Statistic Source:

The main Body Image statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2022 University of Michigan Medicine report about negative body image in teens. Updates are not expected. More information can be accessed at <https://www.michiganmedicine.org/>.

# STRONG

## MENTAL HEALTH

**53% of high school girls experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness (symptoms of depression) 13% of high school girls surveyed by the CDC have attempted suicide.**

### Importance:

Suicide is in the top 3 causes of death for young people between ages 10-24 and 90% of those who die by suicide experienced symptoms of a mental health condition, such as feeling very sad or withdrawn, drastic changes in mood, extreme difficulty concentrating, and intense worry or overwhelm. ([NAMI, 2022](#)). LGBTQ+ youth are at an increased risk for suicidal ideation and have a higher rate of persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness ([Trevor Project, 2019](#)). With 1 in 5 children ages 13-18 living with a mental health condition, and 50% of lifetime mental illness beginning by age 14, early identification and treatment is key to minimizing the isolating and stigmatizing effects mental illness can have on the emotional and social well-being of youth ([NAMI, 2016](#)).

Positive relationships and a feeling of mutual support can promote positive mental health and reduce stress. Girls who have supportive friends, trust others, and get along well with other girls are less likely to report feeling depressed ([Hinkelman, 2023](#)).

### National Comparisons:

*High school students who experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness*

- 28% of male students
- 56% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 53% of Black female students
- 51% of White female students
- 73% of girls who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual students

*High school students who have attempted suicide*

- 6% of male students
- 15% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 13% of Black female students
- 11% of White female students
- 24% of girls who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. Mind+Body program supports the mental health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn how to handle stress in healthy ways.**

### How can I say this?

More than half of high school girls experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness.

1 in 8 high school girls have attempted suicide.

High school girls experience symptoms of depression and have attempted suicide at much higher rates than their male peers.

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual girls have much higher rates of experiencing symptoms of depression and attempting suicide than their heterosexual peers

### Statistic Source:

The main Mental Health statistics (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbbs>.

# STRONG

## SUBSTANCE USE: CIGARETTES

---

**15% of high school girls have ever tried smoking cigarettes.**

### Importance:

Cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, including more women dying from lung cancer than breast cancer. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body, leading to increased rates of heart disease, stroke, cancer (throughout the body), eye diseases, problems of the immune system and type 2 diabetes ([CDC, 2024](#)).

Each day, approximately 2,500 youth under 18 smoke their first cigarette. More than 400 of them will become regular smokers and half of them will die from smoking. It is estimated that if current patterns of tobacco use continue, 5.6 million of today's youth under 18 in the United States will die early because of smoking ([American Lung Association, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 14% of male students
- 14% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 7% of Black female students
- 17% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. FRIENDLY PEERsuasion program supports the physical health of girls by strengthening skills needed to resist pressure to use harmful substances.**

### How can I say this?

More than 1 in 7 high school girls have tried smoking cigarettes.

Latina and White high school girls are twice as likely than Black high school girls to have ever tried smoking cigarettes.

### Statistic Source:

The main Substance Use: Cigarettes statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrb>.



# STRONG

## SUBSTANCE USE: ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES/VAPES

---

**39% of high school girls have ever used an electronic vapor product.**

### Importance:

While teen cigarette use had decreased in the past several years ([CDC, 2024](#)), another concerning trend has emerged-- e-cigarettes/vape use. Most notably, the vast majority of vaping products contain nicotine, an addictive substance that can negatively impact adolescent brain development and particularly impacts attention, learning, mood, and impulse control. Though electronic vaping may expose users to marginally fewer chemicals than traditional cigarettes, early evidence suggests use of vaping products leads to a higher likelihood of also using burned cigarettes simultaneously or in the future ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 29% of male students
- 42% of Hispanic or Latina female students
- 40% of Black female students
- 38% White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. FRIENDLY PEERsuasion program supports the physical health of girls by strengthening skills needed to resist pressure to use harmful substances.**

### How can I say this?

Almost 2 in 5 high school girls have tried electronic vaping products.

High school girls try or use electronic vaping products at a higher rate than their male peers.

### Statistic Source:

The main Substance Use: Electronic Cigarettes/Vapes statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.

# STRONG

## SUBSTANCE USE: ALCOHOL

---

**24% of high school girls have had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days.**

### Importance:

A girl's adolescent years are important for physical, social, and emotional growth, but alcohol and other substance use can endanger these developmental processes. In contrast to historic trends, female high school students are more likely to binge drink than male high school students. Young people who use alcohol are more likely to have poorer educational outcomes, contract sexually transmitted infections or get pregnant as a result of unprotected sex, misuse other substances, and have increased risk of suicide and homicide ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 20% of male students
- 24% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 21% of Black female students
- 26% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. FRIENDLY PEERsuasion program supports the physical health of girls by strengthening skills needed to resist pressure to use harmful substances.**

### How can I say this?

Almost a quarter of all high school girls currently drink alcohol.

High school girls are more likely than their male peers to drink alcohol and to binge drink alcohol.

### Statistic Source:

The main Substance Use: Alcohol statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrb>.

