

End of the year final report King City 2019-20

This has been a noteworthy year for Girls Inc. of the Central Coast. Despite school closures in March, we were still able to serve 99 girls at three schools in King City! Undaunted by our inability to continue bringing our after-school programs to the schools, we perfected our skills in Zoom and implemented virtual workshops for both our high school and middle school programs so that the girls could complete the remaining activities. And, as always, the girls successfully surpassed our anticipated outcomes in every program.

We are proud to report the outcomes of our work this year:

1. We served 36 young women in our **ECHO Leadership Mentoring** program at King City High School. The girls participated in 16 interactive workshops (July-May) that included: goal setting, celebrating our cultures and families, honoring the women who inspire us, basic health care, healthy relationships, requirements for college, nutrition, public speaking, civic engagement, financial literacy, career readiness and resume writing. Three of these workshops were implemented virtually. We also included 4 career days and 3 physical activities. The participants also had the opportunity to explore new places during field trips to three colleges and the State Capitol. They met with legislators and advocated for issues of concern for themselves and their communities. As a result of their participation, 99%-100% can see themselves in college and reported increased self-confidence voicing concerns to legislators.

2. We hired and trained 5 **Youth Leaders** – ECHO graduates – who planned, facilitated and evaluated our programs in King City. The Youth Leaders were trained in how to read a curriculum, public speaking, facilitation skills, classroom management, conflict resolution, team building, job readiness, and mandatory reporting to Child Protective Services. They were also required to learn the informational content of each program: pregnancy and substance abuse prevention, assertive communication, bullying prevention, stress management, health and wellness, developing healthy relationships, sports, and hands-on STEM activities. During their tenure, 100% of the Youth Leaders demonstrated facilitation and public speaking skills; 100% articulated the value of being role models to other girls and of giving back to their community.

3. We implemented our **Will Power/Won't Power** program at Chalone Peaks Middle School, serving 28 8th graders. The girls participated in 10 interactive workshops focused on empowering them to communicate assertively. The workshops included information and activities on how to manage different types of relationships, reproductive health and values, the effects of media messages, bullying, resisting negative peer pressure, dreams, goals and steps to achieve them, voting and the importance of that right, avoiding risky situations, factual information on women's health and wellness, nutrition, hygiene and reproductive health. As a result, 98% feel they have the ability to make good choices for themselves, know they can achieve their goals and dreams, and understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.



4. **Friendly PEERsuasion Phase 1**, provided 25 6th and 7th graders, at Chalone Peaks Middle School, the opportunity to gain skills and knowledge in recognizing and resisting pressures from peers, advertisers, adults or others to use tobacco, alcohol or other drugs. They learned communication skills, stress management, team building, combatting bullying, and healthy vs. unhealthy behaviors. We completed 7 of the 12 Phase 1 activities in person, and 5 virtual workshops after school closures. The virtual workshops included managing stress, depression and anxiety during the pandemic, building self-esteem and confidence, and physical activities as a way of alleviating stress while having fun. As a result, 90% recognized stress, its physical symptoms, and healthy stress management tools, and 99% demonstrated skills for refusing peer pressure. We were not able to set up virtual programming for the elementary school girls and could not offer Phase 2 of Friendly PEERsuasion to Del Rey Elementary School 4th and 5th graders.



5. We served 12 participants – 6 mother-daughter pairs – in **Growing Together**, at Santa Lucia Elementary School. This program is designed to increase positive communication between 9-12-year-old girls and their mothers or other significant adult. Growing Together consists of 5 interactive sessions focusing on open communication, family values, changes girls may experience during puberty, relationships, health and hygiene, decision-making and conflict resolution. The program creates a safe space for mothers and daughters to spend quality time together providing opportunities for bonding, exploring their feelings, strengthening their relationship, and sharing their dreams and goals. Daughters and parents alike loved this program: 100% felt it helped them increase positive communication with each other, feel more comfortable talking about health and puberty, and more confident exploring their feelings and expectations with one another.



Unfortunately, we were not able to offer our college summer program, **Smart Choices**, for graduating middle school girls. This weeklong program takes place at UC Santa Cruz, where the girls experience college life – sleeping in dorm rooms, eating in the dining commons - and workshops/activities on high school, college and career planning, decision-making, goal setting, bullying, assertive refusal skills, media influences, cultural myths and gender stereotypes, strategies for optimal health and wellness, self-defense, yoga, meditation, and running clinics. The UCSC campus is closed, and social distancing in this program would have been impossible.

In the coming year, we will continue to offer programs virtually until it is safe to return to the schools. Because of the ramifications of the world-wide pandemic, we had to reduce our staff, but are currently evaluating the staffing patterns and job descriptions in light of the organization's needs going forward. We will also be examining our programs, making changes where needed to improve the experiences and outcomes for our girls.

We hope this brief overview has been informative and provided you with greater insight in what the girls are experiencing at Girls Inc. Your support makes it possible for us to inspire girls to follow their dreams and achieve their goals.

