



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding



GIRLS' ATTITUDES SURVEY 2017

ABOUT GIRLGUIDING

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good.

WELCOME TO THE GIRLS' ATTITUDES SURVEY 2017

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Each year, Girlguiding's Girls' Attitudes Survey takes a snapshot of what girls and young women think on a wide range of issues.

The survey gives girls' and young women's voices a platform to be heard and taken into account at the highest levels of decision-making across the UK. It empowers girls to speak out on the issues that really matter to them and affect their lives today. This major survey, now in its ninth year, canvasses the opinions of over 1,900 girls and young women aged 7 to 21, inside and outside guiding across the UK. The findings in 2017 build on those from previous years. They give an insight into how girls feel about the specific and emerging pressures facing them today, and what these mean for their happiness, well-being and opportunities in life. Girlguiding's youth panel, Advocate, leads the development of the survey each year and analyses the results. All the results from this and previous surveys can be found on Girlguiding's website.

girlguiding.org.uk/girlsattitudes



ADVOCATES' FOREWORD

The Girls' Attitudes Survey is at the heart of what we do as Advocates; it provides an insight into the lives of girls today and helps us to see the issues they face, the things they care about, as well as their hopes for the future. We also play a huge role in designing the survey, discussing potential questions and analysing the results.

The Girls' Attitudes Survey serves as a reminder that young women are still facing a plethora of problems as they grow up in the UK. This year we see how the expectations placed on girls because of their gender are apparent in every section of this research, and gender stereotypes permeate the responses from across all areas of their lives. As young women, we know that this can limit the opportunities we get to access.

This generation of girls is growing up in a digital society and the majority think digital technology is an essential part of everyday life. However, it's also apparent that being online puts pressure on them to look and act in a certain way. Sexual harassment at school has increased since 2014, particularly on social media. Yet many girls also feel as though their parents don't understand the full range of issues they face online, and some girls are more willing to turn to YouTubers for advice. Few girls say being online makes them happy – although clearly they are striving to develop their technology skills.

Girls as young as seven feel 'sad and angry' about gender stereotypes, and they feel as though this means they are treated differently to boys. Girls face criticism for doing things that are stereotypically masculine, but also when they are seen as 'too feminine'. They can't win.

But girls also see the need to challenge gender stereotypes and overcome them. Over a third of girls aged 11 to 21 believe that their freedom to express themselves, their body confidence, and their opportunities at work would be better if gender stereotypes didn't exist.

Over and over again, girls cite the need for role models that they feel represent them – women in sport, women in tech, women in politics, women defying gender stereotypes, BAME women, disabled women and LGBT+ women. Less than a third of girls feel like politicians understand the issues they face today, and over half think political parties need to do more to have equal gender representation. Young women are worried about what Brexit could mean for their future – a vote in which many were not able to have their voices heard.

Virtually all girls say they think childcare should be shared equally between both parents and expect to be treated as equals with the men they work with in future careers. They want equal opportunities to study a variety of subjects at school. They want better careers' advice, and inclusive, high quality RSE. However, this survey shows us that much more needs to be done if this will be our reality in the future.

This all gives us a clear indication of the action that needs to be taken to improve the lives of girls and young women around the country. As the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK, we have the power to change the lives of hundreds of thousands of girls – to help them be whoever they want to be, beyond limited stereotypes. As advocates we campaign for change that we know will make girls' lives safer and fairer, and help them achieve their aspirations. We were extremely happy, when, earlier this year, the government made relationships and sex education compulsory in all schools in England, something we had been campaigning on since 2014. And it's why we recently spoke out against media sexism, to ensure that female politicians are represented fairly on their politics, not their shoes. And this is why we're determined that the diversity of girls' voices needs to be heard and taken seriously on the things that matter to them.

The Advocate panel is a group of 18 Girlguiding members aged 14 to 25, which gives girls a platform to use their voices and seek change at the highest levels.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overwhelming message that girls and young women are sending us in this year's survey is that they live in a world where sexism and gender stereotypes are entrenched in all areas of their lives. From a young age, girls sense they face different expectations compared to boys and feel a pressure to adjust their behaviour accordingly. Girls encounter stereotyping across their lives – at school, in the media and in advertising, in the real and the virtual world, from their peers, teachers and families. Yet it is also clear that girls are not passively accepting this situation. Perceptive and confident, they are well able to identify stereotyping, and many feel able to call it out and stand up for themselves and others.

At school, many girls encounter an inbuilt assumption that some subjects are more for girls or for boys, restricting their free choice to study what interests them as individuals. Girls feel that stepping outside the norm – for both girls and boys – can result in teasing and labelling from their peers. Girls say they are not getting the sporting offer they want at school, with some sports still being offered only to boys. It's hardly surprising, then, that a quarter see PE as being 'more for boys'. Nor is school a place of safety from sexual harassment: a worrying finding from the report is that girls now experience higher levels of sexual harassment in school than they did in 2014. Sexual intimidation via social media has shown the greatest increase, but girls are being subjected every week to name-calling, physical harassment, and obscene graffiti and images.

In the wider world, girls face a continual barrage of sexist adverts and gender stereotypes perpetuated across traditional and social media, and in marketing. Even the youngest girls are aware of being sold

gendered clothing and products, and they find it disappointing and annoying. Despite this awareness many are internalising the messages that girls are kinder and better behaved, while boys are stronger and take more risks. And they are altering their behaviour as a result: over half of girls of all ages will change what they wear and how they express themselves in order to conform to the stereotypes they are being sold, both on- and offline.

Girls see digital technology as an essential, fun part of their everyday lives, and the overwhelming majority are confident of their tech skills. However, just over a third would consider a career in technology and many feel that schools perpetuate the myth that tech subjects are more for boys. In their social use of tech, girls worry both about their safety and about the pressures they face including threats from strangers, bullying, seeing unwanted pornography, and having control of their own images. A quarter see sexting as a normal part of a relationship and almost one sixth report having felt pressure to send nude photos.

Despite these challenges, girls are using all the tools available to them to look after themselves and develop the skills they need. Most girls tell us that they feel confident in their ability to protect themselves online and are unfazed about entering a male-dominated area of work. They are experts in identifying sexism and stereotyping in the media and in the products sold to them. Many feel angry about gender stereotyping and more determined to succeed because of it. Girls are inspired by role models who challenge and overcome stereotypes, and they are increasingly prepared, as they get older, to challenge sexism themselves.

Girls are doing everything in their power to navigate, survive and challenge the stereotyped world they find themselves living in. However, changes on a bigger scale are required, and girls are using their voices to tell us what needs to happen. They call for schools to do more to encourage girls into subjects dominated by boys and to provide better careers advice; they want increased security and greater protection from threats online; they demand that the advertising industry ends its use of sexist, stereotypical and sexualised images. They ask to live in a world where they need not feel defined or restricted by their gender, and listening to their experiences and opinions is the first step for all of us in working towards that goal.

GENDER STEREOTYPES

55% of girls aged 7-21 say gender stereotypes affect their ability to say what they think

Girls tell us where gender stereotypes are coming from, how stereotypes make them feel and behave – and how they are prepared to challenge them.

EDUCATION

26% of girls aged 7-21 think PE is more for boys

Girls talk about the different expectations of girls and boys in school, how their choices of academic subjects can be affected by gender stereotypes and what they want when it comes to sport.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

76% of girls aged 7-21 feel confident in digital skills

Girls report on their use of technology and the challenges they face in doing so – both now and how this could affect their futures.

PERSONAL SAFETY

54% of girls aged 11-21 have come across unwanted violent or graphic images online that made them feel upset or disturbed

Girls tell us about the harassment and pressures they face, both on and offline, and in and outside of school.

EVERYDAY SEXISM in ADVERTS and MARKETING

95% of girls aged 11-21 said the advertising industry should make sure adverts show more positive, diverse representations of girls and women

Girls talk about the sexism they encounter from advertising, print media and online – and how they feel about adverts that challenge stereotypes.

BEING A GIRL: INSPIRATION, WELL-BEING and POLITICS

57% of girls aged 11-21 don't think politicians understand the issues girls and young women face today

Girls discuss how they see themselves, the things that inspire them and their political engagement.

↳ Sometimes when girls want to play sports in school, boys make fun of you. I want to play football but I can't because I feel uncomfortable and boys stare at you. ↻ Girl aged 7-10

GENDER STEREOTYPES

From as young as seven, girls are deeply affected by gender stereotypes. Almost two thirds of girls aged 7 to 10 say they think girls are better than boys at being kind and around half think they're better at putting their hand up in class. Yet significant numbers associate 'being strong' and 'taking risks and not worrying about failing' with boys. And even at this young age, girls say they are changing their behaviour because of gender stereotypes. Six in ten girls in the 7 to 10 age group will change what they wear because of stereotypes, while almost as many say they change how they behave and express themselves.

55%
of girls aged 7-21 say
**GENDER STEREOTYPES
affect their ability
TO SAY WHAT
THEY THINK**



↳ When my PE teacher told me to do a girl press-up I stood up and told him that he was being sexist and that he was being offensive. ↻

Girl aged 11-16

As girls get older they become slightly less likely to let pressure from stereotypes alter their behaviour – except when it comes to how they behave around boys. Yet still around half of girls feel a need to conform to stereotypes of what's expected from them. And while over a third aged 11 to 21 say gender stereotypes make them feel more determined to succeed, for a significant minority, gender stereotypes negatively affect their confidence and make them feel worried about the future.

More than half of girls and young women say they see gender stereotypes being perpetuated across different areas of their lives. They see them reinforced most often in the mainstream and social media, but notably they're exposed to stereotypes in all areas of life – from the clothes and toys targeted at girls and boys, to pressures they say come from teachers and parents.