# STRONG

## SUBSTANCE USE: MARIJUANA

---

**33% of high school girls have tried marijuana at least once.**

### Importance:

Marijuana use is associated with poorer than expected academic performance, and neurological studies suggest that marijuana use can lead to changes in brain structure, resulting in permanent problems with brain functioning ([Jacobus & Tapert, 2016](#)). Marijuana use in adolescence is also associated with other risk factors, such as increased risk for mental health issues, impaired driving, and potential for addiction ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 26% of male students
- 36% of Hispanic or Latina students
- 34% of Black female students
- 31% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. FRIENDLY PEERsuasion program supports the physical health of girls by strengthening skills needed to resist pressure to use harmful substances.**

### How can I say this?

1 third of all high school girls have tried marijuana at least once.

High school girls are more likely to have tried marijuana, as compared to their male peers.

### Statistic Source:

The main Substance Use: Marijuana statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Updated statistics are anticipated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.

# STRONG

## SUBSTANCE USE: PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

---

**14% of high school girls have taken prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription or differently than how a doctor told them to take them.**

### Importance:

Nearly 1 in 7 high school girls misusing prescription drugs. Teenagers use prescription drugs because they think these drugs are safer than street drugs and they are legal. However, just as street drugs, when used incorrectly, prescription drugs can be very dangerous and can lead to overdose, seizures, stroke, addiction, and even death. Many times, teenagers will take a mix of prescription drugs all at once often using alcohol at the same time ([University of Rochester Medical Center](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 9% of male students
- 15% of Hispanic or Latina students
- 13% of Black female students
- 12% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. FRIENDLY PEERsuasion program supports the physical health of girls by strengthening skills needed to resist pressure to use harmful substances.**

### How can I say this?

Nearly 1 in 7 high school girls have misused prescription drugs.

Female students are more likely than their male peers to misuse prescription drugs.

### Statistic Source:

The main Substance Use: Prescription Drugs statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Updated statistics are anticipated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.

# STRONG

## HEALTHY SEXUALITY: SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

---

### 31% of high school girls report having had sexual intercourse.

#### Importance:

Sexual health is a critical part of a young person's well being. Stigma and misinformation can shape one's decisions about sexual activity. Educating girls about healthy relationships, consent, and how to practice safe sex, allows girls to be empowered advocates and make informed, thoughtful decisions. Studies have shown that educating girls about reproductive and sexual health does not promote increased sexual activity ([Dreweke, 2019](#)).

#### National Comparisons:

- 32% of all male students
- 32% of Hispanic or Latina students
- 28% of Black female students
- 32% of White female students

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn about and develop an appreciation for the human body and all it can do, engage in healthy relationships, explore values, and think about their futures and the world around them.**

#### How can I say this?

Nearly 1 out of every 3 high school girls has reported having sexual intercourse.

Female and male high school students report having had sexual intercourse at similar rates

#### Statistic Source:

The main Healthy Sexuality: Sexual Intercourse statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Updated statistics are anticipated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.



# STRONG

## HEALTHY SEXUALITY: CONTRACEPTIVE USE

**46% of sexually active high school girls used a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse.**

**86% of sexually active high school girls used some method to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sexual intercourse with an opposite-sex partner.**

### Importance:

While all forms of contraceptives can reduce the risk of unintended pregnancies, using a condom during sexual activity also reduces the risk to both partners for most STIs, including HIV. Using any form of contraception, such as the pill, the patch, or IUDs, can reduce the likelihood of unplanned teen pregnancies, which can significantly impact a teen girl's social and economic opportunities ([CDC, 2024](#)). Teenage mothers are more likely to drop out of school, have increased health challenges, live in poverty, and face unemployment as a young adult ([Maslowsky, 2021](#)). Knowledge about contraception can empower girls to take charge of their sexual health.

### National Comparisons:

#### Used a condom

- 58% of all male students
- 49% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 39% of Black female students
- 47% of White female students

#### Used some method

- 89% of all male students
- 83% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 73% of Black female students
- 91% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn about and develop an appreciation for the human body and all it can do, engage in healthy relationships, explore values, and think about their futures and the world around them.**

### How can I say this?

More than 6 in 7 sexually active high school girls report using some method of contraception the last time they had sexual intercourse with an opposite-sex partner.

Young men are more likely than their female counterparts to report using a condom or other method of contraception

Black girls report using a condom or some method of birth control less than their Hispanic and White counterparts

### Statistic Source:

The main Healthy Sexuality: Contraceptive Use statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Updated statistics are anticipated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbhs>.

# STRONG

## HEALTHY SEXUALITY: TEEN PREGNANCY RATE

---

**In 2020, the teen pregnancy rate was 27 pregnancies per 1,000 teen girls (ages 15-19).**

### **Importance:**

Pregnant teens are at higher risk (as compared to women aged 20-24) for severe health complications, such as eclampsia, endometritis, and system infections, while their babies face increased risk of low birth weight, preterm birth, and chronic medical conditions ([WHO, 2024](#)).

**States\* with the highest teen pregnancy rates in 2020 were:**

- Mississippi (39 per 1,000)
- Arkansas (38 per 1,000)
- Oklahoma (37 per 1,000)

\*The 2020 Teen Pregnancy Rate for Washington, DC was 45 per 1,000

**States with the lowest teen pregnancy rates in 2020 were:**

- New Hampshire (12 per 1,000)
- Massachusetts and Vermont (13 per 1,000)
- Utah and Minnesota (16 per 1,000)

### **Girls Inc. Approach:**

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn about and develop an appreciation for the human body and all it can do, engage in healthy relationships, explore values, and think about their futures and the world around them.**

### **How can I say this?**

In 2020, less than 3 of every 100 teen girls became pregnant.

