



## GRANT SUMMARIES

## MOVING GIRLS INTO CONFIDENCE

### OUR APPROACH

Did you know that between the ages of 9 and 13, girls' self-confidence plummets? At the same time, their rates of depression soar. When girls start school, they are more likely than boys to do well in reading, writing, and forming friendships. But as girls move into adolescence, they often become overwhelmed. Sadly, more than half of all girls say they wish they were someone else.

Every girl should believe in herself and realize she matters. Now, thanks to you, girls across Canada will learn to dream big and realize their full potential. Your gift to the Canadian Women's Foundation supports 22 community organizations in delivering innovative girls' programs in 44 communities across Canada. Together, over the next 4 years, we will invest \$794,756 in direct services to girls. In addition, community organizations that work with girls will receive additional supports to improve their organizational capacity-building skills.

### OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS

This work is made possible by the generous support of our donors and partners:

#### Girls' Fund Donors and Partners

- Always
- Aragon Development Corporation
- Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.
- Canadian Progress Club Elevate
- Cenovus
- Mary Jane Crooks and Claire Crooks
- Dr. Lori Egger and Stephen Laut
- Julie and Rick George
- Lynda Hamilton
- The Haynes-Connell Foundation at the Toronto Community Foundation
- Andrea Miller
- Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP
- RBC Foundation (founding partner)
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- Ann Southam Empowerment Fund at Canadian Women's Foundation (founding partner)
- Symcor
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#### Founding Donor of Mentoring for Girls

Nancy Baron of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation

#### Additional Founding Partner of the Girls' Fund

Zukerman Family Foundation

And thank you to our many other corporate partners, individual donors, and private family foundations across Canada for empowering girls!

## NATIONAL

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### Girls' Fund Network

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Disabled Women's Network / Réseau d'action des femmes handicapées with Girls Action Foundation, *Montreal*

DAWN-RAFH Canada and Girls Action Foundation (GAF) are collaborating to create accessible programming for girls with disabilities and Deaf girls. This approach combines DAWN-RAFH Canada's expertise in disability inclusion with the intersectional, feminist, and popular educational methods practiced by Girls Action Foundation. GAF will apply an inclusive model to its programs, then share it with organizations across Canada, in both French and English. A key part of this project is documenting the GAF change process, sharing best practices with other organizations, and mentoring them through the process.

## ALBERTA

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### Project Footprint

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Calgary Immigrant Women's Association, *Calgary*

This project empowers immigrant girls aged 9 to 13 through environmental and outdoor activities. With the help of community partners, the project will raise girls' awareness of environmental issues, women's leadership and how they can get involved in making a difference. Girls will develop confidence and leadership skills through weekly girls' group sessions held at two schools, as well as mentoring activities twice a month. The mentorship component will help girls to apply their skills and lead mini-projects in their schools. An annual field trip will offer participants the opportunity to experience the Canadian wilderness.

### Girls' Club for Immigrant and Refugee Girls

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Multicultural Family Resource Society, *Edmonton*

This weekly girls' club offers immigrant and refugee girls the chance to explore identity and belonging in a safe and culturally-sensitive environment. The goal is for the girls to develop self-confidence and tools they can use to navigate growing up in two cultures. Participants will strengthen their critical-thinking skills, have leadership opportunities, and benefit from a community of support. Building on girls' personal strengths and participation, youth leaders will guide activities that examine racialization, decolonization, body image, sexual health, media representation, and cultural and gender stereotypes. The program incorporates these topics in activities including theatre, photo-voice, a collective kitchen, as well as physical activities. Throughout the year, the girls will work on a project that expresses their story of identity and belonging using film, photo/art exhibits, spoken word poetry, 'zines, or theatre skits. These will be presented at the year-end celebration.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

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### Circles of Care - Circles of Courage

**\$100,000 over 4 years**

Canadian Mental Health Association - Cowichan Valley Branch with Malahat First Nation, *Duncan*

This program encourages Malahat Nation girls to grow up as strong, culturally proud, and active community members. Through the guidance of Coast Salish Elders and through creative arts, the girls learn how to apply traditional teachings to their own lives. Building on the strength of First Nation communities to care for one another, First Nation women play a key role as mentors, helping the girls to develop their self-esteem, resilience, and inner strength.

**Strong Girls of Inlailawatash**

**\$80,000 over 4 years**

Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, Community Development Dept., *North Vancouver*

The Strong Girls of Inlailawatash program provides a vital safe space within the communities for girls to foster healthy relationships amongst themselves and with others through weekly gatherings. Activities are tailored to the girls' interests, with a focus on building resilience, skills development, mentorship, and sacred teachings on the gifts and roles of being a woman. Historically, Coast Salish women have been the leaders, knowledge-keepers, and life-givers within their communities. By strengthening women and girls, this program is helping to strengthen whole communities.