While more than four in ten girls feel able to challenge teachers when they use gender stereotypes, almost as many do not – it may be that, for them, challenging their teacher isn't possible and the risk of getting into trouble too high.

Girls feel more confident challenging their peers, especially as they get older, and challenging their parents. Girls are least likely to feel confident in challenging people they don't know on social media – this may be because they are less invested in having those conversations, or it could reflect worries about a backlash given the high levels of harassment and abuse girls face online.

Girls challenge gender stereotypes in many different ways - by pursuing activities they enjoy and expressing themselves however they want to - despite being questioned by others. Some challenge stereotypes by standing up for boys who are bullied for doing things seen as 'for girls', and recognise that sometimes being 'girly' can be seen as inherently negative. Older girls also gave examples of challenging gender segregation in subjects at school, college or university.

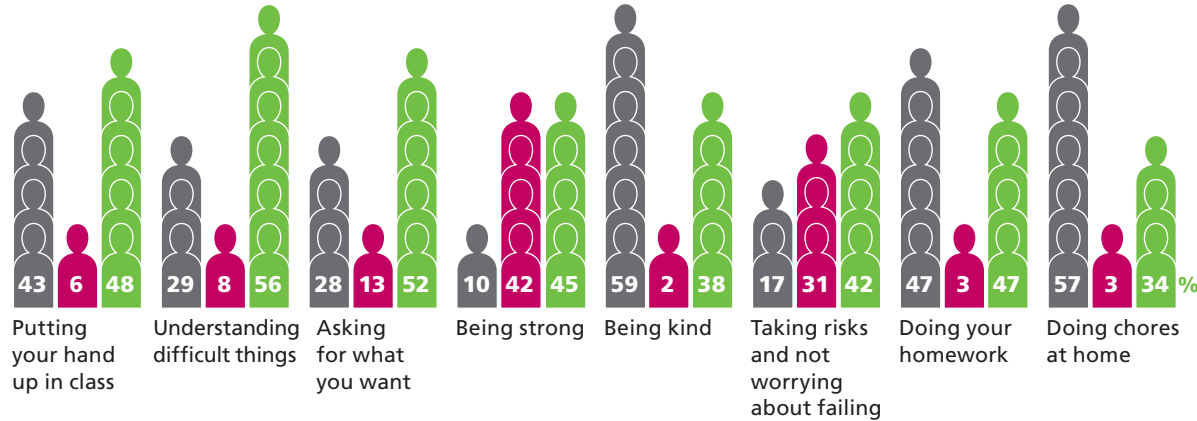
↳ I saw a young boy wanting to buy a princess costume but his mum wanted him to get a 'boy' costume – I went and told him that he looked great in the dress. ↻ Young woman aged 17-21



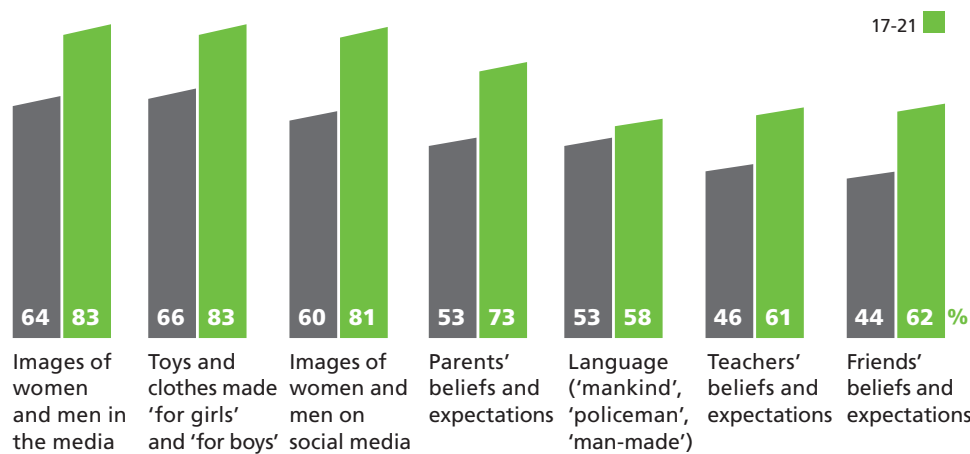
Gender stereotypes

Girls' views on gender and behaviour (7-10)

Girls are better ■ Boys are better ■ Both the same ■

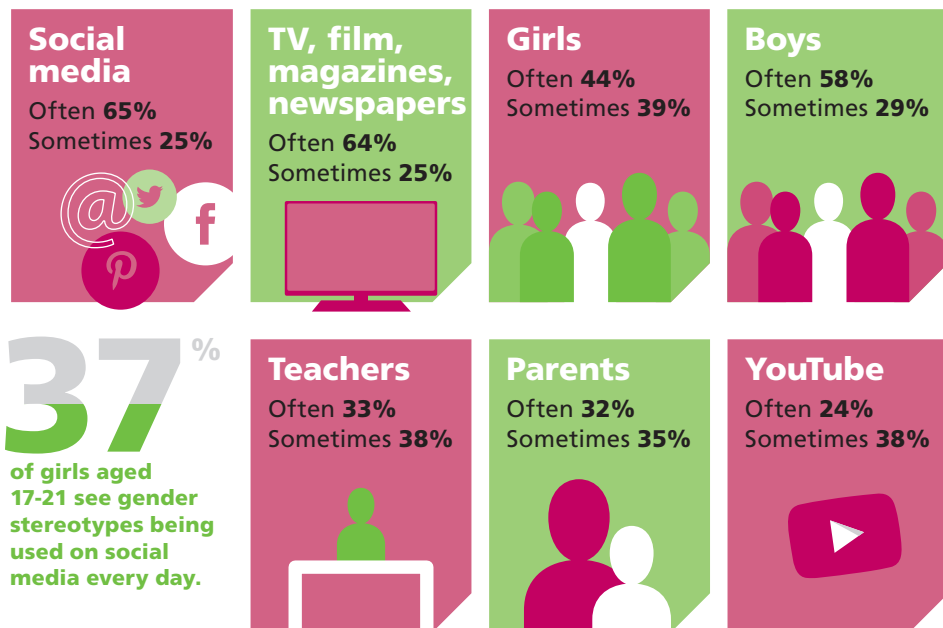


What factors make people think gender stereotypes are true



In PE my male teacher gets the boys to do most of the setting up and treats us like we need the boys to show us how to do everything when we are capable.
Girl aged 11-16

How often girls see or hear gender stereotypes being used from these places (11-21)

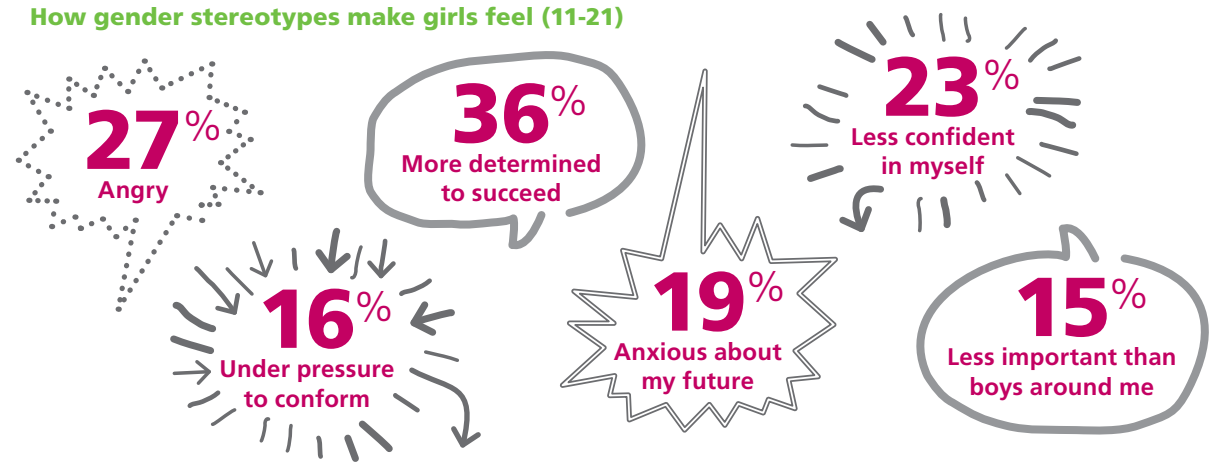


Girls can do anything they want.
Girl aged 7-10

My mum told me that I should not be playing video games because that's a boy thing and I said that everyone has the right to gaming because it's a hobby and if I like it then I like it.
Girl aged 11-16

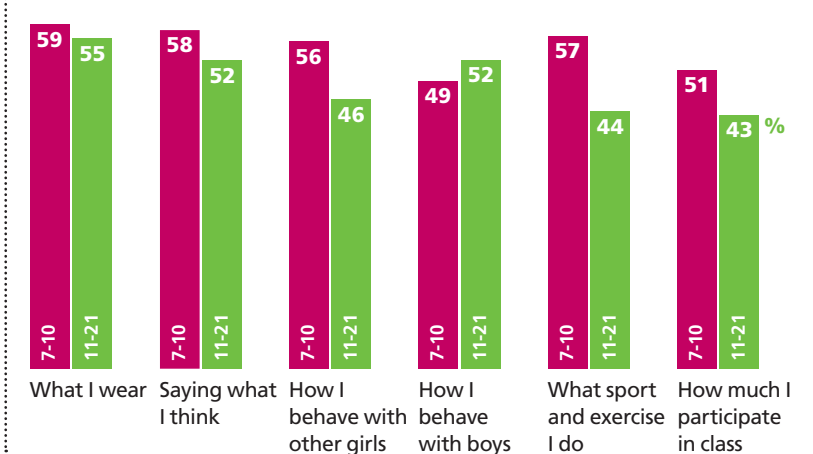
The impact of gender stereotypes

How gender stereotypes make girls feel (11-21)