### **Statistic Source:**

The main Healthy Sexuality: Teen Pregnancy Rate statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the most recent Guttmacher Institute Report on U.S. Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions, which was published in 2024 and utilized data through 2020. Updated reports are published every 1-3 years and can be found at <https://www.guttmacher.org/>

# STRONG

## HEALTHY SEXUALITY: TEEN BIRTH RATE

---

**In 2023, there were 13 births for every 1,000 teen girls ages 15-19.**

### Importance:

Teen mothers often experience stigmatization and lack the support they need to succeed. According to a national survey of girls ages 14-18, girls who were pregnant or parenting were less likely to report that they had someone at their school who cared about them and wanted them to succeed, and 26% say that they received little to no counseling or help in planning their futures. Pregnant and parenting young women also report stigmatization, bullying, harassment, and discrimination at school ([NWLC, 2017](#))

### National Comparisons:

The birth rate among teen girls age 15-19 in 2020 was:

- 21 births per 1,000 among Native American/Alaska Native teens
- 21 births per 1,000 among Latina teens
- 19 births per 1,000 among Black teens
- 21 births per 1,000 among Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander teens
- 8 births per 1,000 among White teens
- 2 births per 1,000 among Asian American teens

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the physical health of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn about and develop an appreciation for the human body and all it can do, engage in healthy relationships, explore values, and think about their futures and the world around them.**

### How can I say this?

Teen birth rates among Native American, Latina, Black, and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth (21, 21, 19, and 21 per 1,000 respectively) are more than double the birth rate among White youth (8 per 1,000), and 10 times the birth rate among Asian American Youth (2 per 1,000).

### Statistic Source:

The main Healthy Sexuality: Teen Birth Rate statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2025 Congressional Research Service Brief on Teen Birth Trends. Update frequency for these briefs are unknown but can be found at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/>

# STRONG

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

---

**55% of girls say that they hear boys making sexual comments or sexual jokes about girls at least several times a week.**

**56% of girls in grades 7-12 reported experiencing sexual harassment during the past school year.**

### Importance:

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual conduct, which can take place in the form of verbal or written comments, gestures, displaying pictures or images, using physical coercion, or harassment based on failure to conform to gender norms ([Hill and Kears, 2011](#)). Often, sexual harassment goes underreported for reasons such as fear for what other people will think, beliefs that reporting will not make a difference, not being sure if comments are serious enough to report, and being worried about not being believed ([Plan International, 2018](#)). Sexual harassment is harmful for adolescent development, as girls who have reported experiencing sexual harassment report having trouble sleeping, a desire to avoid school, and negative emotional and mental health associated with harassment ([Hill and Kears, 2011](#)).

### National Comparison 1:

- 32% of boys feel pressure to join in when other boys are talking about girls in a sexual way.

### National Comparison 2:

- 40% of boys grades 7-12 reported experiencing sexual harassment during the past school year.

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the relationship safety of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn to identify, establish, and cultivate healthy relationships through assertiveness and negotiation skills. Activities focus on personal awareness of rights, boundary setting, and communication within relationships of all kinds.**

### How can I say this?

More than half of middle school and high school girls overhear sexual comments by their peers frequently and experience sexual harassment each year.

Middle and high school girls are 40% more likely than their male peers to experience sexual harassment.

### Statistic Source 1:

[Plan International. \(2018\). The State of Gender Equality for U.S. Adolescents. PerryUndem.](#)

### Statistic Source 2:

[Hill, C. & Kears, H. \(2011\). Crossing the line: sexual harassment at school. Washington, DC: American Association of University Women.](#)

# STRONG

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: SEXUAL ASSAULT<sup>1</sup> / FORCED INTERCOURSE

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**27% of girls experiences sexual assault before the age of 18.**

**13% of high school girls have been physically forced to have sexual intercourse (rape).**

### Importance:

Girls and young women are at especially high risk for sexual assault and forced intercourse, with the greatest risk occurring in late adolescence. Over 80% of women who have been raped were first forced to have intercourse before age 25, including almost 50% of them before age 18. Sexual violence can result in immediate and lifelong consequences, including chronic pain, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Survivors of sexual violence are more likely to engage in negative health behaviors like substance abuse and unsafe sexual activities and are also more likely to experience other forms of violence ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons (Sexual Assault):

- 5% of boys experience sexual assault before the age of 18.

### National Comparisons (Forced Intercourse):

- 4% of male high school students
- 14% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 10% of Black female students
- 14% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the relationship safety of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn to identify, establish, and cultivate healthy relationships through assertiveness and negotiation skills. Activities focus on personal awareness of rights, boundary setting, and communication within relationships of all kinds.**

### How can I say this?

More than 1 in 4 girls experience sexual assault as a minor.

Girls under the age of 18 experience sexual assault at 5 times the rate of their male peers.

More than 1 in 10 high school girls have experienced forced intercourse.

High School girls are more than 3 times as likely as High School boys to experience forced intercourse.

### Statistic Source :

The main Healthy Relationships: Sexual Assault statistic (and comparison data) is taken from a 2020 article in the Primary Care: Clinics in Office Practice journal. No replication of the study or article are expected, but more information can be found at the [National Library of Medicine](#).

