

strong

smart

bold

Inspiring all girls to be
strong, smart, and boldSM



girls
inc.®



is at the heart of girls' lives
and at the forefront of the girls'
rights movement.

With programs that are grounded in research and tested in the field, our organization celebrates and empowers girls, and advocates for an equitable world.

The compelling voices and perspectives of girls are woven throughout the organization's work, which includes engaging programs, original research that highlights underlying causes and effective solutions for girls' issues, and persuasive advocacy at both local and national levels.

strong

Girls Inc. offers programs that flex and strengthen the whole range of girls' muscles—building their athletic skills and competitive spirit; nurturing girls' ability and interest in science, math, and technology; and fostering their self-respect and self-determination. Girls ages 6 to 18 come to our programs at more than 1,000 sites around the country—vibrant centers filled with energetic girls and welcoming staff members absorbed in having fun, exploring, and learning.

smart

All Girls Inc. programs have solid research and evaluation as their foundation. Girls Inc. commissions and conducts original research to understand and address issues affecting girls and young women.

Our national staff and local affiliate leaders analyze the findings and collaborate on programming that meets the needs identified by our research. Pilot projects and model programs are tested by the national organization in partnership with a select group of affiliates, fine-tuned, and then made available to the entire Girls Inc. network. Girls and staff members report back on how these programs are working and what new issues have arisen.

bold

Girls Inc. encourages girls to advocate for themselves, and the organization creates opportunities for girls to speak for themselves in public arenas.

For example, girls have:

- spoken at press conferences about issues facing girls as they take control of their financial lives;
- consulted with top Hollywood executives about media portrayals of women and girls;
- shared their personal stories at national conferences of overcoming obstacles due to sexism, racism, and poverty; and
- organized their communities around important issues during our annual Girls Inc. Week celebration.

Taking action on their own behalf enables girls to think of themselves as leaders at a young age; assess community needs and do something to improve their communities; practice assertiveness and leadership; use analysis and organizing skills to achieve their advocacy goals; and understand, exercise, and protect their rights and the rights of others.

A nationally recognized authority on girls' concerns, Girls Inc. informs policy makers, the media, and business leaders about girls' needs locally and nationally. The staff at our policy office in Washington, D.C. provides expert testimony before Congress and partners with a coalition of youth and women's groups to ensure the rights of girls.

standing up for girls' rights

Girls Inc. understands the complexity of girls' lives and is dedicated to advancing the basic human rights of girls—the right to be respected, self-reliant, healthy, safe, and challenged.

More than any other organization in the United States, Girls Inc. truly stands for girls' rights. In fact, our goal is to ensure that our Girls' Bill of Rights becomes a reality for all girls.



*“Just be proud of your gender.
There is no shame in being yourself.”*

—Tiffany Alexander, 16

*“Through the programs provided by Girls Inc.,
I found myself. They helped me to find my
self-esteem, and be proud of who I am.
They welcomed me with open arms and put
no limitations on dreams and talents.”*

—Nancy Taylor, 17

girls have
the right
to be
themselves
and to resist
gender
stereotypes.

Girls Inc. sounds a consistent theme: every girl is to be honored and valued for who she is.

Growing up in a male-dominated culture, many girls face enormous pressure to judge their self-worth based on narrow standards of physical attractiveness; to put others ahead of themselves; and to conform to damaging notions of femininity that promote passivity and self-sacrifice while discouraging autonomy and pursuit of their dreams.

By contrast, Girls Inc. welcomes girls into our centers to expand their minds, strengthen their bodies, and fortify their spirits.

Our Culture and Heritage programs are designed to help girls critique societal messages about how girls and women should look, think, and act, and to encourage girls to appreciate their individuality and their identity. Journal-writing, poetry and writing workshops, public speaking, cultural celebrations, women's history lessons, and leadership

training enfold each girl in the brightly colored fabric of self-worth.

