



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# 2026 State of the Georgia Girl Report



### THE CENTRAL FINDING

#### Full of Potential. Poised to Rise.

Georgia girls are the most academically ambitious, most college-bound, most goal-focused generation on record. They are also the loneliest.

The girls of this generation reach for their potential against a set of circumstances no prior generation has faced. This report illuminates that reality: **girls and boys have largely different experiences growing up in Georgia.** Research proves, girls need you.

### ABOUT THIS SUMMARY

#### Five dimensions. One girl.

The full State of the Georgia Girl Report examines her life across five dimensions of wellness: physical, digital, emotional, academic, and social.

This summary distills the report's top-line findings, its strongest data, and its clearest calls to action into four pages an entry point for leaders, educators, funders, and every adult with a girl in her life.

Powered by the Girl Scout Councils serving the State of Georgia.  
Read the full report at [www.GeorgiaGirlScouts.org](http://www.GeorgiaGirlScouts.org).



# The support infrastructure is thin.

## EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

### Quiet distress.

Georgia girls report chronic stress and mental distress that the systems around them are not built to hold. More than half of teenage girls report depression symptoms in a given month. One in five has seriously considered self-harm in the past year. Twice as many girls as boys report always feeling stressed.

When she looks for help, she often cannot find it: half of parents can't access the mental health care their daughter needs, and one in five say it's very difficult or impossible.

**35%** of teen girls report intense anxiety - nearly twice the rate of boys.

**1 in 5** middle- and high-school girls seriously considered self-harm.

**50%** of parents report difficulty accessing mental health care for their daughter.

## SOCIAL WELLNESS

### Support is stretched, too.

While 41% of teen girls say they are online "almost constantly," 33% admit they're also lonely. Nearly half do not feel close to people at school. At home, families are also stretched: 44% of Georgia families cannot afford basic needs, placing the state 43rd for financial hardship.

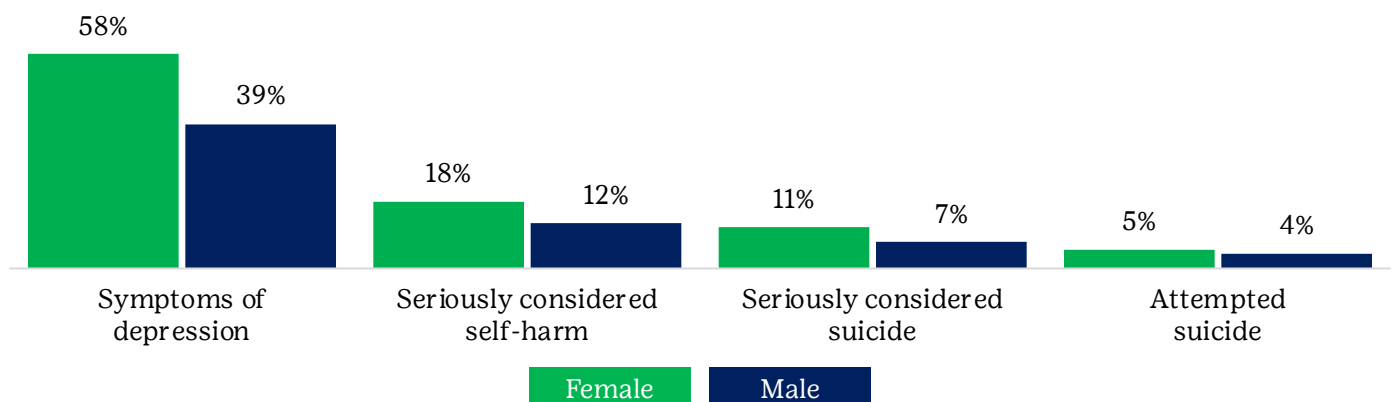
2 out of 3 girls lack a caring adult to talk with about their feelings. The support layer she needs is overextended or unavailable - and likely, she does not ask for help.



Death by suicide is **the second leading cause of death** among young people in Georgia, ages 10-14.

**3 out of 5 middle and high school girls report experiencing signs of depression, leading to 1 in 10 seriously considering suicide.**

*Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Student Health Survey – Middle and High School, 2023–2024.*



# Where Georgia girls are leading & connecting.

## ACADEMIC WELLNESS

### A decade of out-performance.

Beneath the strain is a generation that has spent a decade quietly outpacing every expectation set for it. Georgia girls graduate high school at nearly 90% - five points higher than boys and up almost seven points in a decade.

Girls outperform boys in English Language Arts at every grade level, close the math achievement gap by 8th grade, and outnumber boys in AP, Honors, and Dual Enrollment courses. 12% more girls enroll in college after graduation than their male peers.

**+9%** more girls achieving 8th grade math proficiency in 2025 vs 2015.

**90%** of girls in the Class of 2025 graduated in 4 years vs 83% in 2015.

**15%** fewer women than men select STEM as their first major in college.

## DIGITAL WELLNESS

### Her online community.

A full picture of digital wellness requires naming what girls gain from a digital life. While risks like cyberbullying threaten these spaces, girls use digital channels to deliver what proximity cannot.

71% of teen girls of color encounter identity-affirming content on social. 41% of girls find AI to be more helpful with homework than their parents. Digital tools deliver educational content, career exposure, and civic participation at a scale unavailable to any prior generation.

**63%**

of teen Girl Scouts who do a STEM event want to have a STEM career, compared to just 9% of non-Girl Scouts.



One in four middle and high school girls reports not having an adult at school they can talk with if they have a problem.

# What Georgia Girls Need Next



One clear truth: Georgia girls need adult champions.

In every corner of our state - in academia and policy making, in classrooms and community organizations, at home and next door - girls need adults to step up, speak up, and show up so that they can reach her full potential. This is what the data shows us about where we can start:

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Collect Girl Data.

Prioritize and expand data collection from adolescent youth - especially on emerging issues - published publicly.

## PHYSICAL

### Value Her Body.

Protect movement, guard against disordered eating, and invest in peer spaces where girlhood is understood.

## DIGITAL

### Engage, Don't Avoid.

Become literate in the platforms of digital life. Practice critical media consumption alongside girls.

## EMOTIONAL

### Show Up.

The most protective intervention for girls documented by research is the presence of caring adults. Be present.

## ACADEMIC

### Close the STEM Gap.

Introduce STEM early, protect group experiences with peers and mentors, and expose girls to STEM variety.

## SOCIAL

### Her People, Her Place.

Every girl needs a consistent peer group and a place outside of home to try, fail, and try again. Find her people.

Girls Need You.

## Learn.

Discover more about the power of Girl Scouts.

## Join.

Girls need caring adult mentors to prepare them for life.

## Fund.

Connect with your local council to fund a girl's future.

This report was made possible through the generous support of our partner:



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