The main Healthy Relationships: Forced Intercourse statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.



# STRONG

## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE / SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

---

**11% of high school girls who have dated during the past 12 months reported being physically abused by a dating partner.**

**9% of high school girls who had dated during the past 12 months reported experiencing some type of sexual dating violence.**

### Importance:

Young women are at especially high risk of experiencing abusive or violent relationships. Abusive relationships can have immediate and lasting negative effects on girls. Teens who are subjected to abusive relationships are more likely to experience mental health challenges like anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts, are more likely to struggle with substance abuse, and may exhibit anti-social behaviors like lying, bullying, or stealing. Dating violence as a teen also makes girls more likely to be in abusive relationships in the future ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons (Physical Violence):

Among high school students who had dated in the previous 12 months:

- 9% of male students
- 14% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 8% of Black female students
- 11% of White female students

### National Comparisons (Sexual Violence):

Among high school students who had dated in the previous 12 months:

- 3% of male students
- 9% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 5% of Black female students
- 12% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programs support the relationship safety of girls ages 6-18 by helping girls learn to identify, establish, and cultivate healthy relationships through assertiveness and negotiation skills. Activities focus on personal awareness of rights, boundary setting, and communication within relationships of all kinds.**

### How can I say this?

At least 1 in 10 high school girls have experienced some type of dating violence in the past 12 months.

Girls and boys report being in physically abusive relationships at similar rates

Girls report experiencing sexual dating violence at three times the rate of boys

### Statistic Source :

The main Healthy Relationships: Physical & Sexual Violence statistics (and accompanying comparison data) were taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Updated statistics are anticipated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbs>.

**SMART**

GIRLS INC. FACT BOOK

# SMART

## SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

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**55% of girls say they like going to school.**

**39% of girls feel like they can be themselves at school.**

### **Importance:**

While a majority of girls say that they enjoy school, girls' views of their academic abilities and successes demonstrate that even girls who enjoy and excel in school are not always confident in their own achievement. However, girls are 6 times more likely to enjoy learning when they feel like they can be themselves in their learning environment. Additionally, girls are more likely to enjoy school when they feel they have adults at school who care about them, when they feel they can be themselves in school, and when teachers treat them like they are smart. ([Hinkelman, 2023](#))

### **Girls Inc. Approach:**

**Girls Inc. SMART programs support school-based learning and engagement of girls ages 6-18 through activities promoting literacy skills, STEM interest, and homework help to strengthen girls' academic confidence.**

### **How can I say this?**

More than half of girls enjoy going to school. That enjoyment increases when they are able to feel like themselves in school and when they trust adults at school

Less than 2 in 5 girls feel like they can be themselves in school.

### **Statistic Source:**

The main School Engagement statistics was taken from a 2023 Girls Index report from the organization [Ruling Our eXperiences](#) and utilizes data collected in 2022-2023 from 17,502 girls in grades 5-12. Plans for updated data collection and reporting is unknown, but more information can be found at <https://rulingourexperiences.com/the-girls-index-report/>

# SMART

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: ON-TIME HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

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**90% of girls who enter high school as freshmen graduate within four years.**

### Importance:

Completing high school is a critical milestone for girls to achieve positive and empowering life outcomes, such as financial independence and good health. In 2016, the average income for women who were high school graduates was \$8,000 more than their peers without a high school diploma, cutting their risk of poverty by more than half. Additionally, women who graduate high school are more likely to have health insurance and less likely to require government support systems for their household ([Tucker, 2017](#)).

National graduation rates are lower for several demographic groups and in many communities. Less-resourced students, students with disabilities, English Learners, and students attending poor-performing schools are less likely to graduate from high school often due to lack of opportunity and support ([Reeves, et al, 2021](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 85% of male students
- 90% of Hispanic students
- 86% of Black female students
- 90% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Post Secondary Readiness programs support the academic achievement of girls ages 6-18 through activities that focus on goal-setting, highlight girls' skills and interests, and provide resources for successful homework completion.**

### How can I say this?

Approximately 1 out of every 10 girls (10%) does not graduate high school on time. For Black girls the number is slightly lower with about 1 out of 7 not graduating on time.

High school girls are more likely than their male peers to graduate high school on time.

### Statistic Source:

The main Educational Aspirations: On-Time High School Graduation statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the National Center for Education Statistics database, from a table published in 2025, using data from 2022-2023. Statistics are typically updated annually and can be found at [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp)

# SMART

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES

**4% of young women between the ages of 16 and 24 have dropped out of high school.**

### Importance:

There are a range of societal challenges and obstacles that can push young women out of school and prevent them from achieving their academic and career goals. Disproportionate school discipline, sexual harassment, and a lack of trauma-informed school policies can negatively impact a girl's education. Compared to boys, girls who do not finish school are at higher risk of experiencing unemployment or are more likely to earn lower wages ([NWLC, 2017](#)). Additionally, adults who do not finish high school are more likely to have lower incomes and poorer health ([HHS, 2025](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 6% of all young men ages 16-24
- 5% of Hispanic young women ages 16-24
- 6% of Black young women ages 16-24
- 4% of White young women ages 16-24

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Post Secondary Readiness programs support the academic achievement of girls ages 6-18 through activities that focus on goal-setting, highlight girls' skills and interests, and provide resources for successful homework completion.**

### How can I say this?

High school girls are less likely to drop out of high school than their male peers.

