

The Impact of Girl Scout STEM Programming

A 2022 Report from the Girl Scout Research Institute

Executive Summary

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) are critical to solving today's problems. Overcoming challenges like natural disasters, poverty, cyberwarfare, climate change, and declining resources will rely on people employed in STEM fields to provide a comprehensive view of the problems along with specialized knowledge and the vision to help build a better future.

Despite exponential growth in STEM occupations, women remain vastly underrepresented in the STEM workforce, in holding STEM degrees, and in opportunities to develop STEM interest as youth. Addressing the gender gap in STEM requires starting early and investing in STEM opportunities for girls. For over 100 years, Girl Scouts has taken the lead in providing opportunities to girls to discover, connect, and take action through STEM.

The current study, demonstrates the benefits of Girl Scout STEM programs and activities, yielding 5 key insights on how Girl Scouts is preparing girls to take the lead in STEM.

1. Doing just one Girl Scout STEM activity makes a difference. Findings show that for Girl Scouts of all ages, doing at least one Girl Scout STEM activity during the troop year increased STEM interest and confidence at the end of the year. Additionally, doing multiple STEM activities increases girls' understanding of the value of STEM to society.

2. Girl Scouts is successfully engaging girls in STEM. Two-thirds of Girl Scouts are doing STEM programs—and the majority are doing multiple activities.

3. Girl Scouts in connecting girls to a variety of STEM experiences. Girls' STEM experiences covered topics from computer science, engineering, outdoor STEM, and more. Through experiencing a variety of STEM programs, Girl Scouts can discover their interests and passions.

4. Girls find Girl Scout STEM programs fun and educational. 9 in 10 Girl Scouts from kindergarten through high school had fun doing STEM with Girl Scouts and learned a lot about STEM through Girl Scout STEM programs.

5. The Girl Scout STEM experience is cumulative and relates to future interest in STEM classes and careers. Girl Scouts who engage in STEM programming become interested in taking more STEM classes and having a career in STEM, compared to Girl Scouts who do not engage in Girl Scout STEM activities. Additionally, the more frequently girls do STEM in Girl Scouts, the more likely they are to be interested in future STEM education.

The Girl Scout formula is simple, but the impact is huge. An accepting environment + supportive adults + a variety of fun and hands-on STEM experiences = girls who see the value of STEM and who have the interest, confidence, and competence to take the lead!

Visit the [Girl Scout Research Institute](#) to learn more about the impact of Girl Scouting and access ground-breaking original research on girls' leadership and well-being.