



For Immediate Release

June 23, 2026

New Report by California Girl Scout Councils Highlights Trends, Challenges Facing California Girls

Report calls for cross-sector action and increased investment

SACRAMENTO, June 23, 2026—Today, Girl Scouts of California is highlighting a first-of-its-kind report on the unique realities and challenges facing girls, and called on state leaders to invest and engage in efforts to help them succeed.

The report, commissioned by the eight Girl Scout councils that represent 125,000 girls ages 5-18 statewide, analyzes the well-being, opportunities and experiences of girls in California using publicly available data, government statistics and research studies. It focuses on four key dimensions of wellness critical for girls' holistic development: demographics and economic reality, physical health and development, emotional well-being and mental health and academic performance and career preparation.

“California is home to more than 3 million girls—a diverse, resilient, and powerful generation who are shaping the state’s future,” said **Theresa Edy Kiene, Chief Executive Officer of Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles**. “Experience tells us the challenges girls are facing are solvable, but it will take all of us – families, schools, youth organizations, policymakers and philanthropic partners – working together to ensure every girl in California has the opportunity to succeed.”

The report and its findings have garnered the attention and support of California Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón, First Partner of California Jennifer Siebel Newsom and California Surgeon General Dr. Diana Ramos. Supporters, many of whom attended a press conference today highlighting the report, include the California Girl Scout Council CEOs, California Commission on the Status of Women & Girls, Children Now, The Representation Project, California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, Mount St. Mary’s University and the Search Institute.

“Girls in California are talented, resilient, and full of promise. The findings of the report are a call to action we can answer,” **Pro Tem Limón** said. “The data makes it clear that too many are carrying burdens no child should bear – from mental health struggles to barriers that limit their futures. When girls thrive, California thrives. I thank Girl Scouts of California for leading the way.”

“Investing in the health of girls is foundational in helping them build a healthier and stronger future,” **Dr. Ramos** said. “When girls have the support they need to thrive, we also create a stronger, healthier California.”

At the heart of the report is one overarching question—Are California’s girls OK?—it explores key factors shaping the answer, including emotional wellbeing and mental health, physical health and development, demographics and economic realities and academic performance and career preparation.

Among the report’s key findings:

- **Nearly 4 in 10 California girls show signs of serious psychological distress**—double the rate for boys.
- **68% of students say school pressure is harming their mental health**, citing grades, exams, and deadlines.
- **70% of California girls spend many hours or almost all day on social media**—up from 64% in 2019.
- **More than 145,000 girls in California's K-12 schools experienced homelessness** last year, up from 82,558 a decade ago.
- **Girls are making progress academically and professionally**, but gaps remain across racial, economic, and language groups.

“The State of the Girl report makes clear what’s at stake for girls in California, especially when it comes to the growing mental health crisis they are facing,” said **Kelly Hardy, Senior Managing Director of Children Now**. “Mental health and online safety are critical for young girls to thrive, and this report adds to the overwhelming evidence that California must do more to make these issues a priority.”

The *California 2026 State of the Girl Report*, researched and written by the Center for the Advancement of Women at Mount Saint Mary’s University, features several girls’ essays and quotes that offer insights into where they feel safe, how technology and phones affect their minds and well-being and the challenges they face growing up.

“CAMFT, comprised of over 39,000 members of the California psychotherapist community, applauds the Girl Scouts of California for their prioritization of youth mental health, investing in their emotional well-being, and empowering Girl Scouts to thrive today and in the future,” said **Joy Alafia, Executive Director of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.**

The report also includes recommendations for parents, youth-serving organizations, school administration and teachers, funders and policymakers, including concrete suggestions on promoting healthy relationships, closing the STEM gap, supporting mental health conditions and mentoring girls. It also highlights that philanthropic investment in girls represents less than 2% of overall charitable giving.

“With this data, we’re empowered to better serve girls in our state, meeting them where they are. Girl Scouts is part of the solution—providing girls with a pivotal place of belonging. When girls have the support they need, they grow into their power and potential, which directly benefits all of us,” Edy Kiene said.

To read a full copy of the California 2026 State of the Girl Report, visit <https://girlscoutsofcalifornia.org/state-of-the-girl-report>.

###

Media Contact:

Niesha Fritz, nfritz@lucaspublishing.com

Monica Moses, Monica.moses@girlscoutshcc.org

About Girl Scouts of California

Girl Scouts of California is the largest girl-serving organization in the state, with eight councils collectively reaching every one of California’s 58 counties. Girl Scouts of California serves more than 125,000 girls and is supported by over 78,000 adult members and volunteers.

Rooted in a mission to build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place, Girl Scouts is where every girl has the opportunity to discover her strengths, raise her voice, and make a lasting impact. From California’s urban neighborhoods to rural communities, more than 56,000 girls from under-resourced communities are gaining access to life-changing programs that spark ambition, foster belonging, and unlock potential.

Girl Scouts alum are trailblazers across industries and communities—more likely to pursue higher education, lead in their careers, and drive meaningful change. Backed by the worldwide Girl Scouts movement that includes 1.5 million members and millions of alum, Girl Scouts in California lead the way as they find their voices and make changes that affect the issues most important to them. To learn more, visit girlscoutsofcalifornia.org