Less than 1 in 20 young women drop out of high school

### Statistic Source:

The main Educational Aspirations: High School Dropout Rates statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the National Center for Education Statistics database, from a table published in 2025, using data from 2022. Updated statistics, which are typically updated annually, can be found at [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp)



# SMART

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS: COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

**66% of young women ages 16-24 who completed high school in 2022 enrolled in a two-year or four-year college the same year they completed high school.**

**44% of young women ages 18-24 are enrolled in college.**

### Importance:

Taking college courses, and even more so graduating from college, increases earning power. In 2022, median annual earnings for women working full time were \$40,230 for high school graduates, \$50,220 with an associate's degree, and \$65,960 with a bachelor's degree ([NCES, 2025](#)). Further, the unemployment rate in 2024 was 4.3% for women with a high school diploma, 4.0% for women with some college, 2.8% for women with an associate's degree, and 2.5% for women with a bachelor's degree ([U.S. Department of Labor, 2025](#)). It is important to note that the unemployment rate in 2024 was relatively low for the general population. When unemployment is higher, there is a bigger difference in employment rates based on education with those who have a college degree facing lower unemployment than those with less advanced education.

### National Comparisons:

Young adults ages 16-24 enrolled in college the same year they completed high school:

- 57% of young men enrolled in a two-year or four-year college
- 15% of young women enrolled in two-year colleges
- 51% of young women enrolled in four-year colleges

Percentage of young adults ages 18-24 enrolled in college:

- 34% of young men
- 39% of Hispanic young women
- 39% of Black young women
- 46% of White young women

### Girls Inc. Comparison:

**Girls Inc. Post Secondary Readiness programs support the academic achievement of girls ages 6-18 through activities that focus on goal-setting, highlight girls' skills and interests, and provide resources for successful homework completion.**

***\*Girls Inc. also operates a scholarship program for participants transitioning from high school to post secondary school.***

### How can I say this?

Two-thirds of young women enroll in college the same year they graduate high school.

Among young people ages 18-24, more women than men are enrolled in college than men.

Less than half (44%) of young women ages 18-24 are enrolled in college.

More than twice the number of women who are enrolled in a degree program the same year they finish high school are enrolled in 4 degree programs than 2 year degree programs

A higher percentage of White women are enrolled in college than their Hispanic and Black counterparts

### Statistic Source:

The main Educational Aspirations: College Enrollment statistics (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the National Center for Education Statistics database, from a table published in 2024, using data from 2022. Statistics are typically updated annually and can be found at [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp)

# SMART

## WOMEN IN STEM: GIRLS AND STEM

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**59% of girls say they are good at math and/or science**

**55% of girls say they are interested in STEM careers**

### Importance:

Overall, girls have a high interest in STEM and future STEM careers. Girls' interest in STEM continues to increase and stays steady through high school. Additionally, a girls access to resource does not impact the level of interest a girl has in STEM or a STEM career. Even though interest in STEM continues to grow, girls' perception of their STEM abilities are declining. In 2017, 73% of girls said that they were good at STEM related subjects but in 2023, only 59% said they were good in these areas. Additionally, as students get older, even though their interest in STEM is still strong, their perceptions of their abilities decline. Many girls who perceive themselves to not be good at STEM subjects have high academic performance in these areas, suggesting that there are other factors that lead them to believe they are not competent in this area ([Hinkelman, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 55% of White girls say they are interested in pursuing a career in a STEM field
- 56% of Black girls say they are interested in pursuing a career in a STEM field
- 56% of Multiracial girls say they are interested in pursuing a career in a STEM field
- 63% of Asian American girls say they are interested in pursuing a career in a STEM field
- 57% of Hispanic girls say they are interested in pursuing a career in a STEM field

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Operation SMART programming develops girls' enthusiasm for and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through hands-on activities, girls explore, ask questions, persist, and solve problems.**

### How can I say this?

Just under 3 out of 5 girls say they are good at STEM

Just over half of girls are interested in a STEM career. Girls who identify as Asian are more likely to be interested in a career in a STEM field than their peers from other demographic categories.

### Statistic Source:

The main Women in STEM: Girls and STEM statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2024 Girls Index report from the organization [Ruling Our eXperiences](#) and utilizes data collected in 2022-2023 from 17,502 girls in grades 5-12. Plans for updated data collection and reporting is unknown, but more information can be found at <https://rulingourexperiences.com/the-girls-index-report/>.

# SMART

## WOMEN IN STEM: DEGREES IN STEM FIELDS

### Women earn 36% of all post-secondary STEM degrees.

#### Importance:

Women make up a large portion of certain STEM fields like healthcare, they are underrepresented in other STEM fields like physical sciences, computing, and engineering. While women make up a large portion of certain STEM fields like healthcare, they are underrepresented in other STEM fields like physical sciences, computing, and engineering. Additionally, while women earn the majority of college degrees, they only earn a small share of degrees in engineering and computer science. Increasing representation in STEM fields begins with increasing representation during postsecondary education, since three quarters of STEM workers earn a degree in a STEM field, according to PEW Research. Average earnings for STEM jobs are 65% higher than non-STEM jobs (\$77,400 versus \$46,900, respectively) ([Fry, Kennedy, & Funk, 2021](#)).

