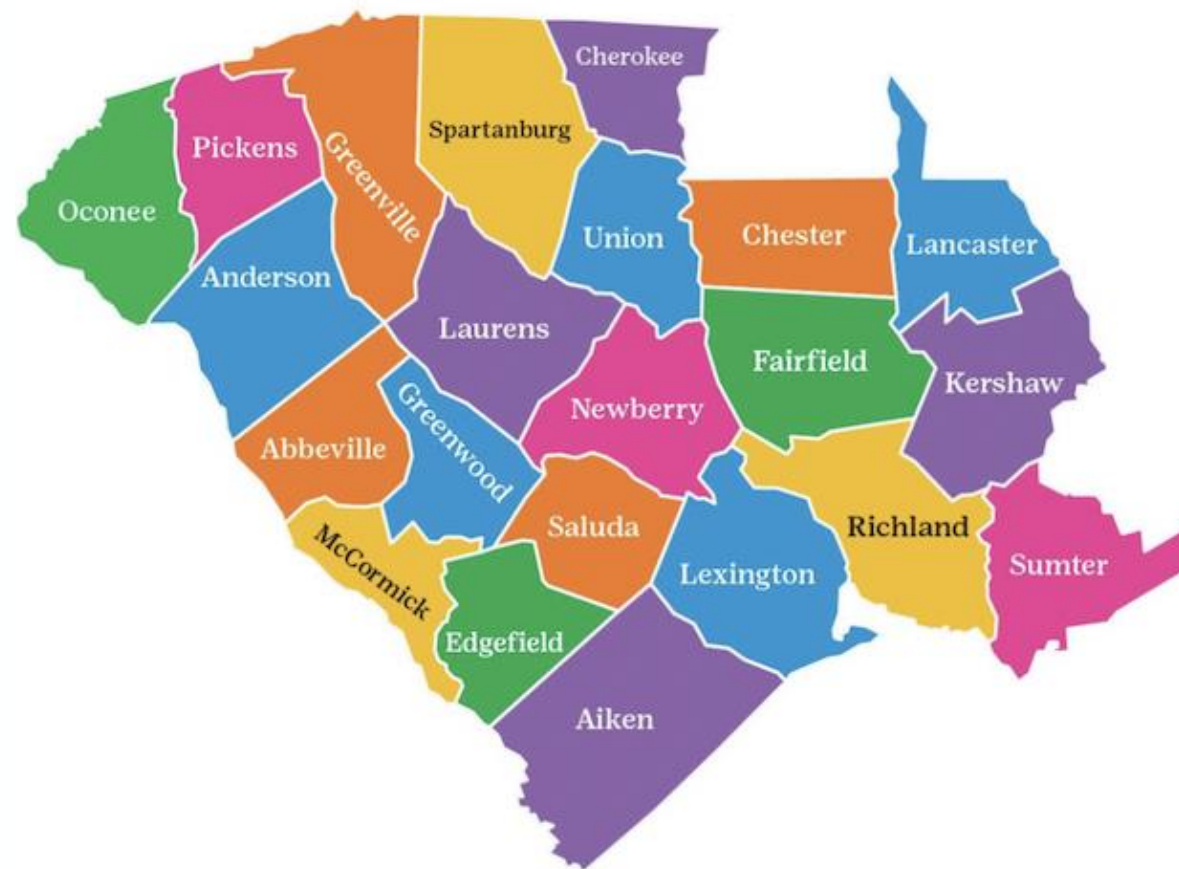


Growing the Movement

Cathy Novinger Girl Scout Leadership Center

Columbia, South Carolina

May 8th, 2025



girl scouts 
of south carolina
mountains to midlands





✖ In two/three words, describe what you think the biggest challenge facing girls in your community is today?