Girls Inc. is committed to diversity in principle and in practice. We celebrate the similarities and differences among girls and embrace girls of every background and ability. We recognize and attempt to bridge the growing gulf in our society between rich and poor, privileged and neglected.

Discrimination against some girls hinders their achievement and harms all girls. We work to eliminate sexism, racism, homophobia, and all forms of discrimination as we strive toward a world of mutual understanding and support.

Girls Dig It!SM is an after-school and summer archaeology program that combines the practices of science with the interpretive tools used in the humanities disciplines, including history, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, and folklore. Girls Dig It! raises questions among girls about how we explore our own and other cultures.

girls have the right
to express themselves with originality and enthusiasm.



“How come every time a girl makes a formal speech in front of a crowd, someone has to stand up and make a big joke about it after she is finished?”

—Charleen Y. Negron, 14

“Every girl has dreams and good ideas, but if she doesn’t express them or tell them to anyone, how are they ever going to come true?”

—Chasity Dillard, 10

Girls Inc. motivates girls to speak up for themselves in peer groups, in school, at home, and in the community.

Affiliates create safe, welcoming places in which girls are listened to by their peers and their mentors. Girls find their voices, build their communication skills, and work in teams on projects that reflect their concerns and interests. Through our local programs and national events, girls write or speak about their personal experiences, insights, and solutions to problems facing girls. They learn the skills to speak and advocate for themselves—individually, and as a group.

Many girls are still discouraged from being too visible, too smart, and too loud. Girls who put themselves forward into leadership positions endure teasing, condescension, and skepticism about their abilities—much like their adult female role models who are knocking down similar barriers. The success and prominence of women and girls in leadership positions brings fresh ideas and

perspectives into the public realm, inspires others to become community leaders, and expands the pool of political candidates for higher office.

Our Leadership and Community Action programs inspire girls to dare to be first and best in any field of endeavor. We create abundant opportunities for girls to come into their own as leaders, to bring their ideas to the community, and to advocate publicly for equity. Girls stand shoulder to shoulder as they become full participants and emerging leaders in their communities.

DiscoverySM inspires girls to become leaders. This innovative program brings 9- to 11-year-old girls and adult women together to help each other discover their capacity for leadership and activism. Discovery awakens women’s and girls’ awareness of themselves as community resources, trustees of the common good, agents of change, and leaders in their own right.

girls have the right
to take risks, to strive freely,
and to take pride in success.

Girls are entitled to set their own expectations for themselves, and to take risks that expand their world and challenge them intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

Girls Inc. raises the bar for girls and dares them to soar in nontraditional areas such as science, technology, and athletics. We place no assumptions or limitations on girls or their abilities, allowing them to discover their own strengths, talents, and dreams. Girls are encouraged to risk failure and to learn from their mistakes. Their achievements are celebrated in local centers, at community events, and in Girls Inc. national competitions.

Girls Inc. aims to make sports an integral part of girls' lives. Girls who play sports enjoy positive physical, psychological, and social benefits such as stronger bodies, improved immune systems, and less stress and depression. Still, too few girls—especially girls of color, girls with disabilities, and girls from low-income families—have opportunities to play sports.

8

Through our Sports and Adventure programs, girls can learn the values and experience the rewards of self-discipline, competition, teamwork and team spirit, responsibility to oneself and others, achieving one's personal best, a positive self-image, and a healthy and well-trained body. We also provide opportunities for girls to travel to new places, climates, and cultures; and to engage in outdoor trips that challenge them as individuals and as members of a team. At Girls Inc., girls grow into their powerful bodies and nurture their adventurous spirits.