#### National Comparisons:

Of all post-secondary STEM degrees awarded in the U.S. in 2019-2020:

- 5% went to Hispanic or Latina women; 9% to Hispanic or Latino men
- 3% went to Black women; 5% to Black men
- 16% went to White women; 33% to White men

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Operation SMART programming develops girls' enthusiasm for and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through hands-on activities, girls explore, ask questions, persist, and solve problems.**

#### How can I say this?

Men outnumber women as STEM graduates across all racial/ethnic groups.

Only one third of post-secondary STEM degrees are received by women.

#### Statistic Source:

The main Women in STEM: Degrees in STEM statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the National Center for Education Statistics database, from a table published in 2024, using data from the 2021-2022 academic year. Updated statistics, which are typically updated annually, can be found at <https://nces.ed.gov/FastFacts/>

# SMART

## WOMEN IN STEM:

### DEGREES IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

**Women earn 22% of all computer and information sciences bachelor's degrees**

**Women earn 23% of all engineering and engineering technologies bachelor's degrees.**

#### Importance:

Despite minor advances over the past decade, women, Black, and Hispanic young adults continue to be drastically underrepresented in STEM fields undergoing considerable growth: engineering and computer science. STEM occupations typically experience lower rates of unemployment than non-STEM fields, therefore providing more consistent wages and other benefits to workers in these fields ([Fry, Kennedy, & Funk, 2021](#)).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the top 6 STEM occupations employing the most people are rooted in computer and information sciences ([U.S. Department of Labor, 2021](#)). From 2021-2031, the BLS projects computer and mathematical occupations to experience the second largest amount of growth, only outpaced by healthcare ([Dubina, 2022](#)). Similarly, according to the World Economic Forum, all of the top 25 degrees (based on pay and demand) are in STEM fields, and the majority of them in computer science and engineering ([Masterson, 2021](#)).

#### Women earn:

- 57% of all bachelor's degrees awarded
- 66% of biological and biomedical sciences bachelor's degrees awarded
- 42% of mathematics and statistics bachelor's degrees awarded
- 77% of bachelor's degrees in engineering and engineering technologies are awarded to men

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Operation SMART programming develops girls' enthusiasm for and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through hands-on activities, girls explore, ask questions, persist, and solve problems.**

#### How can I say this?

Men are awarded more than 3 times the number of Computer Science and Engineering bachelor's degrees as women.

Women earn a higher percentage of degrees in the field of biomedical sciences as in the fields of mathematics and statistics, engineering, and computer and information sciences.

#### Statistic Source:

The main Women in STEM: Degrees in Computer Science and Engineering (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the National Center for Education Statistics database, from a table published in 2025, using data from the 2020-2021 academic year. Statistics are typically updated annually and can be found at [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/current_tables.asp)

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GIRLS INC. FACT BOOK

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## LEADERSHIP

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**59% of girls say that they like to be in charge.**

**55% of girls say that they are afraid to be leaders because they don't want their peers to think they are "bossy".**

**66% of girls say that they do not say what they are thinking or disagree with others because they want to be liked.**

**55% of girls describe themselves as confident**

### **Importance:**

While a majority of girls say they like to be in charge, girls are often discouraged from taking on leadership roles either by their peers or by their own perceptions about leadership. Girls report not wanting to speak up or take on leadership roles for fear of what others might think of them. Confidence plays a role in girls' self-perceptions as leaders, as girls who consider themselves to be less confident are twice as likely to report that they do not speak up or disagree with others because they want to be liked ([Hinkelman, 2023](#)). Yet, while Black girls are more likely than their peers to exhibit assertive behavior and leadership qualities, these behaviors instead are often labeled as behavior infractions like defiance ([Onyeka-Crawford, 2017](#)).

### **Girls Inc. Approach:**

**Girls Inc. Leadership and Community Action programming builds leadership skills for girls ages 6-18 by deepening their understanding of leadership as a collective process grounded in belonging to, and having responsibility for, one's community. Girls get the opportunity to create lasting social change through community action and civic engagement projects.**

### **How can I say this?**

More than half of girls fear being a leader because of how their peers will perceive them.

Two thirds of girls prioritize being liked over sharing their ideas and opinions.

Just over half of girls describe themselves as confident

### **Statistic Source:**

The main School Engagement statistics was taken from a 2023 Girls Index report from the organization [Ruling Our eXperiences](#) and utilizes data collected in 2022-2023 from 17,502 girls in grades 5-12. Plans for updated data collection and reporting is unknown, but more information can be found at <https://rulingourexperiences.com/the-girls-index-report/s>



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## MEDIA LITERACY: SOCIAL MEDIA USE

**92% of girls ages 13-17 use at least 1 social media platform.**

**48% of girls ages 13-17 report being online almost constantly.**

### Importance:

Social media is prevalent in the lives of many teenage girls, starting as young as 5th or 6th grade. Girls who spend more time on social media are more likely to report feeling sad or depressed, are more likely to want to change their appearance, report being less confident, and have fewer supportive relationships ([Hinkelman, 2023](#)). Because of how they spend their time online differently, teenage girls are more likely than their male peers to be negatively impacted by viewing and participating in social media platforms ([Twenge, 2020](#)).