Most popular

social media

15

Also prominent

peer pressure

7

🗨 63

🗨 63

Other responses

confidence

mental health

self esteem

social pressures

beauty emphasis

being able to find a husband

being bullied

belonging social media

body autonomy

building confidence

confidence social media

desire for popularity

equity and equality

invasion of girl spaces

lack of confidence

lack of socialization

men and boys

misogyny societal pressure

opportunity

peer pressure and belonging

perfectionism

pressure to be perfect

safe spaces

safety

safety bullying

sexism

social media

social media image

social pressure

socials

societal expectations

societal pressure

stigmas

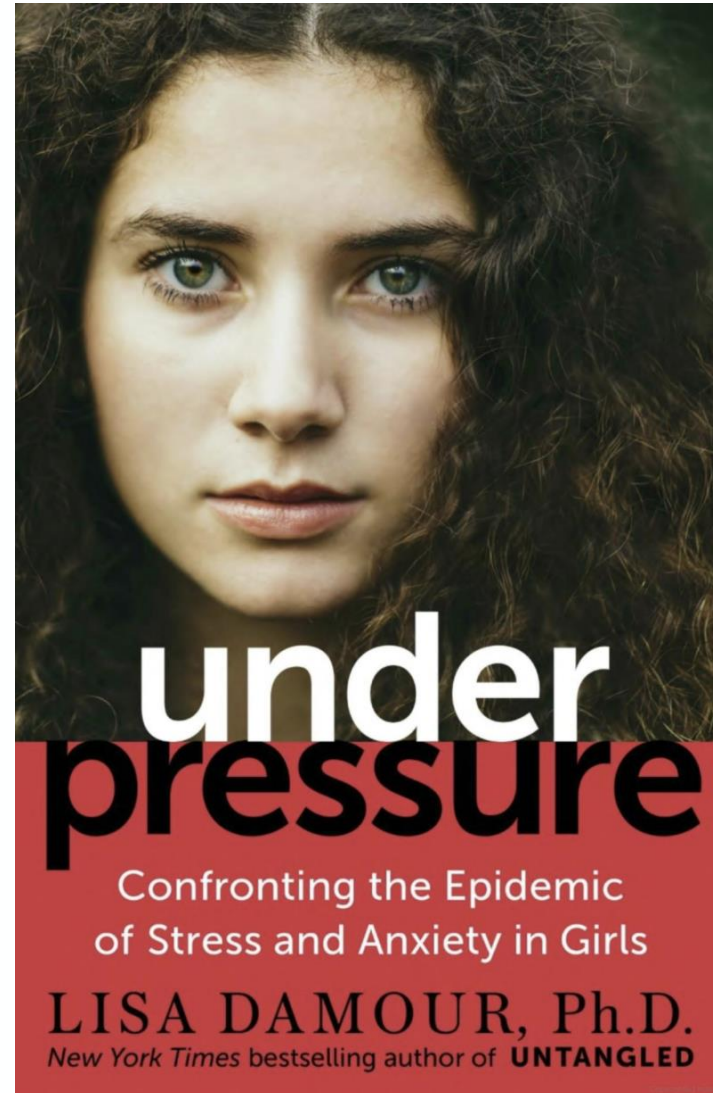
technology

the patriarchy

too much access to info

THE GIRLS' INDEX™

BY RULING OUR EXPERIENCES (ROX)



