

About Girls to Women Mentoring Hawaii

Helping Girls in Hawaii to thrive together

Girls To Women Mentoring Hawaii is a non-profit organization with a mission to support, inspire and empower adolescent girls in Hawaii through school based group mentoring circles. Our circles offer girls the opportunity to develop the skills, self-esteem, resilience, relationships and resources from within themselves and the indigenous culture and environment around them. We give girls the confidence and tools to rise above the many challenges they face and grow into healthy, empowered, vibrant young women.

GTWMH was formed in October 2017 by a group of women with a vision to share the transformative benefits of sitting women's circles to help Hawaii's teenage girls to navigate their journey into womanhood. Some of us were fortunate to have trusted adults to turn to for encouragement as teens but all of us believe that every girl would benefit from having a safe and creative space for self-discovery and empowering peer relationships, where she receives encouragement, inspiration, affirmation and support to define and grow into her unique definition of womanhood.

Our girls circles are guided by a trained senior facilitator and two or three young adult Mentors. Our programming is grounded in a foundation in gender-specific, evidence-based experiential learning which had been proven to address the needs and challenges of Adolescent Girls. In addition, what is unique to our program is that the girls are invited to co-create the program by defining the priorities of needs and support from their own experience and that a core value of our program is to support the girls to discover and develop the resources both internal and external that are available to them from connecting with the Hawaiian culture and environment.

We are delighted to be partnering with the University of Hawaii department of sociology for this program whose students will have the opportunity to participate in our circles both as Mentors and to undertake research to ensure that we meet the specific needs the girls identify for themselves and connect girls with inspiration from the cultural and environmental resources of Hawaii.

Our first circles will be offered in January of 2019 for middle and high school girls in the Puna region on the Big Island of Hawaii. In addition to the mentors from UH, we will be recruiting women from the Community.

We will be drawing upon evidence-based models with proven outcomes to offer girls circles in schools where they can experience emotional safety, encouragement, support and inspiration through healthy relationships with trained adult mentors, each other and most importantly, themselves.

Our circles focus on three essential building blocks for growing strong, courageous, confident girls: long-lasting adult mentor relationships, positive peer interactions and an affirming environment that supports girls to recognize their own inherent strengths and build on them.

Please consider helping us to reach our goal and make a difference that will last beyond our lifetime. ***Suicide is the leading cause of death for the adolescents aged between 10 and 14 in Hawaii.***

A 2017 survey of 9th-12th grade girls in Hawaii found
33.4% had felt sad or hopeless
24.8% had been bullied on school property
16.2% experienced sexual violence by anyone
19.8% had seriously considered attempting suicide
9.8% had attempted suicide one or more times

Hawaii Multiple Cause of Death File (MCOF), 2009-2013, National Center for Health Statistics