Due to the teenage brain having limited capacity for impulse control, teens are at risk of engaging in social media without considering privacy concerns or other consequences, such as harassment, peer pressure, disruptions to sleep, and increased rates of anxiety and depression ([Mayo Clinic, 2022](#)).

### National Comparisons:

#### All teens:

- 67% are on TikTok
- 62% are on Instagram
- 59% are on Snapchat
- 32% are on Facebook
- 23% are on Twitter

#### Males (13-17)

- 60% are on TikTok
- 55% are on Instagram
- 54% are on Snapchat
- 31% are on Facebook
- 24% are on Twitter

#### Constantly Online:

- 46% of all teens
- 43% of teen males

#### Females (13-17)

- 73% are on TikTok
- 69% are on Instagram
- 64% are on Snapchat
- 34% are on Facebook
- 22% are on Twitter

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Media Literacy programming builds digital citizenship skills for girls ages 6-18 by increasing their awareness of the scope and power of the media and the effects of media messages on girls and women.**

### How can I say this?

Half of teen girls report being online constantly.

Teen girls outnumber teen boys on most social media platforms.

Almost all girls report using at least one form of social media

TikTok is the social media platform girls report using at the highest rate

### Statistic Source:

The main Media Literacy: Social Media Use statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2022 PEW Research Center report and utilizes data collected between 2014-2022. A similar survey is typically conducted every few years, and more information can be found at <https://www.pewresearch.org/>

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## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: WOMEN RUNNING FOR ELECTED OFFICE

**In the 2024 election cycle, 50 women ran for Senate seats (21 in final November ballots), 467 for House seats (259 in November), and 17 ran for Governorship (5 in November).**

### Importance:

In 2022, the United States saw a record number of women running as Senate, House of Representatives, and gubernatorial candidates but in 2024, this number marginally decreased ([CAWP, 2024](#)). Though women continue to be underrepresented in political offices, trends indicate increasing civic engagement, not only reflected in high numbers of women running for office, but also in high numbers of voter registration and voter turnout among women of all ages ([CAWP, 2024](#)). Exposure to these examples of female candidates and elected officials may also inspire girls and young women to pursue careers in public affairs and politics ([Lawless & Fox, 2013](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- The record for women running for Senate was set in 2020, with 70 women candidates.
- The record for women running for House of Representatives was set in 2020, with 583 women candidates.
- The record for women running for Governor of a US state was set in 2022, with 69 women candidates.

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. She Votes program teaches girls ages 6-18 about civic engagement and the democratic process through activities where girls gain the skills and confidence to be future voters, candidates, and legislators.**

### How can I say this?

Fewer women ran for office in the 2024 election cycle than the past two election cycles.

### Statistic Source:

The main Civic Engagement: Women Running for Elected Office statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2024 analysis by the Center for American Women and Politics and utilizes data collected between 1980-2024. Similar data is summarized at each election cycle and more information can be found at <https://cawp.rutgers.edu/>.

# BOLD

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: WOMEN IN CONGRESS

**As of January 2025, 151 women (28% of the total membership) are serving in Congress. Of these Congresswomen, 125 are serving in the House of Representatives and 26 in the Senate. 12 Governors are women.**

### Importance:

In an international ranking of countries by the percentage of legislators in the lower house who are women, the U.S., alongside Iraq, ranked 76th out of 184 as of June 2025 ([RepresentWomen, 2025](#)).

Young women are less likely than young men to receive encouragement to run for office, are less socialized by their parents to think about politics as a career path, and are exposed to less political information and discussion than young men ([Lawless & Fox, 2013](#)). With increased representation of women, girls may be more likely to see themselves as being able to pursue a career in public service.

### National Comparisons:

#### Senate

- 74 Senators (74%) are men
- 21 Senators (21%) are White women
- 2 Senators (2%) are Asian American/Pacific Islander women
- 1 Senator (1%) is a Latina woman
- 2 Senators (2%) are Black women

#### House of Representatives

- 310 members of the House of Representatives (71%) are men
- 73 Representatives (17%) are White women
- 27 Representatives (6%) are Black women
- 18 Representatives (4%) are Latina women
- 7 Representatives (2%) are Asian/Pacific Islander American women
- 1 Representative (.25%) are Native American/Alaskan Native/Native Hawaiian women
- 2 Representative (.5%) is a Middle Eastern/North African woman

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**The Girls Inc. She Votes program teaches girls ages 6-18 about civic engagement and the democratic process through activities where girls gain the skills and confidence to be future voters, candidates, and legislators.**

### How can I say this?

More than 1 in 4 United States Senators are women and less than 1 in 3 United States House of Representatives members are women.

Less than one quarter of Governors are women.

Women of color continue to be one of the least represented groups in Congress

### Statistic Source:

The main Civic Engagement: Women in Congress statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was organized by the Center for American Women and Politics. Data is actively kept current with changes to congressional offices and more information can be found at <https://cawp.rutgers.edu/>.

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## CAREER READINESS: FEMALE CEOs IN THE UNITED STATES

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### 39% of all businesses are owned by women.

#### Importance:

Not only do female executives bring skills like collaboration, emotional intelligence, and financial efficiency to their roles, but research has shown that businesses with women in senior leadership positions are “more profitable, more socially responsible, and provide safer, higher quality customer experiences” ([Post, Lokshin, & Boone, 2021](#)). For girls, representation of women leaders can be particularly inspiring to take on leadership positions themselves. However, in the United States today, women hold few top executive positions and often earn less than their male counterparts.