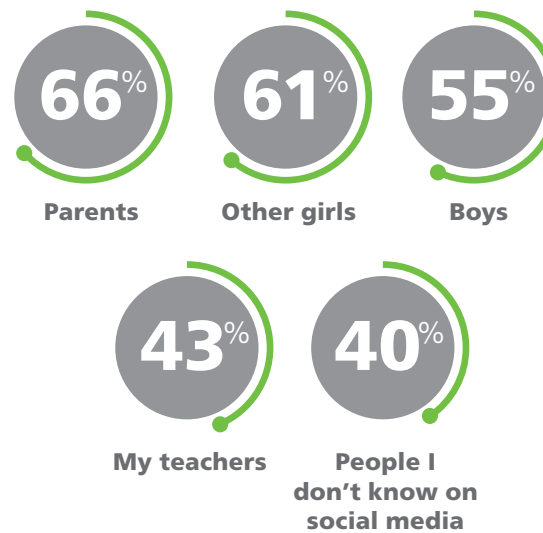
42% of girls aged 7-10 **THINK BOYS** are better than girls **AT BEING STRONG**

How gender stereotypes change girls' behaviour




Challenging gender stereotypes

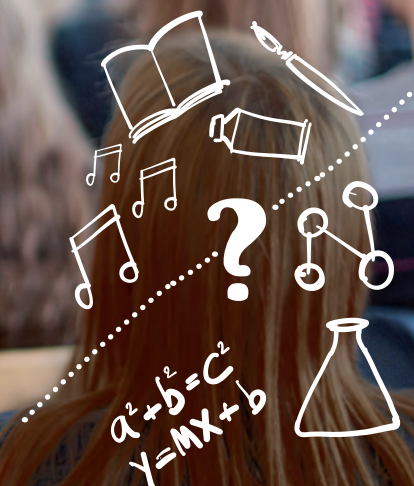
How confident girls feel challenging these people when they use gender stereotypes (11-21)



What girls say would be better if there were no gender stereotypes (11-21)



I have chosen to study aerospace engineering at university. It always surprises people that I want to go into a career in engineering, because I am a woman. I always just tell people that it is something I love and am interested in.  Young woman aged 17-21



EDUCATION

Choices available to young people at school have an enormous impact on their futures – so it's vital that both girls and boys feel equally enabled to study the full range of subjects. The majority of girls and young women say the different subjects they study at school are equally for both girls and boys. However, a significant minority believe some subjects are 'more for boys' and others 'more for girls'.

When asked why, girls made it clear that, from a young age, they are picking up on stereotypes around gender. For example, a number of girls spoke about an expectation that they should be quieter, neater, more emotive and more creative, whereas some felt boys are expected to be physically stronger, louder, more sporty and more logical. Sometimes girls describe these as inherent differences, but they also notice how social pressures contribute. They give examples of teachers promoting some subjects more to boys or assuming boys would be better at them, especially sciences, computing and sport.

26%
of girls aged 7-21
THINK PE
is more
FOR BOYS

I think subjects like maths and PE are more for boys since I have seen more male mathematicians and male athletes.  Girl aged 7-10


Some of girls' views become more gendered as they get older and progress through the education system – for example, younger girls see computing as equally for both boys and girls but as girls get older, they are more likely to say computing is 'more for boys'. Girls are also more likely to think economics is 'more for boys' as they move up through secondary school. On the other hand, younger girls are more likely to say that art, music and drama are 'more for girls' compared to older girls who say creative subjects are equally for both. With over four fifths of girls saying they want more careers advice about what they can do with different school subjects, gender stereotyping, together with a lack of knowledge of the possibilities opened up by various subjects, may be closing off career options to whole groups of young people.

When it comes to sport, a consistent quarter of girls think physical education is 'more for boys' throughout their time at school. Most girls across the age groups say they are motivated to do sport because they want to keep fit and healthy, and to feel more positive.

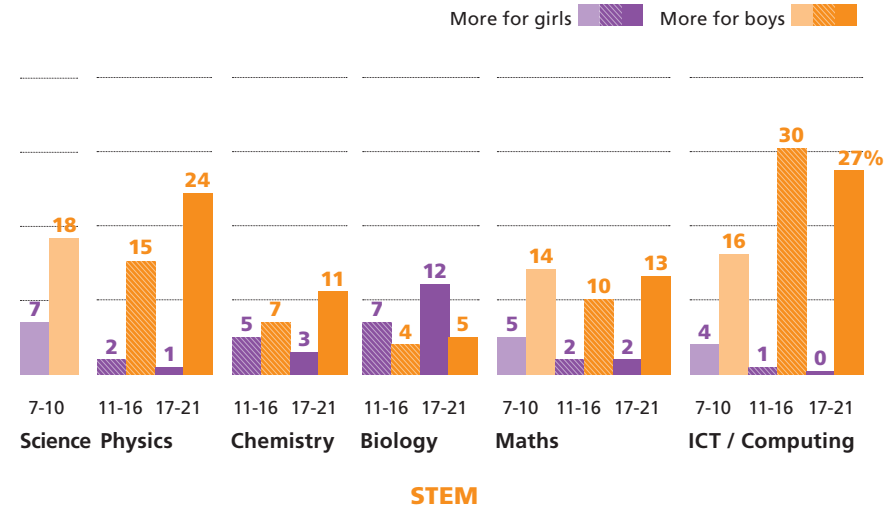
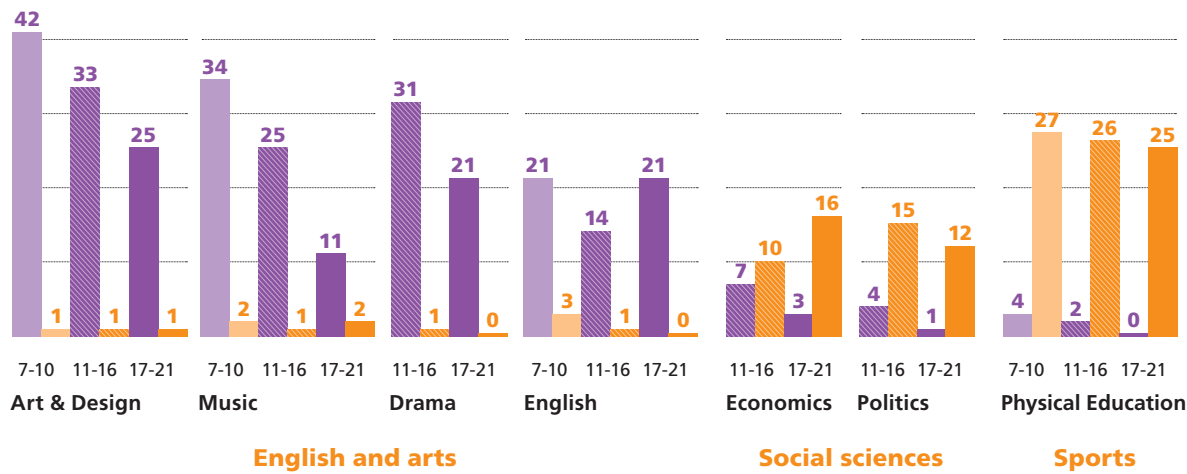
Younger girls also say sport gives them the opportunity to be part of a team and make friends. As girls get older, though, these positive social motivations drop away and they are much more likely to participate in sport to lose weight. The biggest barrier to girls engaging in sport is feeling pressure over their appearance, while a quarter state that harassment from boys and men prevents them from taking part.

In 2016 we learned that while 91% of girls aged 7 to 10 said they had the same choice of sports in school as boys, only 43% of girls aged 11 to 21 did. This year we found more examples of girls not having access to traditionally 'boys' sports. Just over a fifth of girls want to be able to play these sports (e.g. football, rugby, basketball) but the stand-out sporting offers girls want are swimming and martial arts.

When it comes to learning about relationships and sex, 6 out of 10 girls want this to sometimes be taught by people visiting the school, rather than just relying on teachers for this subject.

More girls should be encouraged to play with toys to do with technology and science. A lot of chemistry sets are advertised with just boys playing them, but both boys and girls be encouraged to play with them.  Young woman aged 17-21

Gender perceptions of school subjects



30%
of girls aged 11-16
THINK COMPUTING
is more
FOR BOYS

Why girls think some subjects are 'more for girls' or 'more for boys'

A girl being enthusiastic about physics or chemistry is classed as a 'tomboy' or a boy showing enthusiasm in art would cause other boys to make fun of him.

We don't see as many women in some professions as we do men, such as politics.