In 2017,

9%

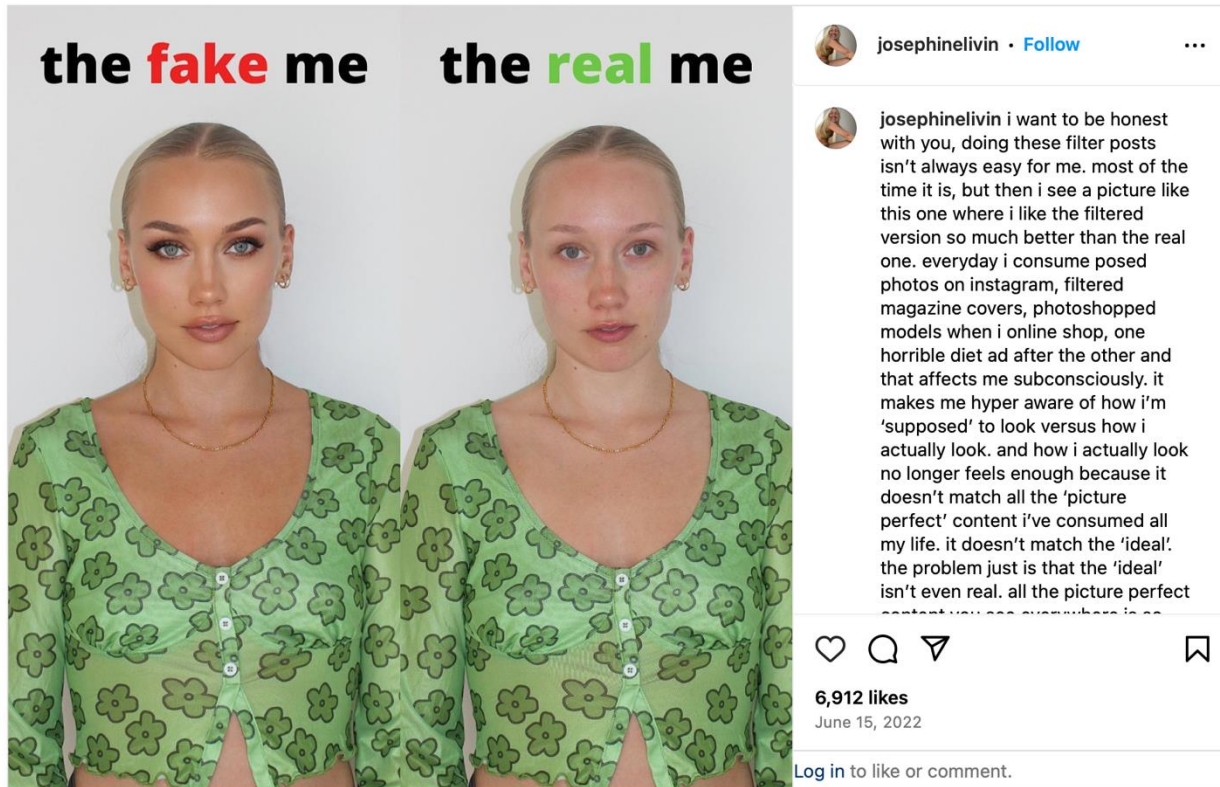
of 5th grade girls
spent
6 OR MORE HOURS
each day
using social media.

In 2023,

46%

do.





“ Lots of girls are on social media, especially TikTok, and a lot of the times I feel excluded because my parents are very anti-social media. Even though I don't have social media, I am still influenced by things. I think a lot of girls my age are developing body image issues and developing eating disorders at a young age because we constantly see other girls on social media who are skinny and gorgeous as heck, and a lot of the time what we see isn't realistic.

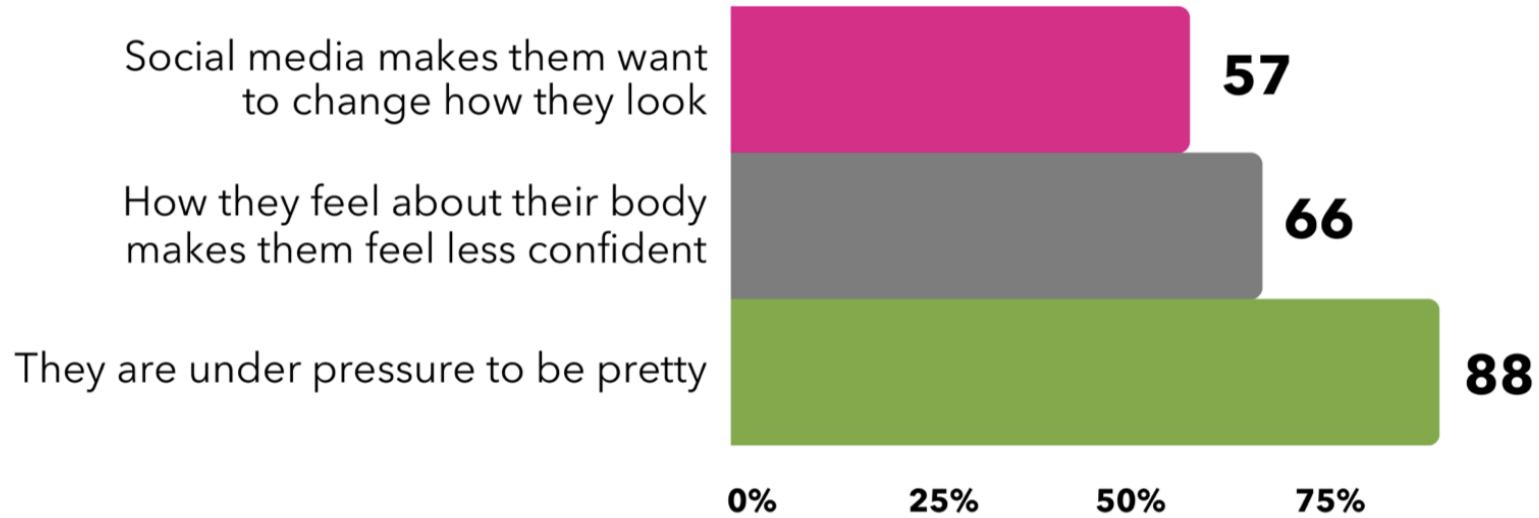
-6th grade girl, Texas

”