#### Comparisons:

- 10.4 % of Fortune 500 CEOs are women.
- 9.2% of Fortune 1000 CEOs are women.
- 7.8% of S&P 500 CEOs are women.
- 9% of Russell 3000 CEOs are women
- 7.2% of private companies over \$1 billion have female CEOs

#### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Leadership and Community Action programming identifies and develops leadership skills for girls ages 6-18, ensuring they have the knowledge, experience, and confidence to take on a variety of leadership roles throughout their communities.**

#### How can I say this?

Less than 2 in 5 businesses in the US are owned by women.

Women do not make up more than 1 in 10 CEOs in any of the major corporation indices.

#### Statistic Source:

The main Career Readiness: Female CEOs statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2024 Women CEOs in America Report from the Women Business Collaborative and uses data from 2023. Data is expected to be updated annually and more information can be found at <https://www.wbcollaborative.org/>.

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## ECONOMIC LITERACY: GENDER-BASED WAGE DISPARITIES

**On average, women who work full time make 83 cents to their male counterparts' dollar.**

### Importance:

Many women are the sole breadwinners for themselves or their families. Even when women share income and expenses with other earners, their incomes are no less critical for the support of their households. These disparities are even greater for women of color. If working women were paid on parity with similarly qualified men, poverty for working women would drop by more than 40%, the economy of every state would grow, and thousands of families would have increased financial stability ([Shaw and Mariano, 2021](#)).

If current trends continue, women as a whole will not reach pay parity until 2063. Black women are not projected to reach parity until 2144 and Hispanic women until 2210 ([Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2022](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- Median earnings for young women ages 16-24 are 95% of those of their male peers.
- Median earnings for Black women are 92% of those for Black men.
- Median earnings for Latina women are 87% of those for Latino men.
- Median earnings for White women are 83% of those for White men.
- Median earnings for Asian American women are 79% of those for Asian American men.

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Economic Literacy programming supports the life skills of girls ages 6-18 by exploring how the economy affects everyone locally and globally and building skills critical to being financially savvy, economically independent adults.**

### How can I say this?

Women are paid less than men across all age and racial demographic groups.

Black and Hispanic women, are paid even less than their White counterparts

### Statistic Source:

The main Economic Literacy: Gender-based Wage Disparity statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from a 2024 table from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and utilizes data collected in 2023. Data for these tables are typically updated annually and more information can be found at . Data has also been taken from a 2025 study from the Pew Research Center about the gender pay gap in the US. It is unclear if and when this data will be updated. More data can be found at <https://www.pewresearch.org/>

# BOLD

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION: BULLYING

**21% of high school girls have been electronically bullied during the past year.**

**22% of high school girls have been bullied on school property in the past year.**

### Importance:

Bullying can result in physical injury, social and emotional distress, and self harm. Victims of bullying are especially likely to suffer from substance abuse, are more likely to drop out of school and have increased rates of mental illness, including depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties and suicidal behavior. Victims and perpetrators of bullying are at higher risk than their peers for lower academic performance and experiencing violence later in life ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

Percentage reporting having been electronically bullied in the past year:

- 12% of male students
- 18% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 12% of Black female students
- 25% of White female students

Percentage reporting having been bullied on school property in the past year:

- 17% of male students
- 19% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 15% of Black female students
- 27% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Project BOLD programs support personal safety skills for girls ages 6-18 by educating girls about gender violence, equipping girls with self-defense skills, and helping girls determine strategies for maintaining healthy relationships.**

### How can I say this?

High school girls are more likely than their male peers to be electronically bullied or bullied on school property.

At least 1 in 5 high school girls has been the victim of bullying in the past year.

White female students report being bullied at higher rates than female students from all other racial and ethnic backgrounds

### Statistic Source:

The main Conflict Resolution: Bullying statistics (and accompanying comparison data) were taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbbs>.

# BOLD

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION: FIGHTING

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**13% of high school girls were in a physical fight during the past year.**

### Importance:

In addition to the physical harm of violent behavior, youth who engage in or are exposed to violence may suffer from a variety of negative outcomes that harm adolescent development, may contribute to learning difficulties, impair judgment, and cause difficulties coping with stress. Adolescent violence can lead to behavioral and mental health difficulties including future violence, risky sexual behaviors, depression, suicidal behavior, substance abuse, obesity, academic difficulties, and school dropout ([CDC, 2024](#)).

### National Comparisons:

- 25% of male students
- 15% of Hispanic/Latina students
- 18% of Black female students
- 11% of White female students

### Girls Inc. Approach:

**Girls Inc. Project BOLD programs support personal safety skills for girls ages 6-18 by educating girls about gender violence, equipping girls with self-defense skills, and helping girls determine strategies for maintaining healthy relationships.**

### How can I say this?

Nearly 1 in 8 high school girls was in a physical fight during the past year.

High school girls are nearly half as likely as their male peers to have been in a physical fight in the past year.

### Statistic Source:

The main Conflict Resolution: Fighting statistic (and accompanying comparison data) was taken from the 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which was published in 2024. Statistics have historically been updated every other year and can be found at <https://cdc.gov/yrbbs>.



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