Girl 11-16

Young woman 17-21

Relationship and sex education (RSE) and careers advice

What girls want (11-21)



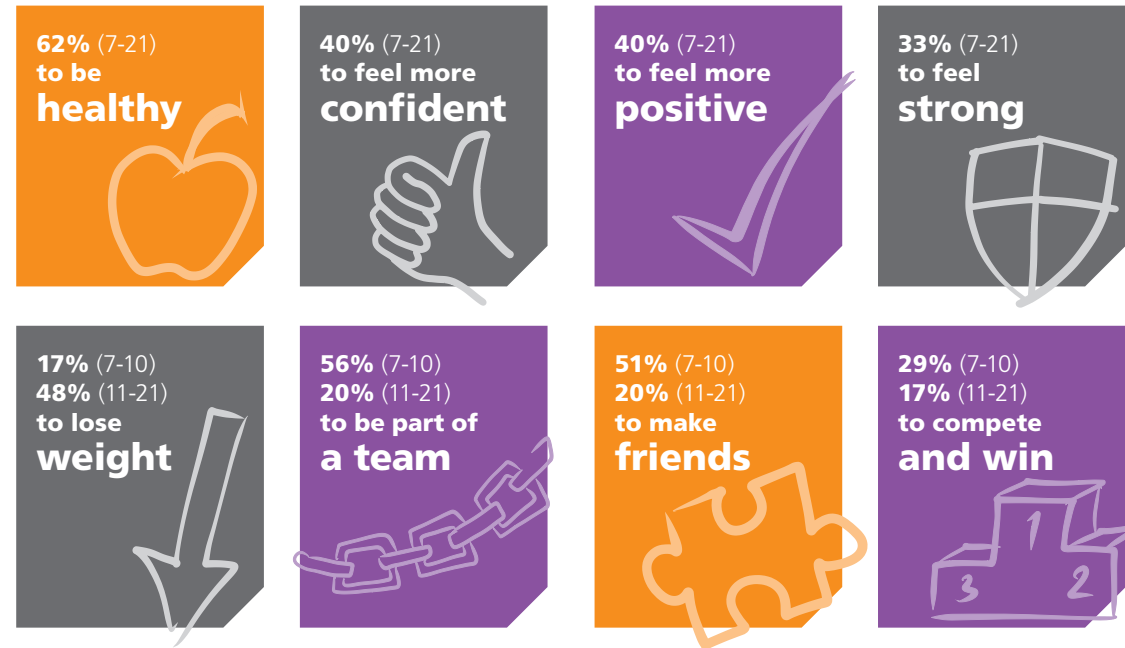
62% want some RSE taught by people visiting the school, not always by teachers

48% want some RSE taught in groups with just girls and just boys

82% want more careers advice about what they can do with different subjects at school

Sport

Why girls want to do sport



There is a heavy weight training section at my gym in university. I almost never see girls in there. It can sometimes feel very intimidating, especially the first few times I went. But I continue to work out regularly and not care what those guys think of me.

Young woman aged 17-21


Sports girls want at school (11-21)



Barriers to sport and exercise (11-21)



84% of girls aged 11-21 expect equal opportunities with men at work in the future and think childcare should be shared equally between parents.

More girls would be encouraged into tech if you destroyed the stereotype that only boys can use technology; loads of girls already use and have jobs in technology, they're just not talked about enough.  Girl aged 11-16


DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Girls of all ages have left us in no doubt about the importance of digital technology in their lives. The overwhelming majority of girls think using technology is essential for everyday life, and most say it's fun and enjoyable. As girls get older, they report using digital technology more often (every day) with some saying they find it addictive. However, just a third post publicly on social media every day, suggesting that this kind of engagement is less appealing – possibly because of negative responses they might face online.

Girls and young women feel confident in their digital technology skills: half aged 11 to 21 know how to set up a website or blog, while 55% turn to YouTube for help learning new skills. However, despite girls' highly developed digital skills and high levels of confidence, they continue to face barriers when considering a career or even studying computing in school, because of their gender.

76%
of girls aged 7-21 feel
**CONFIDENT IN THEIR
DIGITAL SKILLS**



Being the only female in a male-dominated environment can be very difficult, so it's important to make sure that girls feel welcome and safe in these places.  Girl aged 11-16

Half of girls are confident they know what job they could do in tech in the future – while half aren't. Just over a third of girls would consider a job in technology, although digital tech skills will be fundamental for the future workforce. The majority of girls say they aren't put off working in technology because of a lack of women – which could suggest either that they are resigned to being in a minority or that they feel confident about overcoming gender stereotypes. However, girls' detailed responses do reveal worries about entering a sector where there may be few women.

To encourage them to consider a career in technology, girls said they wanted to hear from more women who could explain to them what they do and why they enjoy it. They want women in tech to be more visible and more valued. Girls thought schools have an important role in helping them to develop the digital technology skills they need and should not assume tech is something that just boys would be interested in.

However, they wanted this encouragement to be about finding what's interesting for them individually rather than just getting more girls into tech for the sake of it.

Given the potential issues facing young people in the social use of tech, a quarter of girls aged 7 to 21 say they would get advice from a YouTuber over their parents. Girls aged 11 to 16 relate most to YouTubers and are the most likely to see them as good role models. The oldest group (17 to 21) are more cynical and aware of YouTubers advertising brands or having a potentially negative effect on viewers. While YouTubers can provide reassurance and support to older girls, especially those aged 11 to 21, the youngest girls' favourite YouTubers were funny and entertaining.

Have more clubs for technology, just for girls. This way girls can have any ideas and won't be afraid that boys will make fun of them.  Girl aged 11-16

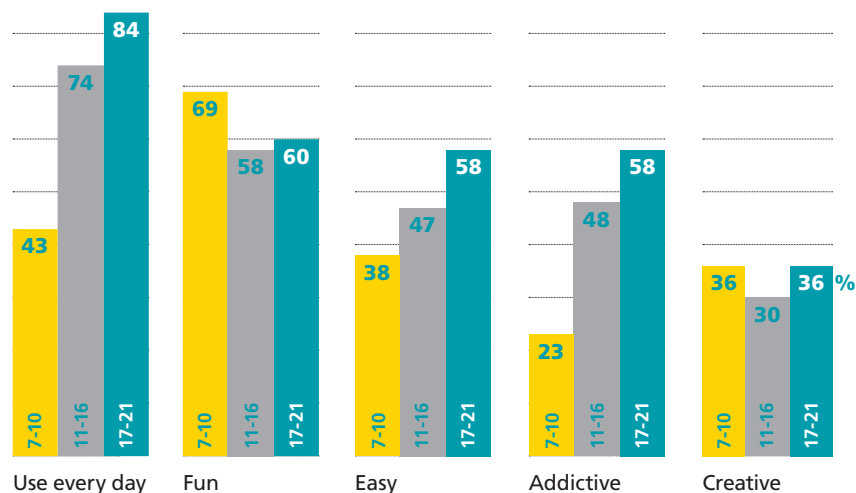


Girls' skills and use of digital technologies

Confidence in digital technologies



What girls think of digital technologies



The ICT teacher often sends boys to help us rather than picking a girl, which puts us off the subject.
Girl aged 11-16

There is a lot of stigma around girls taking technology subjects still, so let them know they're allowed to choose them.
Young woman aged 17-21

Using digital technologies (11-21)

56% say at school they learn useful ways to use tech in everyday life

55% say YouTube is the main place they go to find out how to do something they're not sure about

49% say they know how to set up a website or blog

45% say their mobile phone is the most important thing they own

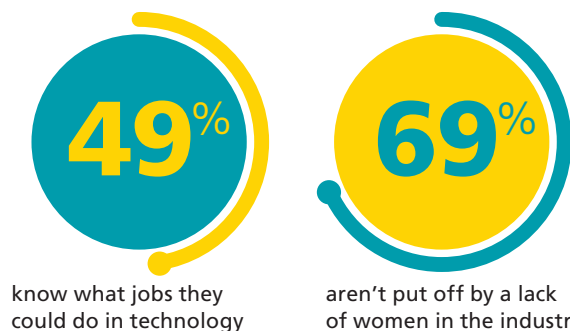
42% say they prefer to communicate on social media than face-to-face

35% say they post on social media every day

37%
of girls aged 7-21
WOULD CONSIDER
doing a job in
TECHNOLOGY

Jobs in tech

What girls think (7-21)

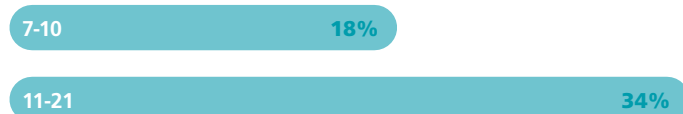


YouTubers

YouTubers are good role models for young people



More likely to get advice from a YouTuber than their parents



What girls say about their favourite YouTubers

They're so funny and hilarious and make me laugh when I feel sad
Girl aged 7-10

She does videos on how to cope with issues and bullying at school
Girl aged 7-10

They're paid to promote brands and have to behave in a way so they don't damage their own 'brand'
Young woman aged 17-21

She's so positive
Young woman aged 17-21

They present unrealistic ideals of life
Young woman aged 17-21

She gives really good advice on anxiety and it helps me a lot
Girl aged 11-16

She's a self-taught female robotics builder that shows me the more fun side of technology without forcing me into it because of my gender
Young woman aged 17-21

She is inspiring and helpful with what to do with my career
Girl aged 11-16

It would be safer online if the report button was easier to see and your account could be set to personal on all social media. *Girl aged 11-16*



PERSONAL SAFETY

Both on and offline, girls' sense of safety is threatened by harassment and sexual pressures. There has been an increase in sexual harassment in school since our 2014 survey, in particular when it comes to harassment that girls face on social media. There has been an increase in the number of girls affected by a form of harassment compared to three years ago and more than a third experience sexual harassment at school every week.

Girls face a number of risks and pressures online – a quarter of young women say sexting is seen as normal in relationships and 16% say they've felt pressured to send a nude picture. A significant number of girls have come across images they've found upsetting, suggesting that more needs to be done to regulate the online world in which children interact and engage. However, despite these pressures and risks, 88% of girls aged 11-21 feel confident about protecting their information and privacy online – possibly a reflection that nearly all children now learn online safety at school.

54%

of girls aged 11-21 have come across unwanted **VIOLENT** or **GRAPHIC IMAGES ONLINE** that made them feel **UPSET** or **DISTURBED**



I'd feel safer online if there were kids-only channels that didn't have things popping up that aren't suitable. *Girl aged 7-10*

Half of girls say they feel their parents understand the pressures they face online. When girls were asked what they worry about when online, girls aged 7 to 10 named strangers, which is also what they believe their parents are most concerned about. As girls get older, though, the worries they express diverge from what they perceive their parents' worries to be, as social pressures rather than safety concerns become more prominent. The oldest group of girls (aged 17 to 21) were much more concerned about being distracted from their school or college work and about how they are perceived by others online, while they thought their parents' main worries remained consistently around threats from strangers.