CONFIDENCE

There are many variables that impact girls' reports of confidence. In the 2023 Girls' Index, the way that girls felt about their bodies and appearance was correlated to their reports of confidence. Additional appearance-related findings are included below.

% OF GIRLS WHO REPORT:



A young girl with long dark hair, wearing a blue tank top with green polka dots and pink shorts, is running happily on a concrete sidewalk. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green trees, a grassy area, and a street with a stop sign. The text "At 14, she'll think they're unbearable" is overlaid in white on the image.

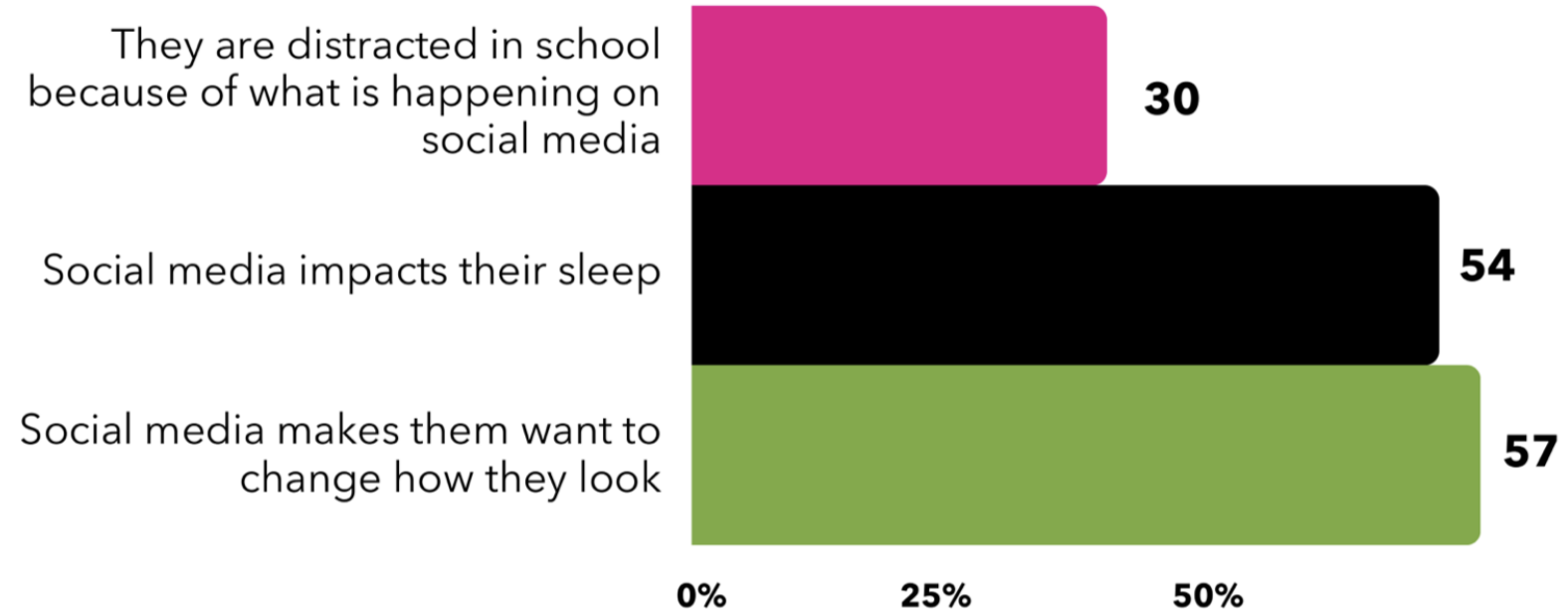
At 14, she'll think they're unbearable



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media use impacts several other areas of girls' lives, including their perceptions of their appearance, their attention in school and their nighttime sleep.

