



# How Girl Scouting Enhances the Lives of Girls

Girl Scouts is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls, with a research-proven program that helps them cultivate important skills so they can take the lead in their own lives and the world.

Now more than ever, Girl Scouts is needed. A recent report by the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI), [\*The State of Girls 2017: Emerging Truths and Troubling Trends\*](#), shows that economic conditions affecting girls have not recovered from the Great Recession; more girls live in poverty and low-income households today than ten years ago. Girl Scouts offers these and all girls a solution—the very skills and leadership opportunities they need to empower themselves for life.

**THE STATE OF GIRLS** Girls in the United States are growing up in a period of rapid demographic, social, and economic change. Since 2007, which marked the beginning of the Great Recession, girls have faced challenges to their health, happiness, and opportunities for success. Findings from *The State of Girls* show that many girls in the U.S. today:

- ▶ Experience problems with their physical and emotional health
- ▶ Lack access to extracurricular activities that promote positive development (such as sports and volunteering)
- ▶ Have lower educational outcomes

Girl Scouts levels the playing field—because all girls, despite their backgrounds, deserve educational and enrichment opportunities that help them discover their strengths and passions throughout their youth and into adulthood.

**LEADERSHIP THE GIRL SCOUT WAY** How do we do it? Through the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, which offers a variety of age-appropriate activities that are girl-led, cooperative, and hands-on, and that prepare go-getting girls to take on challenges big and small in their lives. Guided by supportive adult leaders, girls practice everyday leadership as they earn badges, sell cookies, go on exciting trips, explore the outdoors, and more. Girls learn and grow in a safe, all-girl environment, which helps them discover themselves and their values, try new things and take healthy risks, connect with others to create positive relationships, and take action in their communities on issues they're passionate about.

Research confirms it: **Girl Scouting works, today and into the future.**

**GIRL SCOUT IMPACT TODAY** New research from the GSRI, the [\*Girl Scout Impact Study\*](#), provides compelling evidence that Girl Scouts fare better than non-Girl Scouts on a number of key measures of life success. Compared to their non-Girl Scout peers, Girl Scouts are more likely to:

- ▶ Exhibit stronger leadership skills and take an active role in decision making
- ▶ Earn better grades and have higher academic aspirations
- ▶ Desire a career in STEM, law or business; industries in which women are underrepresented
- ▶ Have adults in their lives who help them pursue goals and think about their future
- ▶ Participate in fun and challenging activities that shape their character and open up new worlds to them

Findings from this report prove it: Girl Scouts lead more well-rounded lives and show a stronger propensity for success than non-Girl Scouts.

**GIRL SCOUT IMPACT TOMORROW** [\*Girl Scouting Works: The Alumnae Impact Study\*](#), a 2012 GSRI report, shows that women who were Girl Scouts as girls—especially those who were members for more than three years—display positive life outcomes to a greater degree than women who were not. These outcomes include:

- ▶ Higher sense of self and life satisfaction
- ▶ More volunteerism and civic engagement
- ▶ Higher levels of education and income

Did you know that some of the most [prominent women leaders](#) in the U.S. were Girl Scouts as girls? It's true! 76% of current female U.S. senators, 67% of current female governors, and every female secretary of state in U.S. history wore Girl Scout green. In addition, more than half of women in business are Girl Scout alumnae. Talk about an endorsement!

**SUMMARY** Many of today's youth, girls among them, face considerable challenges on their way to becoming effective leaders and active citizens in a 21st-century world. Our unique program equips girls with the courage, confidence, and character to discover they have the power to make the world a better place—and then go out and make it happen! Girl Scouts helps girls grow into citizens who are responsible, caring, and engaged—attributes that fewer and fewer girls are developing through formal academic channels.

For 105 years, Girl Scouts has been preparing girls for a lifetime of leadership. Today and always, we are committed to ensuring *all girls* develop to their full potential.

**ABOUT GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA** Founded in 1912, Girl Scouts of the USA is the preeminent leadership development organization for girls, with 2.6 million members—1.8 million girls and 800,000 adults. Girl Scouts is the leading authority on girls' healthy development, and builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. To volunteer, reconnect, donate, or join, visit [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org).