Generally, girls say that their parents who post pictures of them on social media tend to ask their permission first, and they are mostly happy about this and trusting of their parents. However, a fifth of girls feel embarrassed when their parents post pictures of them on social media.

When asked what would make being online safer, younger girls said they expect their parents to have control over what they see and block inappropriate sites. Girls across the age groups wanted better protections from and accountability for images, video or other content that was disturbing or upsetting, and wanted more to be done to address online bullying or strangers contacting them.

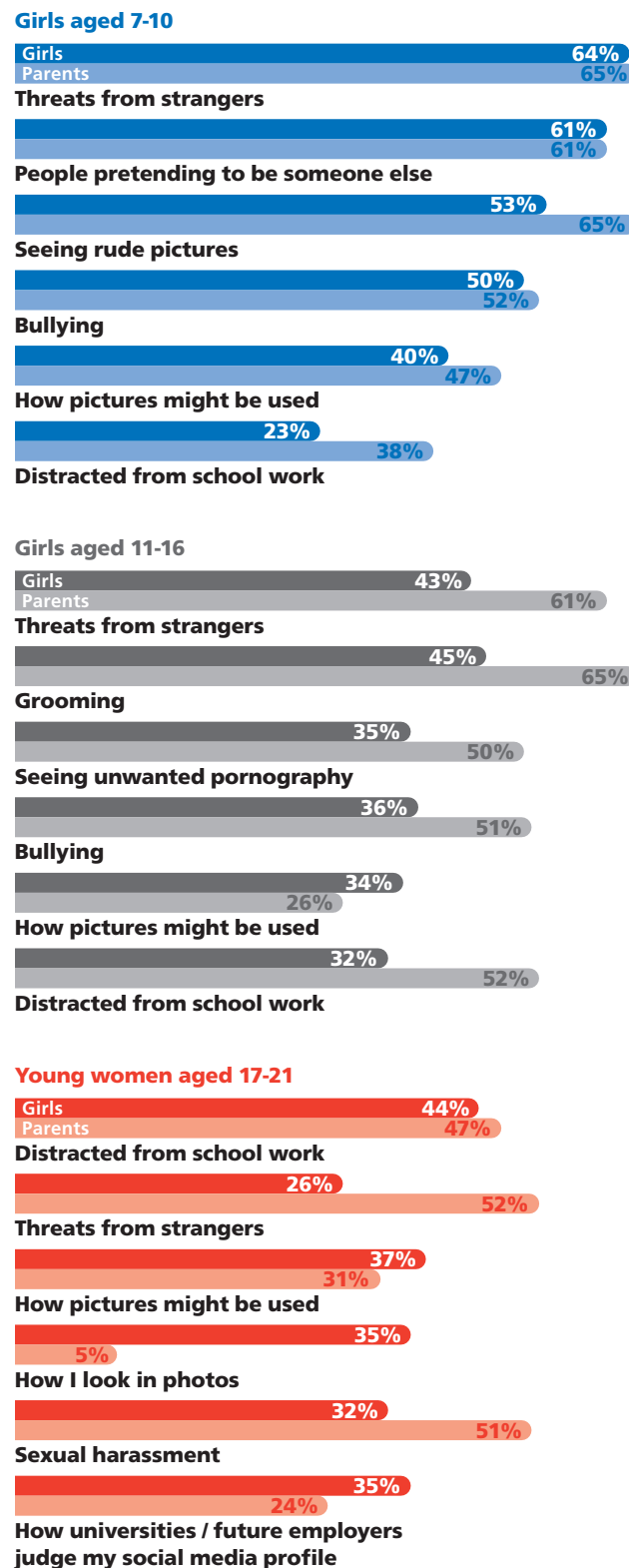
There has been a worrying increase in sexual harassment of girls in school in the past three years. However, girls are refusing to accept this behaviour from boys - 59% say they would feel confident to stand up to sexual harassment at school.

I'd feel safer online if it was easier to report and block fake accounts. *Girl aged 11-16*



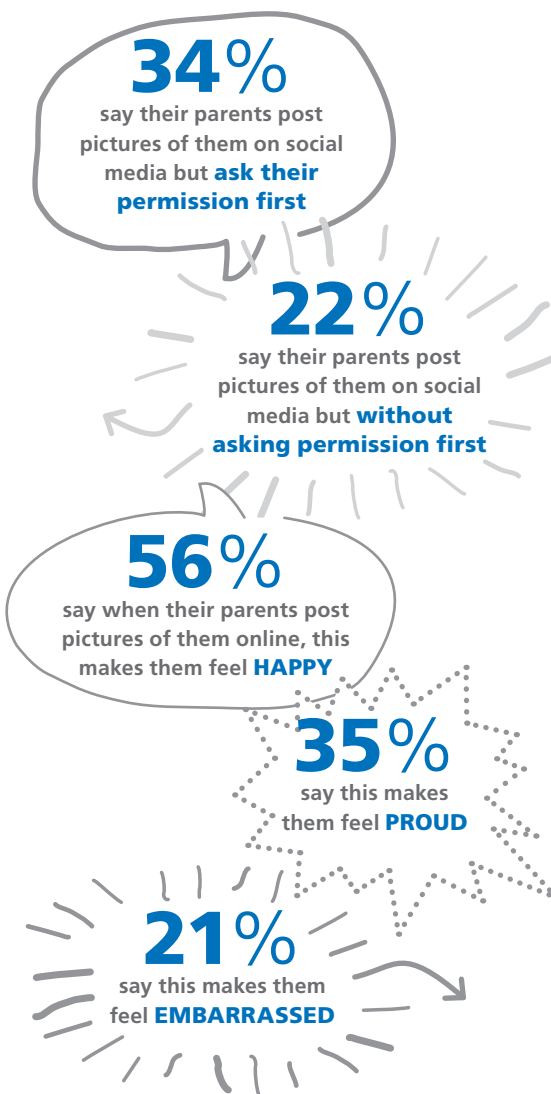
Online safety and pressures

Girls' online worries and their perceptions of parents' worries



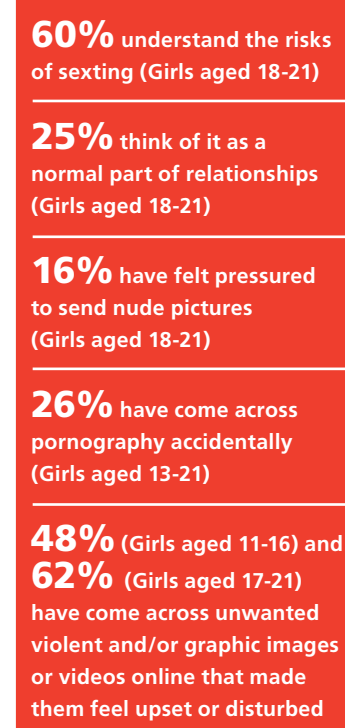
See Annex on page 33 for full list.

Parents' posts on social media (7-10)

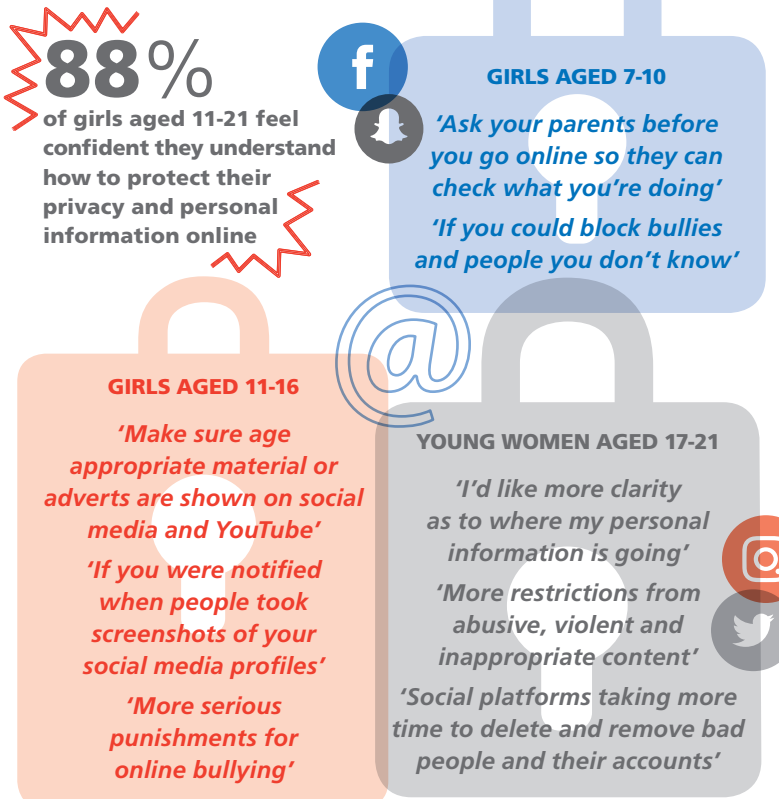


47% of girls aged 11-21 think their parents **UNDERSTAND** the pressures they **FACE ONLINE**

