

HEART (Helping Everyone Achieve Respect Together) Peer-Educator Program is offered to girls ages 14 to 18 and is a girl-driven, asset based health and sexuality education program focused on expanding and improving access to crucial, unbiased teen health and sexuality information and resources for underserved youth, so that teens can take responsibility for their own sexual health. HEART implements a unique research-based model of peer education that revolves around one-on-one peer interactions that provide information and support, and optimizes girls' positive influence on their peers through one-on-one conversations in their own informal social networks.



Upon joining HEART, participants attend an intensive training. Participants meet weekly for additional skill building, work-shops, sisterhood activities, and to continuously learn the latest facts, info and news on teen health, sexuality, relationships, drugs, violence, depression, peer pressure and other trends. HEART participants also attend field trips, conferences, and an annual retreat.

As with all Girls Inc. programs, HEART takes a "whole girl" approach to development and the program intentionally supports girls in building skills, confidence, self-esteem, and their sense of what is possible.

How Girls Inc. HEART program is meeting girls' needs:

Girls Inc. conducted a survey of more than 1,800 Alameda County girls in spring 2003. Only 64% of the female respondents reported they have received "good information" about sexual health issues. The study found high rates of risky behavior:

- 84% of sexually active girls report using contraception, but only 62% say they use it every time; and another 9% say they never use contraception.
- Of girls who say they are sexually active, over 18% report they have been pregnant; 7% of sexually active girls say they have children.
- 26% of girls who are sexually active report feeling pressured "the first time". The HEART program serves to address this by providing knowledge empowering girls and their peers to make healthy decisions.



Girls Incorporated®
of Alameda County

Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and boldSM

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Impact of HEART:

The objectives of the HEART program are:

- At least 85% of Peer Educators and Mentors will demonstrate increased knowledge of: reproductive anatomy, pregnancy, HIV and sexually transmitted infections, birth control, community resources for teens, and common myths about reproductive health, sexual behavior, and pregnancy prevention.
- Peer Educators and Mentors will complete a total of at least 650 peer contacts each year.
- At least 80% of Peer Educators will increase their leadership skills.

How to join HEART:

HEART is offered at Skyline High School in Oakland and Girls Inc. Headquarters. For more information contact the Program Coordinator at 510.357.5515 ext. 237.



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