What Matters?

Key insights from a survey among New Zealand girls.

Introduction

GirlGuiding New Zealand is a leading organisation for girls and young women in New Zealand, providing opportunities for growth and development, and enabling girls and young women to reach their full potential and make a difference in the world. An important part of being a girl-led organisation is the ability to engage with New Zealand girls - to listen to them, understand their needs and what's important to them. To be able to confidently and accurately advocate on behalf of New Zealand girls, GirlGuiding New Zealand surveyed 3,324 girls across New Zealand aged 10 to 17 years (between 30 April and 18 July 2018) using independent market research company Buzz Channel - to understand what matters to New Zealand girls.

Role Models & Admirable Qualities

★ The personal qualities New Zealand girls admire most in female role models are setting a good example, being self-confident and proud of who they are, compassionate and kind.

★ Most frequently mentioned by girls as a female they admire, or believe is a good role model, is their mother - mentioned by three in ten girls (31%).

★ Girls spoke of their mothers as being compassionate, supportive, encouraging and setting a good example, as well as being giving and hard-working.

> *"Because she is confident about herself and doesn't care what other people think."*

> *"I admire her because she is proud to be herself."*

> *"My mum is the most compassionate and committed person I know. She has so much love in her heart and is never afraid to share that love."*
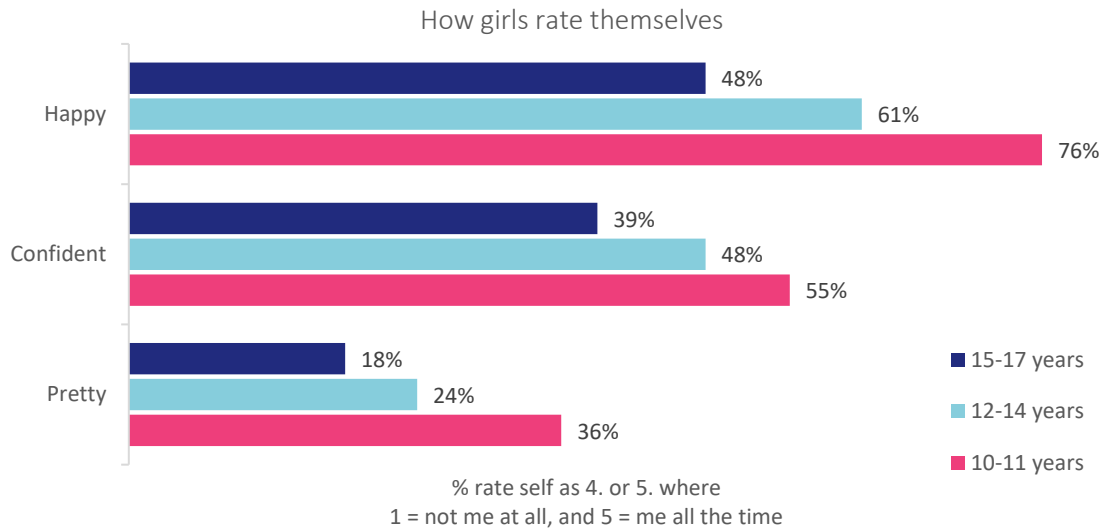
> *"She (mum) is one of the most caring people I have ever met. No matter what's going on in her life, she always puts others ahead of herself. Her kindness, determination and focus, is so admirable to me."*

Important Personal Qualities

★ The two qualities girls feel it's most important to be are:
   o Accepting of everyone (53%)
   o Standing up for what you believe in (49%)

★ Following this, being kind, happy and hard-working were the most important attributes next selected.

★ The attributes rated relatively low in importance by girls were:
   o Being smart (4%)
   o Good at solving problems (3%)
   o Pretty (2%)
   o Good at sport (2%)
   o Popular (1%)

★ Compared to the 2016 What Matters survey, a significantly higher proportion of girls believe being kind is one of the most important things to be (37% compared to 31% in 2016), and less girls selected being happy as one of the most important things to be (31% compared to 40% in 2016).

★ When asked to rate themselves on the same qualities, most girls (approximately 8 in 10) rated themselves as being friendly, accepting of everyone and kind all or most of the time. Very few girls believe they don't have these attributes.