**Girls Have Game**

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Options Community Services Society, *Surrey*

Faced with cultural and language barriers, newcomer and refugee girls may be unable to access community activities that promote physical activity. Girls Have Game reduces these barriers, providing guided weekly activities in an inclusive, non-competitive environment. The girls have the opportunity to try different sports and physical activities, strengthen their personal and social skills, and develop awareness of the long-term benefits of exercise and play. The program aims to improve the health and well-being of immigrant and refugee girls, boosting their sense of empowerment, and helping to ease their transition into Canadian culture.

## MANITOBA

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**SADI Girls' Group Mentoring**

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre with Sagkeeng First Nation, *Pinawa*

In two rural communities, this mentorship program offers girls age 10 and 11 a safe and supervised space to build healthy relationships with older peers. Through partnerships with local schools, the program runs groups that organize discussions, events, and other activities. In Pine Falls, activities focus on issues like gender equality, empowerment, and leadership, with the goal of enhancing the girls' social skills and self-esteem. In Sagkeeng First Nation, activities draw on similar themes and explore and celebrate the role of history and cultural teachings through the involvement of Elders. Small mentoring groups are led by girls aged 15 and up.

## NEW BRUNSWICK

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**Go Girls! Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds**

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saint John, Inc., *Saint John*

This school-based group mentoring program encourages girls aged 10 to 14 to develop positive habits around physical activity, balanced eating, and self-esteem. In the program, eight girls are matched with two mentors for 14 weeks. Each of the weekly sessions has a topic focus, such as goal-setting, dealing with bullying, decision-making, and leadership. These topics are all related to the key themes of active living, balanced eating, and feeling good about oneself. The goal is to help girls develop a positive sense of self and set them on a path to reach their full potential. After the 14-week Go Girls! Program, an enhanced mentoring component continues weekly for the rest of the school year. The groups participate in less-

structured activities that build on the initial themes. The goal is to keep building the girls' resilience, knowledge, skills, relationships, and confidence. Monthly outings complement the weekly sessions.

## NOVA SCOTIA

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### Express Our Diversity

**\$120,000 over 4 years**

Second Story Women's Centre, Lunenburg

Express Our Diversity empowers girls and students who identify as female to develop a healthy sense of themselves as individuals, and as members of diverse communities. The first part of the program is Express Yourself, a weekly session that focuses on confidence-building and self-expression for participants age 9 to 13. It is offered in four schools to students in Grades 4-7. These sessions help participants to identify themselves within their communities, and to determine the strengths they can contribute. Both programs focus on issues including social expectations, self-esteem, body image and sexuality, social media and pornography, healthy relationships, and decision-making.

## NUNAVUT

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### Northern Lights Girls' Club

**\$159,944 over 4 years**

YWCA Agvvik Nunavut, Iqaluit

In the Northern Lights Girls' Club, girls age 9 to 13 have the opportunity to explore their culture, embrace their identities, address gender stereotypes, and celebrate what it means to be a girl. In the program, girls learn about gender equality and culture with the help of mentors in their community. By engaging in traditional activities and learning from Elders, participants celebrate Inuit language, culture, history, and tradition.

## ONTARIO

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### Divas Young Women's Media Group

**\$114,128 over 4 years**

Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre, Toronto

The Divas Media Group increases girls' media literacy by exploring representations of femininity, the gender binary, and the limitations of gender stereotypes. In weekly meetings, participants discuss feminism, sexism and other social justice issues, and create radio and TV productions that are aired in the local community. These activities give participants the opportunity to improve their public-speaking skills, and learn about digital audio engineering. The program also incorporates creativity through spoken word and arts and crafts workshops. Along with boosting media literacy, the program aims to increase girls' confidence overall, enhance their understanding of consent in sexual relationships, and of LGBTQ+ identities.

### The Bloggurls

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

North York Community House, Toronto

The Bloggurls mentoring program builds on the success of the Village Bloggurls Program, a weekly girls' leadership and media literacy/media production program in Lotherton Village and Westminster- Branson. The core program provides girls in two communities with creative opportunities to address issues including systemic violence, representation of women in the media, and societal expectations.

The program also helps girls develop skills in leadership, media literacy, and critical thinking. Activities like writing blog, 'zine, and social media posts provide a platform for expression, reflection, connection, and support. Using this approach and model, North York Community House plans to replicate this program at Charles H. Best Middle School in the Bathurst-Finch community. The program mentors provide additional support and technological expertise, and inspire the participants to go further with their ideas and innovative projects.

**The Girls' Mentoring Program**  
Sarnia Lambton Rebound, *Sarnia*

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

This mentoring program matches girls aged 9 to 13 with adult mentors, creating relationships that foster positive life skills. The program aims to reach girls living in rural county areas, as well as immigrants and newcomers. In three-hour sessions held every other week, the girls learn to find their voices, advocate for themselves, and address equality and inclusion. Participants are encouraged to dream big, to work together to accomplish their goals, and to pursue their vision of success. There is also an opportunity for older girls to act as mentors to support new program participants.

