



## Girls and Body Image

Girl Scouts of the USA/Girl Scout Research Institute

### KEY MESSAGES & FINDINGS

- **Girls attribute media and fashion to the pressure to be thin.**
    - Nine in ten girls say the fashion industry (89%) and/or the media (88%) place *a lot of pressure* on teenage girls to be thin.
  - **Girls say they would prefer to see more “natural”/“real” images in the media.**
    - Eighty-one percent of girls would rather see “real” or “natural” photos of models than touched-up, airbrushed versions.
    - Seventy-five percent would be more likely to buy clothes they see on “real-size models” than on super-skinny ones.
  - **Girls have a love/hate relationship with the fashion industry.**
    - Three in four girls (75%) say that fashion is *really important* to them.
    - Forty-eight percent wish they were *as skinny* as the models in fashion magazines.
    - Forty-seven percent say fashion magazines give them *a body image to strive for*.
    - Forty-one percent say they prefer to see the latest fashions on *skinny models* rather than on fuller-sized women.
- However:**
- Sixty-five percent of girls think that the body image represented by the fashion industry is *too skinny*; 63% think it is *unrealistic*; and 47% think it is *unhealthy*. More than a quarter (28%) say the fashion industry body image looks *sick*.
  - Sixty percent say that they *compare their bodies* to fashion models.
  - Only 46% think the fashion industry does a good job of representing people of all races and ethnicities, with Caucasian girls the most likely to say this (52%, compared to only 42% of Hispanics and 32% of African Americans).
  - Thirty-one percent of girls admit to *starving themselves or refusing to eat* as a strategy to lose weight.
- **African American and Hispanic girls have a more positive body image.**
    - A higher percentage of Hispanic girls (79%) say they are *satisfied* with their bodies compared to their African American (76%) and Caucasian (72%) counterparts.
    - Seventeen percent of African American girls are *completely satisfied* with the way their body looks, compared to 14% of Hispanic and 10% of Caucasian girls.