



Girls' Mental Health in Alabama

Commissioned by the Girl Scout Councils Serving Alabama

One in three high school girls in Alabama has seriously considered attempting suicide.



Nearly half (46%) of high school girls felt sad or hopeless in the last year.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, CDC, 2021, Alabama

The U.S. Surgeon General declared youth mental health a national crisis in 2023. But girls and boys are experiencing this crisis differently: high school girls were **3x more likely** to have seriously considered attempting suicide (32%) compared to boys (10.5%). Most concerning is the worsening trend: in the last 10 years, the percentage of high school girls who made a plan to carry out suicide nearly doubled from 14% to 26%.

- Research shows that girls-only environments can help reduce feelings of hopelessness in adolescent girls compared to co-ed environments.
- Training, such as Youth Mental Health First Aid, can support adults in understanding the signs and symptoms of a mental health crisis and offer support.

50%
increase among girls in Alabama showing signs of depression compared to 10 years ago.

Supportive Adults for Positive Mental Health

The role of a supportive adult is critical for positive youth mental health. Schools in Alabama are not equipped to provide appropriate interventions: as an example, the American Counseling Association recommends a ratio of 250 students per one counselor in a school setting. In Alabama, the ratio is 389:1. Organizations like Girl Scouts have a critical role to play in fostering adult role models for girls.