% OF GIRLS WHO REPORT:





In 2017, 86% of 5th grade girls described themselves as confident.

86%

In 2023, the statistic is 68%.

68%

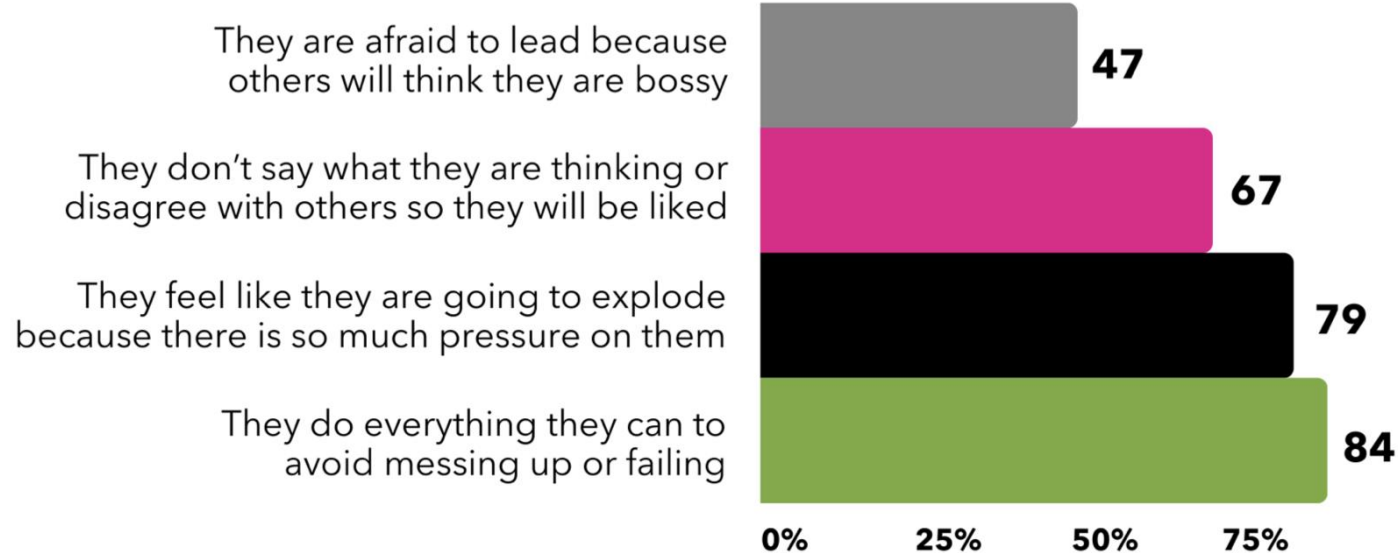




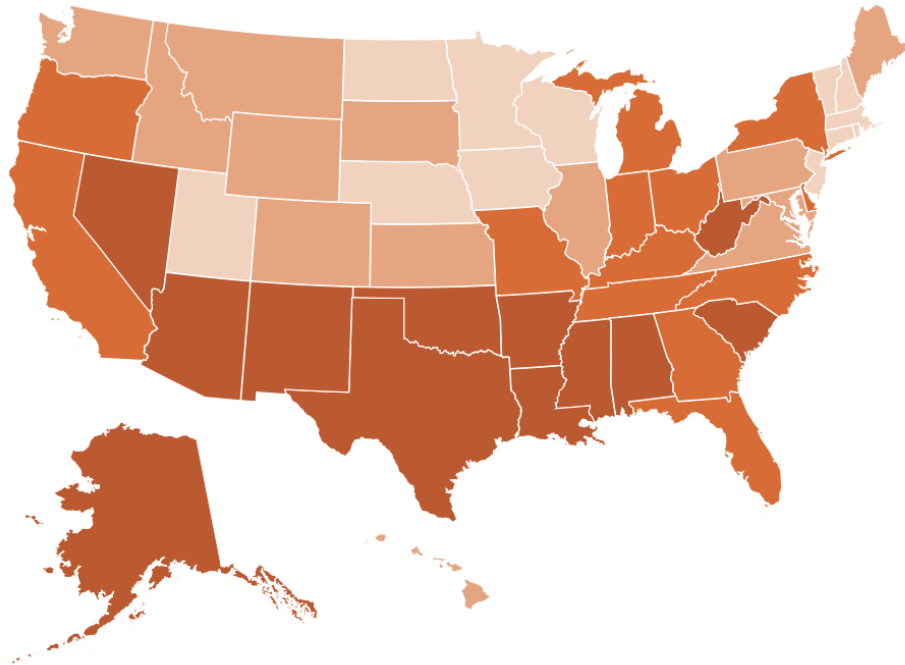
LEADERSHIP

Girls with the highest academic performance (those with a 4.0 or higher grade point average) are not immune from pressures and confidence challenges that can impact all girls. They too, struggle with low self-perception coupled with high reports of pressure.