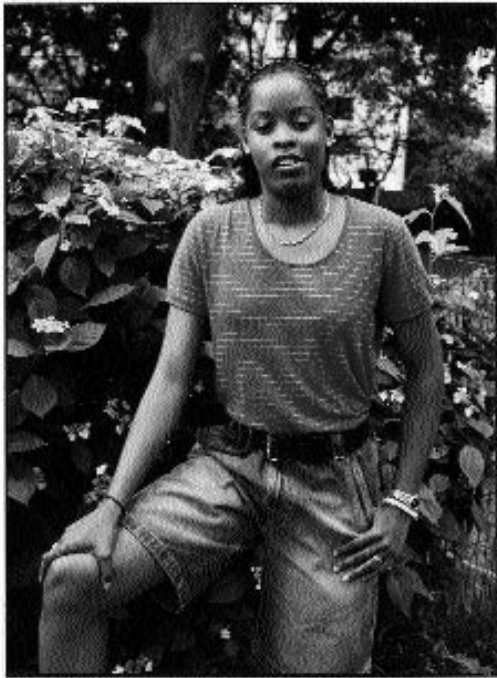
Sporting ChanceSM is a program series through which girls learn how to feel less vulnerable and more powerful, how to be both cooperative and competitive, and how to discipline their bodies and their minds. Sporting Chance enhances girls' athletic skills while introducing them to the exciting world of organized sports. Girls also learn about successful female athletes, and a range of educational and career opportunities in sports. They play competitive sports, gain an understanding of their own skill levels, learn the importance of nutrition, and determine how to pursue their sports and fitness goals.



*“Anything that’s scary, I just feel like I am so great
and I can accomplish things. I want to try a real
mountain to climb up and I want a black belt.”*

—Cherie Musgrove, 11

9



"I wouldn't change anything about me because I like me just the way I am."

—Tamara Louis, 14

girls have the right to accept and appreciate their bodies.

Girls Inc. encourages girls to embrace their bodies and be proud of their individual shapes, sizes, colors, abilities, and strengths.

The messages that society communicates to girls about their bodies are, at best, deeply disheartening. From the media, girls understand that body dissatisfaction is normal, dieting is essential, and being sexually attractive is primary. Yet girls are not supposed to enjoy or be in charge of their sexuality. Our culture also discourages girls from developing strong, athletic bodies; dismisses those girls who are perceived as too dark, too round, or too tall; and pressures girls to compromise their health to conform to unrealistic standards. Those who would withdraw girls' sexual and reproductive health rights make clear that girls are not to be trusted with their own bodies. Girls are often left to bear the long-term consequences of sexual partnerships alone.

Our organization works to change limiting, dangerous cultural messages such as thinness as a measure of worth; smoking and alcohol as integral to glamorous lifestyles; and violence, or sexual relationships without responsibility, as acceptable behavior.

Girls Inc. offers comprehensive Health and Sexuality programming, research, and advocacy that counters these distorted messages. Girls learn how to develop healthy bodies, to resist pressure to change or harm their bodies, and to make thoughtful decisions about what they do with their bodies physically and sexually. We help girls and their families to communicate about sexuality; educate girls to reduce their risk of sexually transmitted

diseases or pregnancy; encourage all girls to develop positive sexual identities; advocate for access to quality health care for all girls and their families; and prepare girls to avoid the use of harmful substances. At Girls Inc., girls learn to respect themselves, to thrive in their bodies, and to make healthy choices for their future.

Preventing Adolescent PregnancySM goes beyond traditional sex education courses by focusing on girls' motivation to avoid early pregnancy, not just their know-how. Research shows that girls won't put information about contraceptives and sexually transmitted diseases to use unless they care enough about themselves to plan their futures on their own terms. With new-found skills and peer support girls who have participated in the program tell us they are choosing not to have sex until they're ready or are using preventative and protective methods effectively.

Girls Re-Cast TVSM is a popular component of the Girls Inc. national media literacy campaign. The program includes an exciting curriculum in media literacy that encourages girls to evaluate what they see and hear on television, and critique gender stereotypes. Girls rewrite TV scripts, stage their own TV talk shows, and create their own public service announcements.