★ The two attributes girls rated themselves lowest on were:
   o Popular - 21% gave a rating of 4 or 5
   o Pretty - 19% gave a rating of 4 or 5
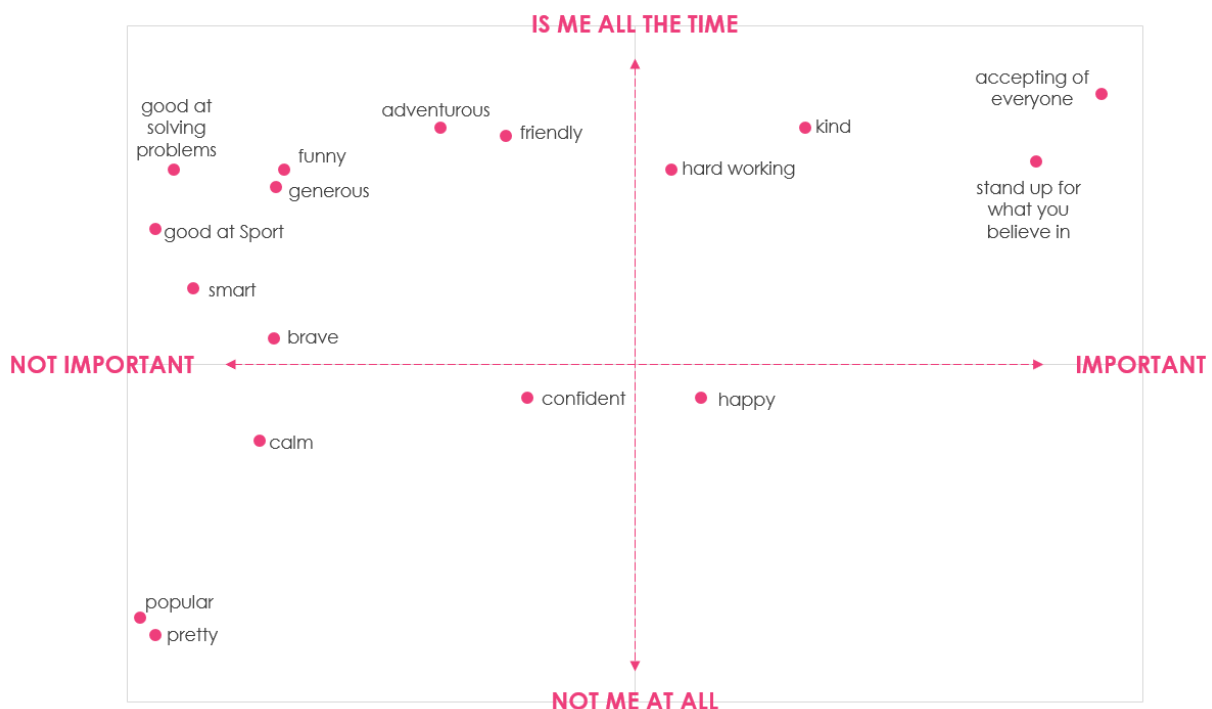
- ★ Girls' perceptions of themselves as being happy, confident and pretty decrease as they get older, with significantly less girls aged 15-17 years seeing themselves this way, compared with younger girls aged 10-12 years.

How girls rate themselves

Happy	15-17 years: 48%
	12-14 years: 61%
	10-11 years: 76%
Confident	15-17 years: 39%
	12-14 years: 48%
	10-11 years: 55%
Pretty	15-17 years: 18%
	12-14 years: 24%
	10-11 years: 36%

Legend:
- ■ 15-17 years
- ■ 12-14 years
- ■ 10-11 years

% rate self as 4. or 5. where
1 = not me at all, and 5 = me all the time

What's Important to Girls

- ★ Spending time with friends (79%) and doing well at school (71%) are the two most important activities in the lives of New Zealand girls, followed closely by family gatherings (59%). This ties in with the things that girls most worry or care about being doing well at school (43%), what their future will look like (39%), and friends and/or family feeling sad or being hurt (35%).
- ★ Around a quarter of girls worry or care about being judged and/or feeling sad or depressed.
- ★ The two most common things girls worry or care about in the news are gender equality (32%) and cruelty to animals (30%). Stories in the news about cruelty to animals was mentioned significantly more by younger girls aged 10-11 years (52%).

Issues Girls Face

- ★ Most girls agreed with statements around pressures today's girls face, particularly feeling pressure to look good in life and on social media, body types in the media, and judgement from others, particularly girls aged 12 years and over.
- ★ Eight in ten girls aged 10-17 years felt they had been discriminated against at some point in their life. Results show this incidence increases with age.