Sexting, pornography and graphic content

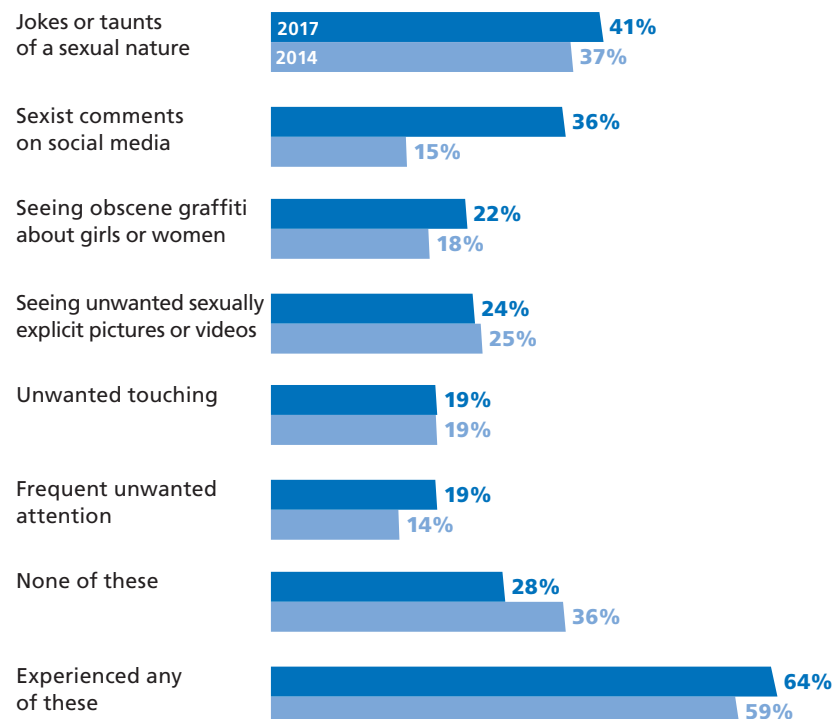


What girls want to be safe online



Sexual harassment at school

Things girls have experienced in the past year (13-21)



Things that girls have seen or experienced in the past week (11-21)



3 Stereotypes in adverts make me feel annoyed. Girls are just as clever as any boy and can do anything a boy can do. *9* Girl aged 7-10



EVERYDAY SEXISM in ADVERTS and MARKETING

When choosing clothes and toys, girls of all ages know when they are being targeted by manufacturers or advertisers because of their gender, through the use of blatant gender stereotypes such as a reliance on pink or use of words such as 'pretty'. This can make girls feel uncomfortable and annoyed as it suggests there are limits to what they are supposed to like or do.

As girls get older they become more aware of gendered selling as a problem: half said they thought this sort of marketing using gender stereotypes is harmful to women being treated fairly and having equal opportunities to men. Some young women said the use of gender stereotypes to sell clothes was so normal to them in their everyday life, they did not always notice it.

95%

of girls aged 11-21 said the advertising industry should **SHOW MORE POSITIVE, DIVERSE REPRESENTATIONS OF GIRLS AND WOMEN**

6 I feel angry and not at all surprised as this is the type of advert I see all the time. *9* Girl aged 11-16

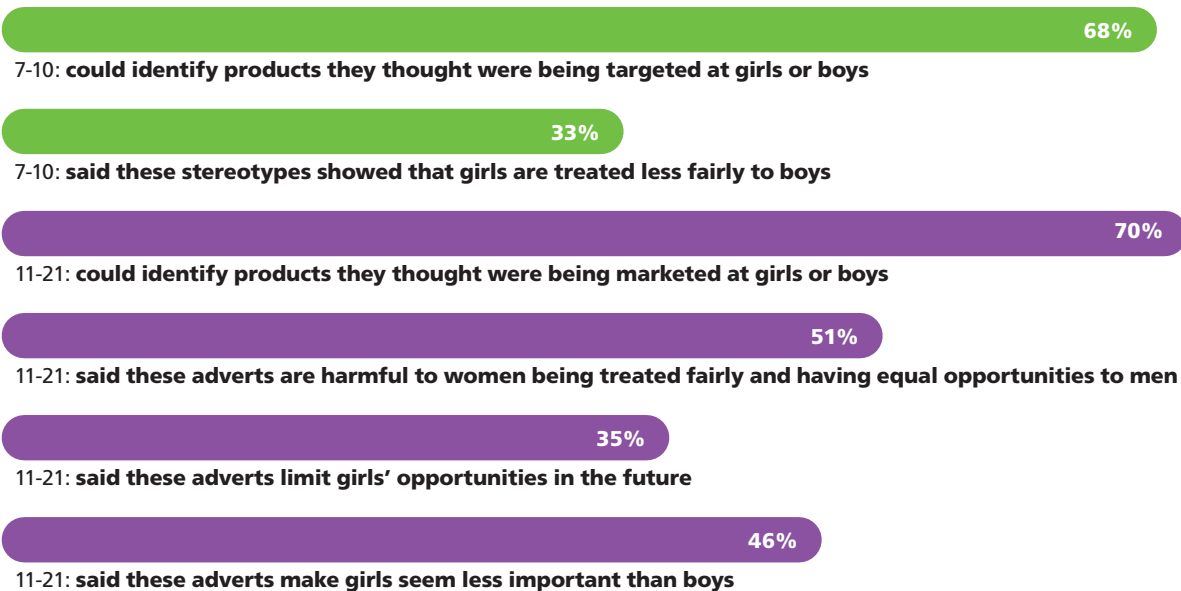
Adverts that challenge gender stereotypes were welcomed by girls and young women - for example, taking part in sports traditionally seen as 'more for boys'. Such adverts made them feel empowered and proud to be a girl. For some, seeing these sorts of images was rare and felt important in encouraging them to believe in what they can achieve. Older girls aged 11 to 21 felt most strongly that adverts showing positive images of girls and women's abilities, those that challenged stereotypes and offered diverse presentations of young women being visible and active, were important and had a significant impact on girls' lives - with seven in ten saying they helped women to be treated equally in society.

Girls are frequently exposed to adverts and marketing that often depict stereotypical and sexist ideas of women and men - more than half have seen airbrushed images in the past week that made them feel pressured to look different, and just under half have seen stereotypical and sexist representations of women and girls that made them feel less confident in what they can do. The high levels reported reinforce the fact that this sexism is part of their daily lives - but this doesn't mean they accept it. Girls overwhelmingly feel that the advertising industry needs to do better. Nearly all agree that advertisers should show more positive and diverse representations of girls and women and stop using stereotypes and sexualised images.

6 It makes me feel happy to see that that girls are breaking stereotypes and just doing what they enjoy doing. *9* Girl aged 11-16

Ads and gender stereotypes

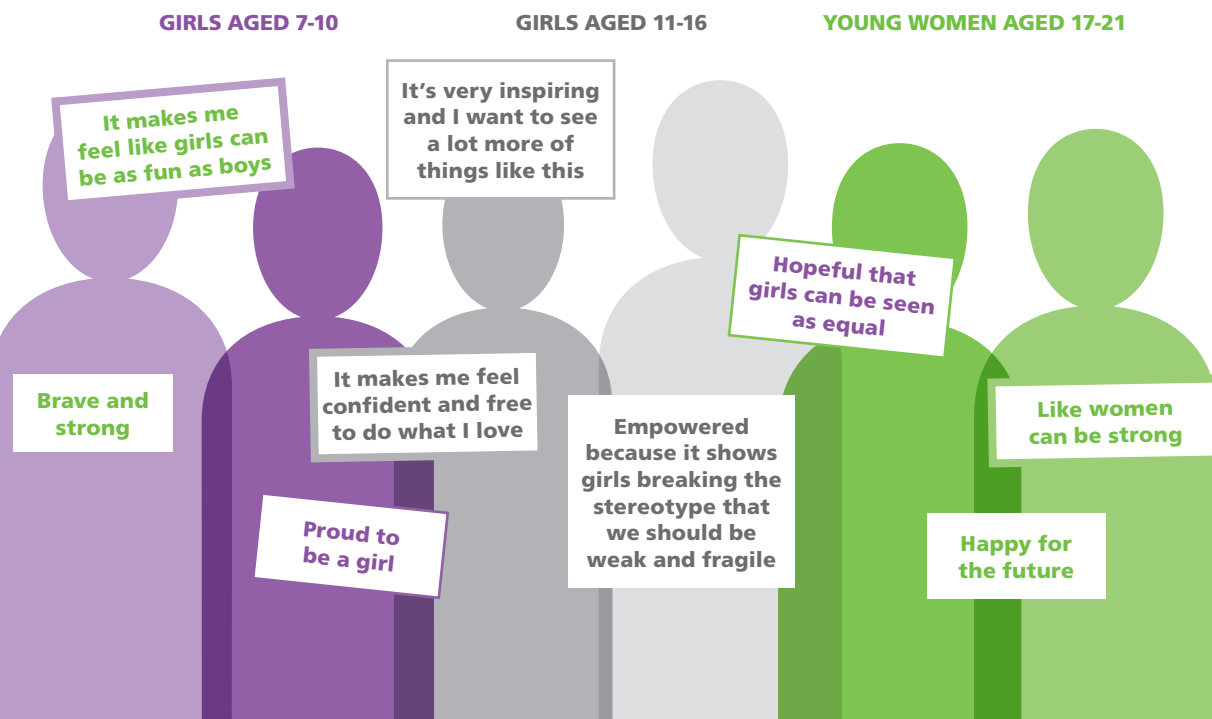
Girls' awareness of adverts that use gender stereotypes



Adverts that challenge gender stereotypes



How adverts that challenge gender stereotypes make girls feel



How adverts that use gender stereotypes make girls feel

GIRLS AGED 7-10

'Disappointed and underestimated - plus I don't like pink!'

'I feel as if the companies are sexist because of what they think girls/boys like. For instance I'm a girl but I like navy blue. It doesn't mean I'm a boy.'

GIRLS AGED 11-16

'Confused and annoyed - women can be just as strong and powerful as men.'

'It makes me feel angry because it is clearly implying that girls are less important and capable than boys.'