% OF GIRLS WITH A 4.0 OR HIGHER GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) WHO REPORT:



A 2024 STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF
OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING



RANKINGS AND KEY

BEST	BETTER	WORSE	WORST
1. New Hampshire	13. Idaho	26. Oregon	39. Alabama
2. Massachusetts	14. Washington	27. Indiana	40. South Carolina
3. Utah	15. Maine	28. Ohio	41. Alaska
4. Vermont	16. Virginia	29. New York	42. Arizona
5. Minnesota	17. Colorado	30. Florida	43. Texas
6. New Jersey	18. Wyoming	31. Delaware	44. West Virginia
7. Iowa	19. Kansas	32. Missouri	45. Arkansas
8. Connecticut	20. Montana	33. North Carolina	46. Oklahoma
9. Nebraska	21. South Dakota	34. Michigan	47. Nevada
10. North Dakota	22. Maryland	35. California	48. Louisiana
11. Wisconsin	23. Pennsylvania	36. Tennessee	49. Mississippi
12. Rhode Island	24. Illinois	37. Georgia	50. New Mexico
	25. Hawaii	38. Kentucky	

District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are not ranked.

Richland and Lexington County

TOTAL number of girls ages 5-18:

60,409

1,775 Girl Scouts

8,475 4th and 5th grade girls

432 Girls Scout Juniors

13,407 6th through 9th grade girls

343 Girl Scout Cadettes

girl scouts
of south carolina
mountains to midlands





Strong sense of self

I am glad I am me. 86%

I know I can do important things. 86%

I know I can be good at many different things. 86%

I am happy with myself most of the time. 78%

I know I can be a leader. 75%

I really like the way I look. 75%



Challenge seeking...

I try things even if I may not be good at them. 66.74%

Even if I am afraid of making mistakes, I still try new things. 63.64%

I don't give up, even when things are hard. 61.68%



Girl Scout benefits...

78% of Girl Scout alumnae have attended college.

77% of Girl Scout alumnae vote regularly.

48% of Girl Scout alumnae volunteer.