Incidence of girls who feel they have ever been discriminated against

15-17 years	85%
12-14 years	75%
10-11 years	40%
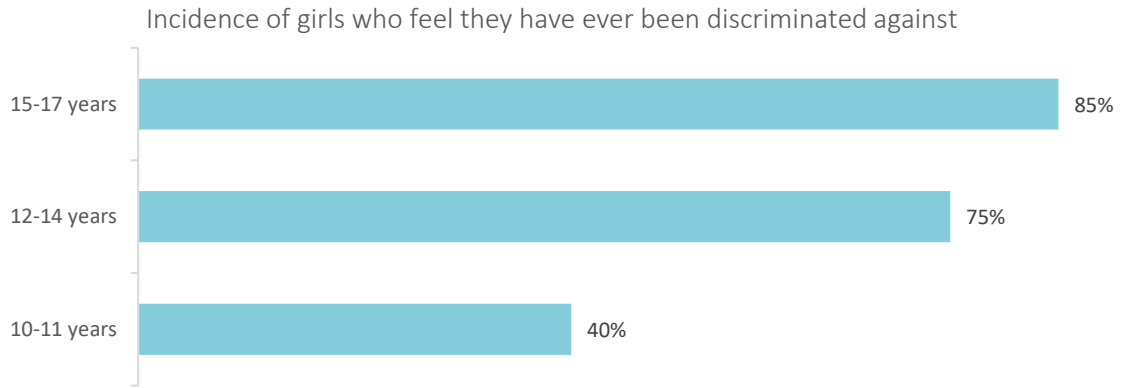
★ Six in ten girls feel they have been discriminated against for their physical appearance.

★ Girls also felt they had been discriminated against because of gender, age, mental illness, race, class, culture, religion, sexuality, and disability.
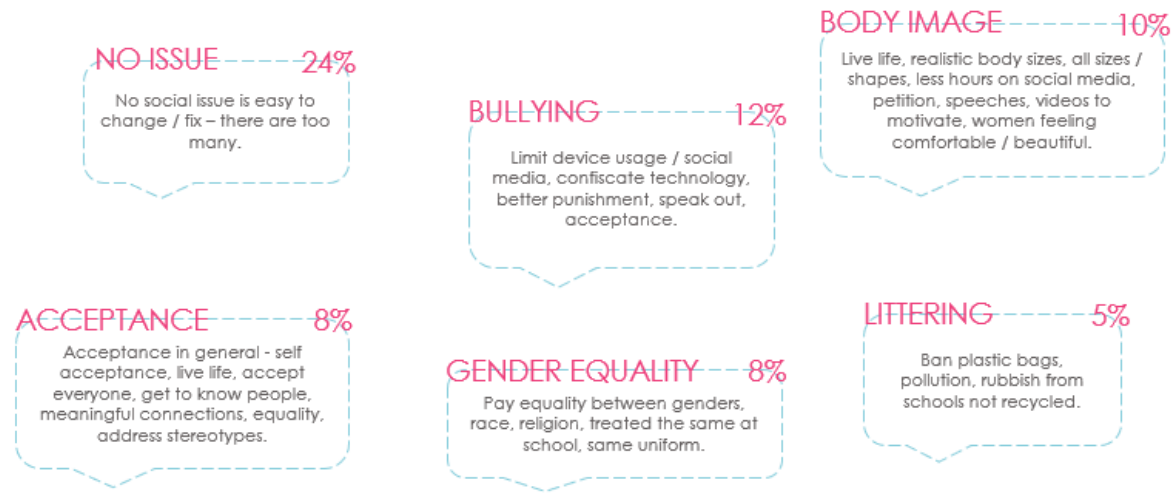
What girls have felt discriminated against for

Physical Appearance	Gender	Age	Mental Illness	Race	Class	Culture	Religion	Sexuality	Disability
60%	39%	35%	18%	17%	16%	15%	15%	15%	5%
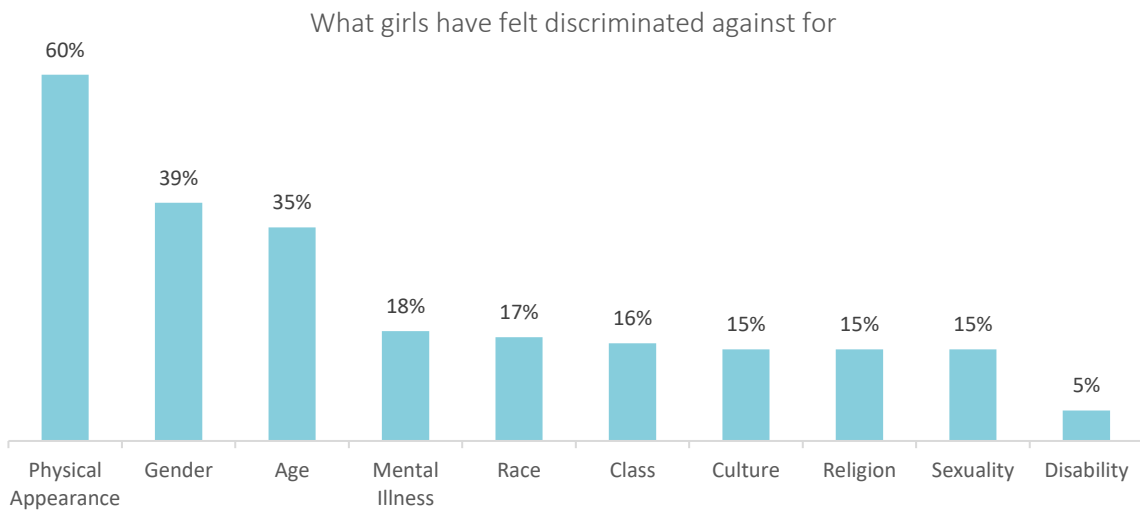
Understanding of What Feminism Means