YOUNG WOMEN AGED 17-21

'Annoyed because it shows that women are only liked for their appearance.'

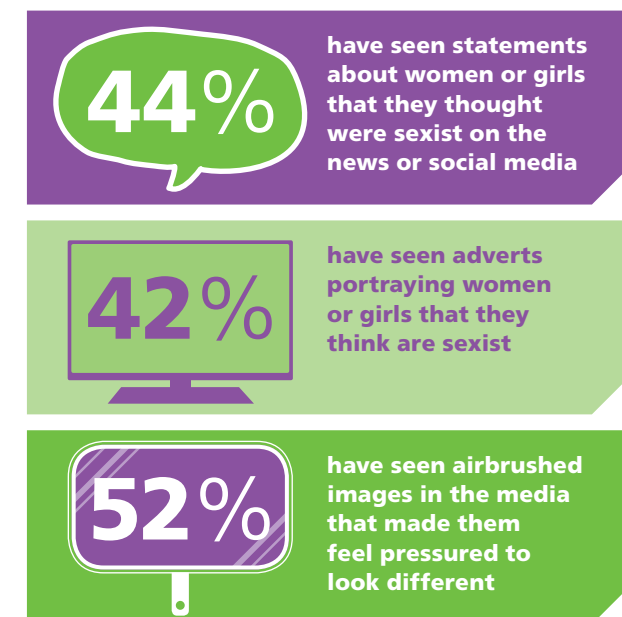
'Kind of like I have to conform and be as perfect as the model but at the same time I know that it's all Photoshopped.'



of girls aged 11-21 have SEEN STEREOTYPICAL IMAGES of men and women in the media in THE PAST WEEK that made them feel LESS CONFIDENT TO DO WHAT THEY WANT

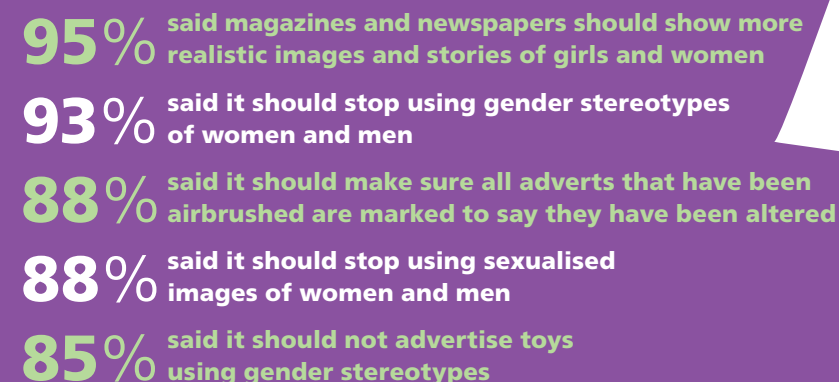
Sexism in the media

What girls have seen in the past week (11-21)



Girls' calls to the advertising industry

What girls want to see (11-21)



↳ Famous women athletes inspire me because they show me that I can do anything that I dream of doing. ↻ Girl aged 11-16

BEING A GIRL: INSPIRATION, WELL-BEING and POLITICS

How do girls see themselves? When asked to describe themselves, the youngest girls (aged 7 to 10) mostly used positive words that give details about their character rather than, for example, their looks. As girls get older, they are less likely to be as positive about themselves. They are more likely to describe themselves as shy or lacking in confidence, and social pressures are more prominent. The oldest group are also more likely to talk about themselves in relation to social groups and identities, and to highlight social pressures. Across the age groups, though, there is a strong underlying theme of resilience despite these pressures and well over half of girls say they are aware of someone at school they can talk to about their mental health.

This chapter highlights some of the challenges some girls and young women face in feeling really good about themselves, and shows how important it is that they know how to access support when they need it and how important positive female role models are for girls when they are growing up.

57%

of girls aged 11-21
don't think politicians
UNDERSTAND
the issues girls and
young women face today



↳ I feel inspired by seeing someone achieve something amazing that's taken courage and determination. ↻ Girl aged 7-10

Two thirds of girls said they were aware of someone at school they could talk to about mental health, while a fifth said they weren't. However, it isn't clear whether girls would feel comfortable using this support: our 2016 report revealed that 54% of girls aged 11 to 21 are put off from seeking help with their mental health because of fear about being judged.

When asked what makes them feel good, girls overwhelmingly said being around friends and family – though for older girls, looking good was important too. Being kind or creative, being outdoors and doing sport all make girls feel good: and these all rank above being online. This could be explained by the number of worries and issues around feeling safe and the pressures girls face online, outlined earlier in the survey. The activities they prioritise offer them a break from these pressures and expectations.

Girls are inspired by role models and seeing other girls and women achieving things, for example seeing women visible in sport and at the Olympics. Girls felt inspired by the achievements of other women who were, in their eyes, empowered as a result of breaking stereotypes and overcoming adversity.

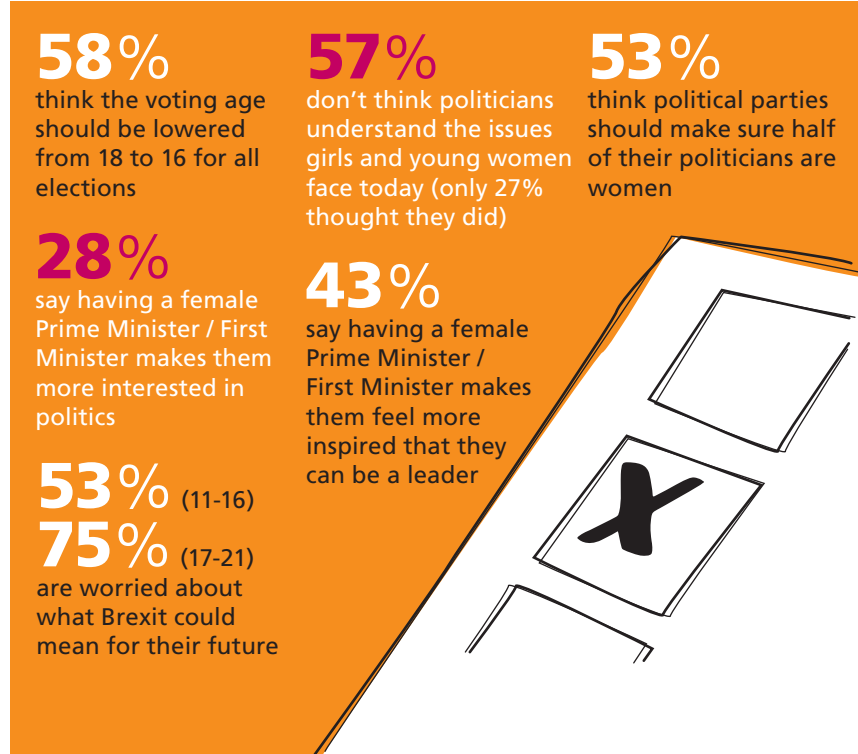
Having a female Prime Minister or First Minister does inspire girls: but it inspires many more to think they could be leaders than to want to enter politics. However, this does not mean that girls are not politically engaged: more than half of girls and young women believe the voting age should be lowered to 16, and many are concerned about the impact of Brexit, increasingly so as they get older. Over half of girls don't think politicians understand the issues they face - this has remained static since 2014 when 57% of girls aged 11-21 said they thought politicians don't listen to the views of girls and young women.

↳ I'm inspired by strong successful girls in STEM. ↻ Young woman aged 17-21



Politics, identities and inspiration

Girls' views on politics (11-21)

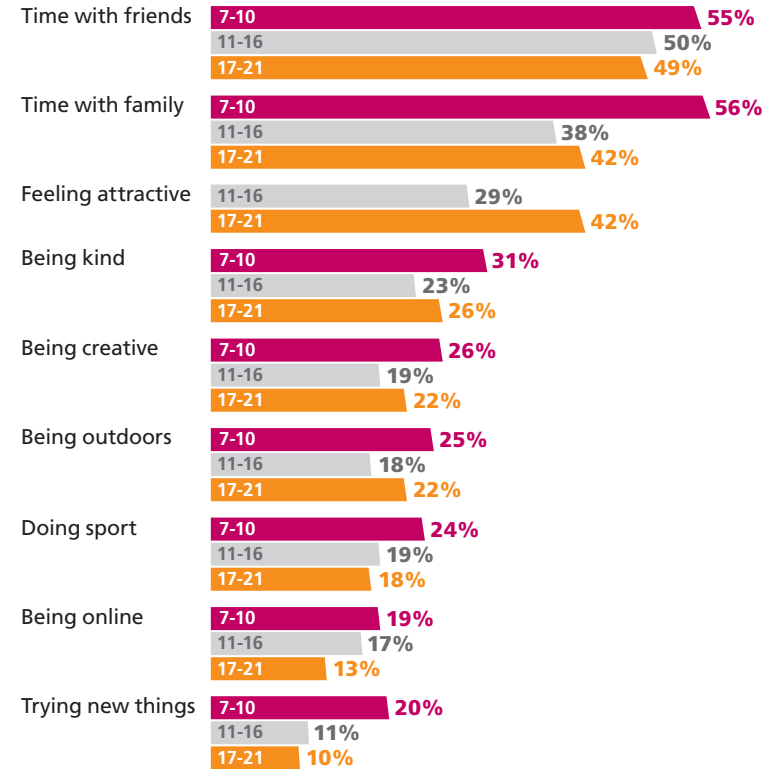


I'm inspired by strong women in politics and female influencers on social media who aren't afraid to defend their opinions and stand up to others.