Girls learn to advocate for images they would like to see while gaining exposure to a range of media careers. An annual meeting in Hollywood, convened by Girls Inc., brings girls together with dozens of TV producers and executives to discuss ideas for positive and realistic portrayals of girls and women on television.

girls have the right
to have confidence in themselves
and to be safe in the world.

Girls Inc. strengthens girls with the knowledge and skills to live safer lives, and the ability to defend themselves, if need be.

Overwhelmingly girls are the targets rather than the perpetrators of violence. Girls may be subjected to child abuse or sexual abuse in the family, acquaintance rape on a date or violence in a dating relationship, sexual harassment in school or in the community, and violence when moving about in society at large. Their behavior, and the behavior of those around them, may be influenced by media portrayals that glorify violence and trivialize girls and women. Additionally, young women are often pressured into using alcohol or drugs, reducing their judgment and ability to stay safe.

Girls and women who are involved in the juvenile justice system face additional challenges, and Girls Inc. is working to improve their situations. Girls Inc. advocates responding to the strengths and needs of girls, not only to their behaviors. We do this by working to establish gender equity in policies and practices of arrest, detention, and allocation of juvenile justice resources, and by diverting girls from the juvenile justice system to community-based programs.

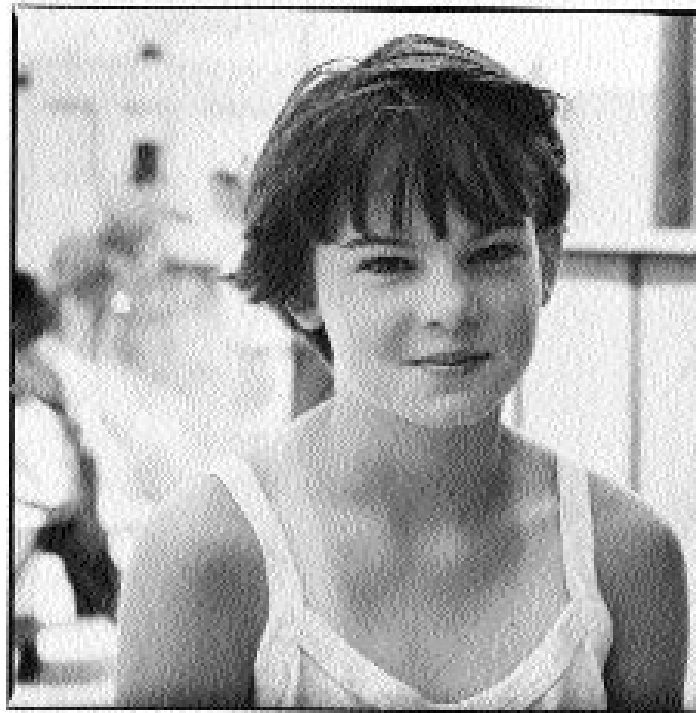
Girls Inc. believes that girls have a right to move about freely in society, to participate in redefining the roles of women, and to change the policies, practices, and realities that limit them.

12

Through our Self-Reliance and Life Skills programs, girls acquire a range of skills that enable them to elude or navigate dangerous situations. Girls learn how to recognize and avoid threatening situations, mediate disputes and resolve conflicts, treat everyone with respect and sensitivity, defend themselves in the face of violence, and balance the power in relationships to avoid being exploited or exploiting others. With new-found confidence, Girls Inc. girls talk smarter and stand taller as they stride down their chosen path.

Project BOLDSM helps women and girls avoid, cope with, and address violence. With skills in conflict resolution, negotiation, and developing healthy, respectful relationships, girls can begin to create nonviolent solutions for themselves and their communities.

