The State of Girls: Unfinished Business

A report by the Girl Scout Research Institute
The Girl Scout Research Institute

• Center for original research and evaluation at Girl Scouts of the USA.
• Expert on girls, focusing on the voices of girls.
• Recent reports include girls and financial literacy, STEM, media, leadership, and more.

www.girlscouts.org/research

• This is the first report to stake out key issues and major trends focused exclusively on girls’ healthy development in the U.S. today.

  – Demographic and economic trends, health, safety, education, extracurricular involvement, and leadership
Summary of Findings

There is promising news for girls, but there is more work to be done.

+ Educational attainment
  - Emotional health, access to out-of-school time activities

Many girls are being left behind.

• African American and Hispanic girls face significant challenges in making successful transitions to adulthood.
Summary of Findings

- Leadership
- Out of School Time
- Connection to digital world
- Education
- Emotional Well-Being
- Physical Well-Being
- Economic Well-Being
The Hispanic/Latina girl population is growing.

**Today**
1 in 5 girls is Hispanic/Latina.

**By 2030**
1 in 3 girls will be Hispanic/Latina.

**BUT, Hispanic/Latina girls are at risk.**

- 33% are impoverished.
- 41% are overweight or obese.
- 16% drop out of school.

*Data is not destiny! Let’s not turn our backs on girls who need us the most! Learn more at: www.girlscouts.org/stateofgirls.*
Economic Well-being

Poverty is a critical issue for girls in this country.

Figure 2-1: Percent of Girls Ages 5 to 17 in Poverty, by Race and Ethnicity, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percent of Girls in Poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White*</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black*</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian*</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian*</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Non-Hispanic
Physical Health

Childhood obesity rates have risen sharply in recent years.

Figure 3-2. Percent of Girls Ages 5 to 17 Who Are Overweight or Obese, by Race and Ethnicity, 2010

*Non-Hispanic
Source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2009-2010
Emotional Health

• About 30% of girls report some sort of bullying or aggression from their peers.

• 34% of girls report feeling sad or hopeless.

• 9% of girls experience partner violence.
  – 16% of black/African American girls report being hit by a boyfriend
Education

Progress has been made, but not for all girls.

There are 130 women enrolled in college for every 100 men.

BUT

16% of Hispanic girls drop out of high school—more than twice the national average.

Data is not destiny! Let’s not turn our backs on girls who need us the most! Learn more at: www.girlscouts.org/stateofgirls.
Progress has been made for our girls.

74% of teen girls are interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

But, we still have a long way to go.

Women make up only 38% of recent STEM college degrees.

Data is not destiny! Let’s not turn our backs on girls who need us the most!
Learn more at: www.girlscouts.org/stateofgirls.
Girls are optimistic about their financial futures.

96% of girls expect they will be able to provide for their families.

Girls see a future where they are financially independent and empowered.

80% would rather make their own money than marry someone who would support them financially.

Are girls ready to manage their financial futures?

ONLY 12% of girls today currently feel very confident making financial decisions.

Girls want financial literacy skills to achieve their dreams.

9 in 10 girls say it is important for them to learn how to manage money.
Out-of-School Time

Girls are engaged in sports and extracurricular activities, but many girls are under-scheduled.

Figure 6-5. Percent of 12th Grade Girls Participating in Extracurricular Activities, 2009*

- School Sports: 34%
- Performing Arts: 27%
- Academic Clubs: 18%
- Student Government: 12%
- School Newspaper or Yearbook: 11%

*Includes those participating to a great or considerable extent.
Source: Monitoring the Future, 2009
Access to Technology

Most girls in this country are connected digitally.

• More than ¾ of girls ages 12 to 17 have a computer or laptop in their home, have a cell phone, and play video games.

• Despite increased use of electronic media, girls still value spending time with their friends.
  – Nearly 60% of all girls spend time doing social activities in person with their friends at least several times a week.
Leadership

Leadership is not a top goal for girls.

Figure 7-2. Girls’ Desire to Be a Leader by Race/Ethnicity

Source: Change It Up!, Girl Scout Research Institute, 2008
Conclusion

- The State of Girls shows the disparity that exists for girls as it pertains to physical, economic, and emotional well-being is big and is getting worse.

- Demographics and access to resources affect the reach of youth serving organizations.

- No single organization can tackle all the challenges facing girls.
Call to Action and Next Steps

• Collaborate with Girl Scouts to raise awareness, educate the public, and fund opportunities that can help remedy some of the most pressing challenges girls and communities face today.