

Operation SMART (Science, Math & Relevant Technology)

Program is a Girls Inc. national identity program that encourages girls to get dirty, experiment, and work in teams to discover how math and science relate to their everyday lives. The Operation SMART approach is to assume girls are interested and successful in science and math and to offer activities in an informal, youth development setting. This approach allows girls to build confidence and imagine science and math careers as attractive options for the future. At Girls Inc. of Alameda County, Operation SMART participants meet two to four times weekly to participate in fun, interactive activities that creatively integrate math and science in subjects like engineering, chemistry, environmental studies, game theory, computer science, and biology.

Since research shows girls' interest and *belief* in their abilities in science and math wane during the late elementary and early middle school years, Operation SMART intentionally targets girls in third through seventh grade. As with all Girls Inc. programs, Operation SMART takes a "whole-girl" approach and invites girls to take positive risks, ask questions, find their voices, and expand their sense of what is possible.

Girls Inc. of Alameda County offers a continuum of age-appropriate programs for girls ages 5-18. Operation SMART is the third of the five continuum programs. As each supports girls in building skills in a variety of areas, girls are encouraged to join in kindergarten and continue through their completion of high school.

How Girls Inc. Operation SMART program is meeting girls' needs:

Girls are much more likely than boys to say they don't like science or math, and significantly less likely to pursue careers in these fields. SMART creatively integrates math and science into subjects like architecture, the environment, and computer science. Girls learn that careers involving science, math, and technology are, in fact, a real option and a lot of fun. This program's "smarter" approach encourages girls to risk mistakes, increases their confidence and makes science and math more attractive options for their futures.

- Women constitute 45% of the U.S. workforce, but hold just 12% of science and engineering jobs.
- Despite substantial gains in the number of women pursuing graduate degrees in the sciences, women currently earn only 23.6% of all Ph.D.s in math and computer science, 26.7% in the physical sciences, and only 18.3% in engineering. (National Council for Research on Women).

Impact of Operation SMART:

The objectives of the SMART program are:

- To have more than 120 girls in grades 3-7 participate in the Girls Inc. school year SMART program
- For at least 80% of participants to demonstrate growth in terms of achieving new skills and knowledge in physics, chemistry, math, and engineering

**girls
inc.**

Girls Incorporated®
of Alameda County

Inspiring all girls to be
strong, smart, and boldSM

CONTACT US
(510) 357-5515
www.girlsinc-alameda.org
info@girlsinc-alameda.org

- For at least 90% of participants to indicate that the program increases their interest and builds their confidence in math and science

How to learn more about Operation SMART:

Operation SMART is currently held at selected elementary and middle school sites in Oakland and San Leandro. To learn where Operation SMART is offered or for more information contact the Operation SMART Manager at (510) 357.5515 ext. 238.