Our Friendly PEERSuasionSM program is unique because it approaches substance abuse prevention as a peer issue, using the positive influence of young people modeling healthy behavior. Older girls learn decision-making, assertiveness, and communication skills, which include practicing how to walk away from situations where they feel pressured to use alcohol or drugs. They learn about the effects of substance abuse, to recognize media and peer pressure to use drugs, and experience better ways to manage stress. The newly trained "PEERSuaders" create substance abuse prevention activities for younger kids. Looked up to as leaders, the older girls' commitment to stay drug- and alcohol-free is reinforced.



"People think that girls don't know how to protect themselves, but that's what Girls Inc. is all about—creating stronger women."

—Monica Moffitt, 16

13



“I believe that all women should have the right to do what they believe in.”

—Ebonie Hopkins, 12

girls have the right
to prepare for interesting work
and economic independence.

Every girl growing up today must plan to achieve economic self-sufficiency. As the nation's leading advocate for girls, Girls Inc. recognizes that economic literacy is an essential part of giving girls the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to achieve financial independence, and take charge of their lives.

Today, 61 million women are in the paid workforce performing a wide range of jobs including teacher, firefighter, basketball player, corporate executive, FBI agent, news anchor, scientist, and soldier. However, unless today's girls acquire the skills they need to succeed in the information age, tomorrow's women will be relegated to the bottom of the pay scale—in service, sales, and clerical jobs. Girls Inc. provides girls with real-world knowledge about money, wealth, power, and independence.

Too many girls—and too many children of color—still get the message that technology, math and science are not for them. Research shows that parents, teachers, and other adults typically expect girls not to perform as well as boys in science, math, and related subjects regardless of their true potential or demonstrated abilities. At Girls Inc. sites, however, girls jump at the opportunity to dismantle machines and solve logic puzzles.

Through our Careers and Life Planning programs, Girls Inc. cultivates in girls the desire to achieve economic self-sufficiency, as well as their dreams. Our GirlsLinkSM

initiative works to build girls' computer confidence, equipping them for success in this growing and competitive field. Using the hands-on curriculum of Operation SMARTSM, which demystifies science, math, and technology, girls are asking questions, making guesses, taking chances, getting dirty, and having fun. In hundreds of sites across the country, more than 350,000 young people have started on the path to becoming auto mechanics, surgeons, computer systems designers or entrepreneurs. Supported by adults instead of rescued, girls learn to embrace their curiosity, face their fears, and trust their own judgment.

She's On the Money!SM introduces young girls to basic financial concepts, including money management and investing. The action component of the Girls Inc. national economic literacy campaign, this program gives girls the opportunity to explore how money influences their world, and how they can influence local communities and local economies.

Eureka!SM invites girls to college campuses two summers in a row for a four-week intensive program where they delve into math, science, computers, sports, and careers. Follow-up sessions throughout the school year keep girls engaged, and a paid internship placement the third and final summer of the program gives them the chance to use what they have learned to further their educational and career goals.

Girls' Bill of Rights

Girls have the right
to be themselves and to resist gender stereotypes.

Girls have the right
to express themselves with originality and enthusiasm.

Girls have the right
to take risks, to strive freely, and to take pride in success.

Girls have the right
to accept and appreciate their bodies.

Girls have the right
to have confidence in themselves and to be safe in the world.

Girls have the right
to prepare for interesting work and economic independence.

It is only fitting that this brochure—which represents a bold
new step in Girls Incorporated history—be dedicated to
Donna Brace Ogilvie, Lifetime Chair of the National Board
of Directors. For over fifty years, Donna has provided the
nurturing vision and unstinting support that has enabled
Girls Incorporated to grow from a small network to
our current incarnation as the nation's leading voice of girls.
We are most grateful for her partnership in our efforts
to offer millions of girls across the country the possibility
of a fulfilling and productive future.



Girls Incorporated®

For more information:

1-800-374-4475

www.girlsinc.org

National Headquarters

120 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005-3902
Tel: (212) 509-2000
Fax: (212) 502-8708

National Resource Center

441 West Michigan Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3287
Tel: (317) 634-7546
Fax: (317) 634-3024