Young woman aged 17-21

Well-being

What makes girls feel positive



65% of girls aged 11-21 say their school, college or university HAS SOMEONE they can speak to about **MENTAL HEALTH**

How girls describe themselves

I'm a born leader, sporty and a kind friend to others

Confident around friends but not around people I don't know

I am happy most of the time but am worried about the future

I feel upset because of the pressures of having a good body - it's all I see online and it's all people seem to talk about at school

Friendly

'Adventurous, loving and brave'

'Confident, smart, fun, creative and loving'

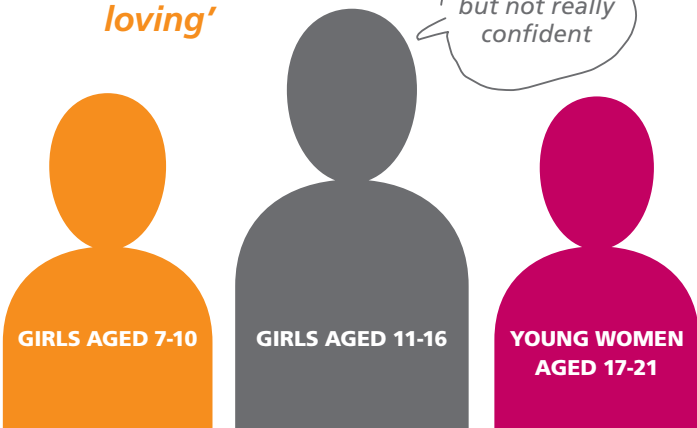
'I like animals, puzzles, maths, electronics and metal inspired music'

Happy but not really confident

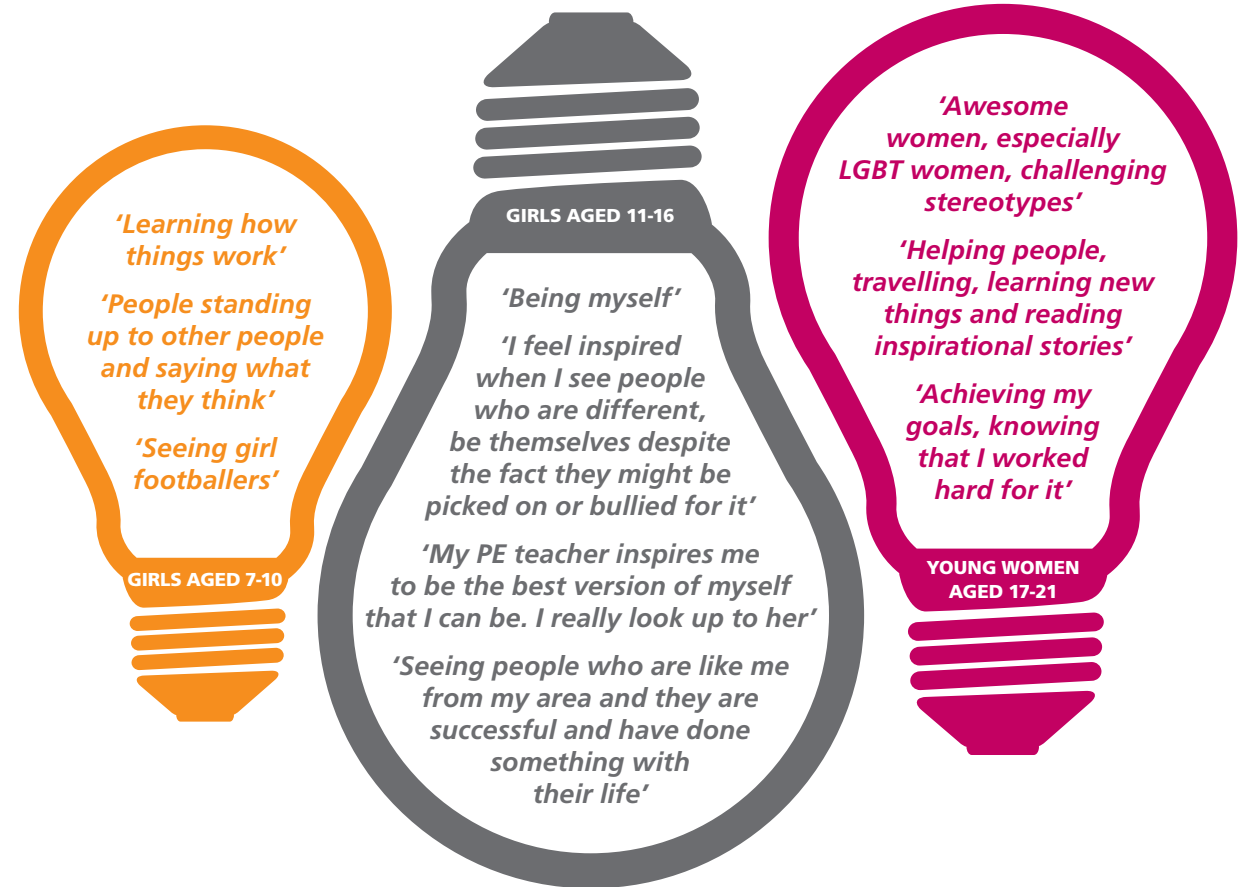
Confident, happy and enjoying each day

'Independent, ambitious and open-minded'

I am really sporty and girly at the same time



What makes girls feel inspired



WE ARE GIRLGUIDING

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We give them a space to have fun.

WE ARE FOR ALL GIRLS

We are for all girls and young women, whatever their background and circumstances. We offer them fun, exciting activities and the chance to make lifelong friends. You'll find us in many communities, helping to give girls a head start in life and encouraging them to be happy, self-confident and curious about the world they live in and the difference they can make.

WE GIVE GIRLS THEIR OWN SPACE

We give girls a place where they can really be themselves with other girls and share the experience of growing up as a girl in today's world. We provide a safe, non-judgemental environment where girls can explore the issues they care about while having lots of fun, enjoying new experiences and learning vital skills.

WE GIVE GIRLS A VOICE

We give girls the confidence, skills and information to make informed decisions. We offer a supportive, inclusive and exciting environment where they can reach their own conclusions about the world. We show them how they can speak out and take positive action to improve their lives and the lives of others.

WE CHANGE AS THE LIVES OF GIRLS CHANGE

We are relevant to today's girls because we listen to them and constantly evolve and adapt what we offer them without losing what makes us uniquely us. We provide support, comfort and friendship in what can often seem a complex world for girls as they grow up.



METHODOLOGY

Girlguiding commissioned ChildWise, leading specialists in research with children and young people, to conduct the Girls' Attitudes Survey. A total of 1,906 girls and young women aged between 7 and 21 took part in the survey from across the UK, from both inside and outside Girlguiding.

The majority of questions were completed online, with 7 to 16 year olds doing this in school, while the older age group were interviewed via an online panel. Additional face-to-face interviews were carried out with young women who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET), to ensure that this potentially marginalised group was fully represented.

The questionnaire was adapted to be suitable for different age groups, 7 to 10, 11 to 16 and 17 to 21 years. Core questions were asked across the full age range, so that changes in attitudes as girls get older can be tracked.

Fieldwork took place during March to May 2017.

Where data does not total 100%, the remainder answered 'don't know'.

Sample details

Data was weighted at analysis to correct any imbalance in the final sample across the age range and within geographical region.

Total	7-8 yrs	9-10 yrs	11-13 yrs	14-16 yrs	17-18 yrs	19-21 yrs
1906	273	316	345	306	312	354

	England	Wales	Scotland	N I	Urban	Rural
	1309	209	237	151	1487	419

7-16s	School performance:	Outstanding / Good	Satisfactory / Poor
1240		760	310

17-21s	ABC1	C2DE	At school / Uni / FE	Working	NEET
666	319	332	450	113	103

ANNEX

Girls and their perceptions of their parents' worries online

Girls' worries online (%)	7-10	11-16	17-21
Threats from strangers	64	43	26
People pretending to be people they're not (7-10) / Grooming (when someone lies about their age or who they are to get closer to a child and gets a child to do something they don't want to do) (11-21)	61	45	26
How pictures of me might be used by other people	40	34	37
Seeing rude images or pictures (7-12) / Seeing unwanted pornography (13-21)	53	35	24
Bullying from people I know	50	36	18
Comparing myself and my life to others (11-21)	-	30	40
Being distracted from school work because of time spent online	23	32	44
How I look in photos (11-21)	-	30	35
How universities or future employers might judge me from my social media profile (11-21)	-	25	35
Sexual harassment (for example receiving unwanted comments or images/videos of a sexual nature) (13-21)	-	23	32
Feeling I need to check my phone first thing in the morning and last thing at night (11-21)	-	22	26
How to spot fake news (11-21)	-	11	19
Number of friends, followers and likes I have on social media (e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter) (11-21)	-	13	10

Perceptions of parents' worries online (%)	7-10	11-16	17-21
Threats from strangers	65	61	52
People pretending to be people they're not (7-10) / Grooming (when someone lies about their age or who they are to get closer to a child and gets a child to do something they don't want to do) (11-21)	61	65	52
Seeing rude images or pictures (7-12) / Seeing unwanted pornography (13-21)	65	50	30
Being distracted from school work because of time spent online	38	52	47
Bullying from people I know	52	51	34
Sexual harassment (for example receiving unwanted comments or images/videos of a sexual nature) (13-21)	-	36	51
How pictures of me might be used by other people	47	26	31
How universities or future employers might judge me from my social media profile (11-21)	-	19	24
Feeling I need to check my phone first thing in the morning and last thing at night (11-21)	-	12	13
Comparing myself and my life to others (11-21)	-	13	11
How I look in photos (11-21)	-	8	5
Number of friends, followers and likes I have on social media (e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter) (11-21)	-	6	3
How to spot fake news (11-16)	-	6	4



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

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