★ Six in ten girls believe feminism is equality between genders, and 27% feel it's standing up for women's rights and advocating for women.

Making Change

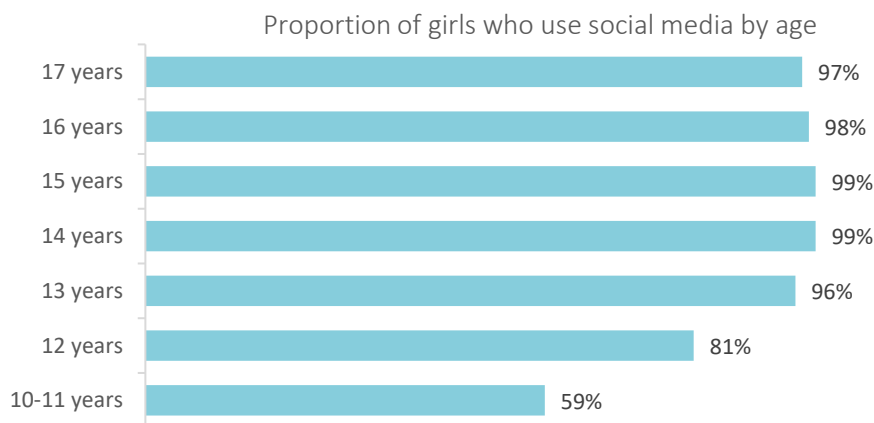★ One in five girls feel actively changing their own behaviour is the best way to change something in the world (21%), followed by writing a letter (18%), fundraising (17%), and creating a video to post on social media (14%).

★ At least three in ten girls had changed their behaviour, talked to friends, fundraised, talked to teachers or parents, shared something on social media, or started or signed a petition in the past.

★ A quarter of girls felt there was no social issue that could be easily fixed. However, other girls mentioned bullying, body image, acceptance, gender equality and littering as issues that could easily be fixed, along with suggestions on how to address these issues.

NO ISSUE ---- **24%**
No social issue is easy to change / fix – there are too many.

BULLYING ---- **12%**
Limit device usage / social media, confiscate technology, better punishment, speak out, acceptance.

BODY IMAGE ---- **10%**
Live life, realistic body sizes, all sizes / shapes, less hours on social media, petition, speeches, videos to motivate, women feeling comfortable / beautiful.

ACCEPTANCE ---- **8%**
Acceptance in general - self acceptance, live life, accept everyone, get to know people, meaningful connections, equality, address stereotypes.

GENDER EQUALITY ---- **8%**
Pay equality between genders, race, religion, treated the same at school, same uniform.

LITTERING ---- **5%**
Ban plastic bags, pollution, rubbish from schools not recycled.

Pop Culture & Social Media Usage

★ Almost all girls believe pop culture influences them in some way (93%) - examples include social media, a negative influence in general, celebrities, and music.

★ Virtually all girls aged 13 years and over use social media. Girls 10-11 years are significantly less likely to use social media mainly because they are too young or not allowed.

Proportion of girls who use social media by age

Age	Percentage
17 years	97%
16 years	98%
15 years	99%
14 years	99%
13 years	96%
12 years	81%
10-11 years	59%

★ Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook are the most popular social media used by girls:
  ○ 92% use Instagram
  ○ 75% use Snapchat
  ○ 59% use Facebook

★ When asked about a story that stood out to them this year, girls mentioned the shootings in the USA (12%), bullying (10%), mental health (8%), inequality (7%), climate change (6%), Donald Trump (5%), and LGBTQIA+ (5%).