**TechGyrls, TechGyrls 2.0, STEAM Pilot, and STEM Mentoring**  
YWCA Cambridge, *Cambridge*

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

TechGyrls is a girl-led, hands-on, exploratory, and experiential STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) program that is designed to foster an enduring interest in STEM. It opens girls' eyes to the opportunities available to them in the STEM fields. The goals of the mentoring program are to increase girls' and mentors' sense of self-worth; to broaden girls' understanding of the STEM field; and to inspire girls to be self-motivated in a supportive and encouraging environment. With their mentors, girls undertake experiments and field trips, as well as long-term projects.

**The Speak Up Arts Program**  
Community Arts and Heritage Education Program (CAHEP), *Thunder Bay*

**\$144,000 over 4 years**

This program engages girls in weekly artist-led projects in both school and community settings in Thunder Bay. The goal is to empower girls who face social barriers through activities including dance, drama, literary arts, music, new media, urban art, and visual art. The program approach honours Northern Ontario and First Nations views of leadership, which celebrate those whose voices may not always be heard. The program will involve 7th- and 8th-grade students from one school for the first two years, with the long-term goal of expanding to a second school.

**CRC Girls Program**  
Community Resource Centre (Killaloe) Inc., *Killaloe*

**\$132,260 over 4 years**

Through weekly sessions, this program empowers girls in rural Renfrew County to explore new skills, take on challenges, and celebrate their strengths. Girls aged 9 to 13 will have the opportunity to participate in physical activities, games, media-awareness activities, and art projects. The programming, which is grounded in a feminist framework, consists of three 14-week sessions, as well as summer activities.

## PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

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**The Empowering Girls Project**  
The Boys and Girls Club of Summerside, *Summerside*

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

In a safe, supportive space, girls aged 12 to 13 build healthy relationships, develop confidence, and learn how to identify and pursue their dreams. Through this 16-week interactive program, girls are encouraged to discover their strengths and abilities. There is a strong focus on helping each girl to find her voice and become comfortable sharing her ideas. The girls are empowered to put their visions into action and make

a difference in their community through girl-led leadership projects. The program includes workshops/discussions, guest speakers, social activities, field trips, as well as creative activities like art, music, and dance.

## QUÉBEC

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### The Girls' Program

**\$124,000 over 4 years**

Action jeunesse St-Pie X de Longueuil, *Longueuil*

The Girls' Program helps girls to develop media-literacy skills through activities and discussion. It aims to address the fact that girls are bombarded with messages that negatively influence their emotional, social, and physical well-being. Girls are encouraged to envision a world that is positive and inclusive by using various tools to create their own media. In group activities, girls critically analyze media and learn how to use it to share their own messages with the world.

### Activités scientifiques pour filles

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Les Scientifines, *Montreal*

This after-school program offers girls aged 8 to 12 a fun, engaging way to learn about science and technology. Through group activities, projects, and events, girls learn about STEM and practice research and problem-solving skills. Throughout the program, girls learn to work together, develop confidence, debunk gender stereotypes, and celebrate the opportunities for women and girls in STEM fields. The program is offered five times a week.

## SASKATCHEWAN

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### Girls' Group

**\$140,000 over 4 years**

Cornerstone Family and Youth, *Carlyle*

Girls' Group is a group mentoring program that offers weekly meetings, events, field trips, community-service projects, and confidence-building activities over the course of the school year. The program begins by bringing mentors and mentees together in a large group for guided activities with facilitators. Later, the facilitators divide the group into smaller peer-led mentoring groups. These groups meet weekly until June with the guidance of the facilitator. The smaller mentoring groups begin to develop relationships that last many years. The groups participate in team-building activities and group projects. The goal of the program is to ensure each girl feels supported by her peers, has strong self-esteem, and a sense of belonging within her community.

### Girl Power

**\$160,000 over 4 years**

Sturgeon Lake Central School, *Sturgeon Lake*

This innovative after-school program helps Sturgeon Lake First Nation girls navigate risk factors including sexual violence and abuse, parental neglect, and teenage pregnancy. This program aims to break this cycle and help girls aged 9-13 to achieve their full potential. The girls' self-esteem is promoted through a variety of cultural, educational, and recreational activities. These activities build on participants' individual and collective strengths and help them find their voices. The program creates safe spaces, promotes healthy lifestyle choices, and offers role-modeling in critical areas. The goal is to empower girls to think positively about themselves, their community, and their future.

YUKON

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**The Young Women of Wisdom Program**  
Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, *Whitehorse*

**\$144,692 over 4 years**

This weekly program provides a safe space for girls aged 9 to 13 to learn from Aboriginal teachings and develop a stronger connection to the land and to connect with women mentors from the community. The Circle of Courage medicine wheel serves as a teaching guide, and specific activities include traditional craft-making, facilitated discussions, sharing circles, traditional teachings, fishing, and canoeing. Facilitators and Elders work with the girls to address barriers in the community, and how to use personal strengths to overcome them. During the winter the program runs in the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre hall; during the summer the focus is on outdoor traditional First Nation activities.