

# About Girls Inc. of the Central Coast



**Our Mission:** To inspire all girls to be strong, smart, and bold™ and to respect themselves and the world around them.

**Our Vision:** Empowered girls achieving success in a complex and diverse world.

Girls Inc. of the Central Coast® is an affiliate of Girls Incorporated, a national organization that has been providing programs for girls since 1864 in the United States and Canada. We deliver innovative, research-based programs designed specifically to address the strengths and needs of girls ages 8 to 18. Our programs focus on empowerment, health and leadership, preparing girls for economic independence and confident adulthood.

Founded in 1999 as a 501(c)(3) organization, Girls Inc. of the Central Coast (Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties) served over 1,300 girls in 32 schools sites in 10 cities from July 2019 to June 2020.

All programs are conducted after school at the school sites. We have established productive working relationships with the schools, whose staffs assist us with recruitment and program implementation.

We are currently operating in Salinas, Seaside, Monterey, Castroville, Soledad, Greenfield, King City, Hollister, Watsonville, and Aptos at nine high schools, eleven middle schools, and twelve elementary schools.

Girls Inc. of the Central Coast offers programs primarily facilitated by teens. Teen graduates from our high school program return as paid youth leaders to facilitate programs. They are confident, strong, and passionate about working in their communities as role models for younger girls. They are hired as facilitators for programs aimed at younger girls – a model for leadership that not only provides these young women with practical skills and experience, but allows us to reach a broad spectrum of girls.



## Programs

**1. ECHO Leadership Program:** Works with young women in high school ages 15 to 17, to encourage them to pursue post-secondary education, and plan for future careers. Meet once every other week after school on school grounds.

**2. Youth Leaders Program:** Provides opportunities for the ECHO graduates to continue their leadership development as Youth Leaders and Teen Teachers by delivering programs to girls in high school and middle school. They both receive training on their respective curriculums and on-going support throughout the year.

**3. Smart Choices Summer Program:** This week- long summer program takes place on a local college campus and inspires girls entering high school to make positive life choices about health, relationships and school. Girls explore their potential for leadership, examine myths about cultural and sexual stereotypes, critically examine the influence of the media, and determine classes they should take to get into college.

**4. Will Power/Won't Power:** A series of workshops for girls 12 to 14 years old teaching assertive communication, forming healthy relationships, avoiding risky situations, and learning about teen health. Meets once a week after school on school grounds.

**5. Friendly PEERsuasion:** A substance abuse education program for middle school girls, which also prepares them to become facilitators of workshops on this subject for elementary school children. This program approaches drug abuse prevention as a peer issue, using the positive influence of young people modeling healthy behaviors. Meets once a week, after school on school grounds.

**6. Growing Together:** Designed to increase positive communication between mothers (or other significant female adult) and their 9 to 12 year old daughters. It helps them discuss questions about sexual behavior and puberty without embarrassment. Growing Together meets once a week in the evenings.

**7. Strong, Smart and Bold Summer Camps** Strong, Smart and Bold Summer Camp is a two-week day camp for girls ages 8 to 11. Girls participate in research-based programs: *Girls Take Another Look* increase their awareness of the scope and power of the media and the effects of media messages on girls and women, *Girls enCourage* is designed to sustain girl's interest in sports through adolescence by introducing them to nontraditional activities and adventures, *Operation SMART* (STEM) develops girl's skills and enthusiasm for science through experiment and hands-on activities.

# THE GIRLS INC. DIFFERENCE



Today in the United States, girls continue to encounter significant obstacles to their well-being and success.

**1 IN 4 GIRLS** will not finish high school.

**78% OF GIRLS** are unhappy with their bodies by age 17.

**3 IN 10 GIRLS** will become pregnant before the age of 20.

**1 IN 5 GIRLS** will be a victim of childhood sexual abuse.

Girls Inc. meets these challenges by helping girls explore and celebrate their strengths, their voices, who they are today, and who they will become.

Girls Inc. equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers and grow up healthy, educated, and independent. Girls build confidence and embrace positive decision-making to take charge of their health and wellbeing, and achieve academic, personal and career goals.

## THE GIRLS INC. EXPERIENCE HELPS GIRLS TO GROW UP:



**Strong (Healthy):** Girls gain knowledge to embrace physical activity, positive body image, and nutrition while decreasing or delaying substance use and risky sexual activity.

**Smart (Educated):** Girls increase their love of learning, improve performance in school, explore STEM and non-traditional careers, and aspire to and plan for education beyond high school.

**Bold (Independent):** Girls build life skills to set and achieve goals, have healthy relationships, and increase resilience in the face of obstacles to live productive and fulfilling lives.