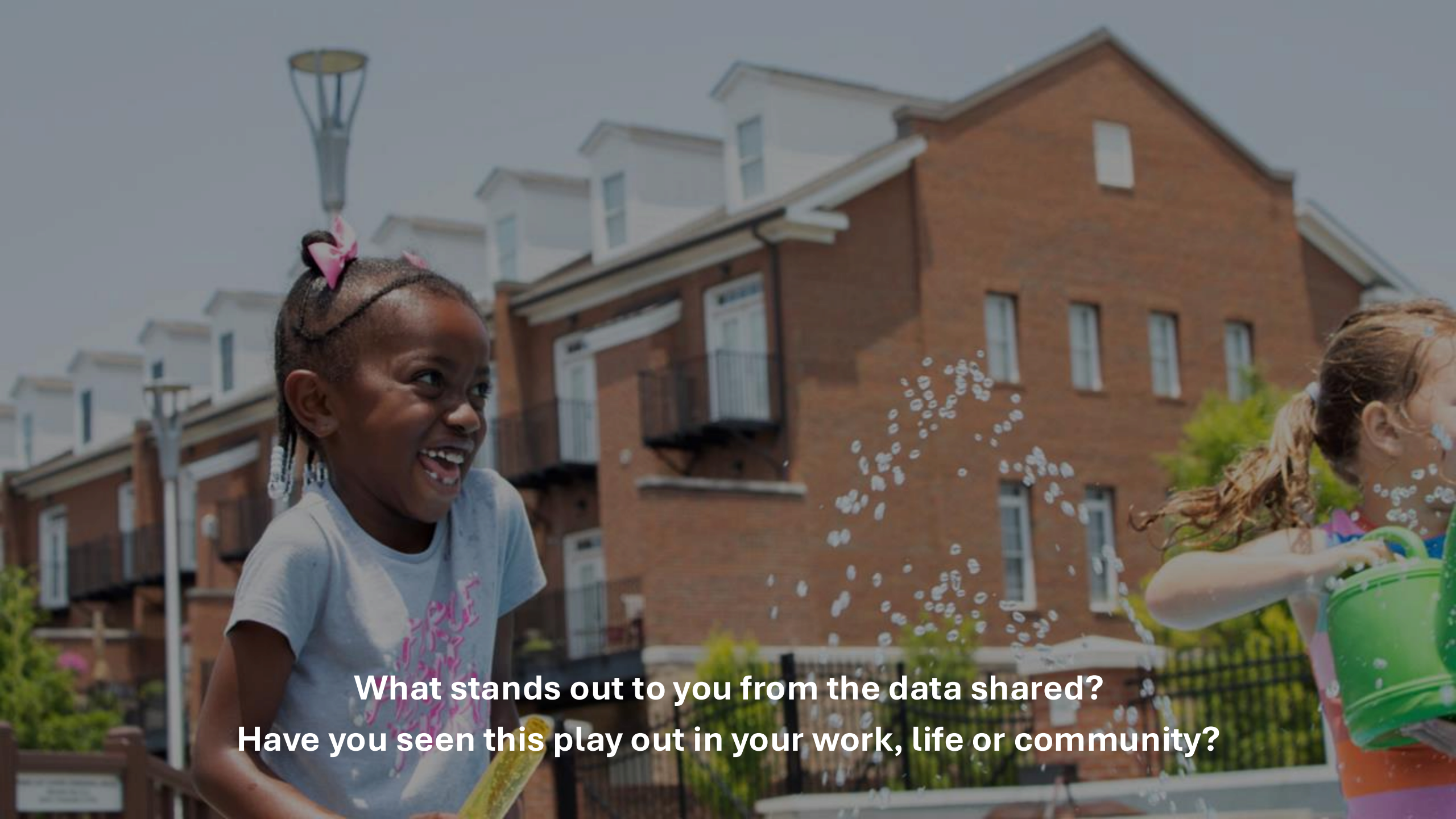
Girl Scout alumnae report a higher household income.

Alumnae with at least three years of Girl Scout experience report higher levels of life satisfaction.



Confident Girls...
try new things
speak their minds
have supportive
adults in their lives
want to lead
have girlfriends they
trust



A photograph of two young girls playing outdoors. The girl on the left is a Black girl with a pink bow in her hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt, and is smiling broadly. The girl on the right is a white girl with blonde hair, wearing a colorful striped shirt, and is holding a green bucket. A large spray of white bubbles is in the air between them. In the background is a multi-story brick building with white window frames and a black metal fence. A street lamp is visible on the left.

**What stands out to you from the data shared?
Have you seen this play out in your work, life or community?**

Who are the organizations in your community doing the best work with girls (ages 5 - 18) outside of school time? 45 82

Most popular

girls on the run

9

Also prominent

junior league

5

churches

4

girl scouts

4

every black girl

3

revolution red

3

run hard

3

Other responses

alpha

junior league of columbia

no idea

sororities

united way

aka

akas

alpha kappa alpha

black girl clubhouse

black women

boys and girls club

church

church frances burns

church groups

city parks rec

columbia robotics

dance schools

delta

dont know

everyblackgirl inc

excel academy

faith community

federated girls club

girl get up

girl get up society

girls on run

gsscomm

inc

jack and jill

jlc

kappa

national coalition of 100

national council of negro

nawic - women in constuct

sheriffs and cpd

sistercare

sowing seeds in the midla

specific sports clubs

sports

sports clubs

sports groups

sports programs

summer camps

the links

the links inc

women federation

What barriers do you think exist for families/girls that might like to participate in Girl Scouts?

51

- > 1st Costs: Can't afford the cost of participation (membership, uniforms, camp, programs)
- > 2nd Time: Too busy with other activities
- > 3rd Visibility: Don't know about Girl Scouts, where a troop is, or how to join
- > 4th Brand: Don't think Girl Scouts is for them (not welcoming, lacking diversity, not relevant, not cool, etc.)
- > 5th Transportation: Can't get to a troop meeting; don't live near where troops meet

