

## What Girls Say About Girl Power!

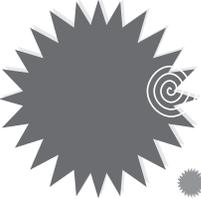
*"I am a very intelligent young girl who has a mind of my own and is going to use it!" Dottie, 13, Maryland*

*"Be yourself! Keep your own views on things. Reach all your goals in your sights, if they're what you want. Stay you and not anyone else!" Eeyore, 14, Oregon*

*"My body is changing into a teenager. It is amazing all that is happening to me. It makes me feel proud of myself." Justice, 11, West Virginia*

*"Yo creo que las drogas son muy malas porque te pueden lastimar la mente." (translation) "I think drugs are very bad because they can hurt your mind." Crystal, 9, Arizona*

*"Always be yourself. You can be friends with anyone, and do anything you want by being yourself. And if you're not, it's just like cheating." RSK, 11, Maryland*



*"The persons who encourage me the most are my parents. They always tell me to follow my dreams, and help me do anything. They always push me in school, so I can be better." Jessica, 10, Arizona*

*"Turning down drugs takes courage and makes me feel proud, independent, and good inside. I didn't get pressured into doing something I didn't want to do and that gives me self-esteem and a sense of control in life, and to be a leader and not a follower." Lindsey, 11½, Michigan.*



***"We want to tell every girl: You are unique, you are valuable, and, if you put your mind to it, you can succeed. We want to tell every parent and every caring adult to listen to girls, to encourage them, to help them set high standards, and provide them opportunity, by doing this you can help them not only survive—but thrive—through adolescence.***

***We must teach girls that their health and their future are more important than their image, that the size of their ambition is more important than the size of their clothes, and that the dreams they create for themselves are more important than the dreams that are created for them.***

***We want to make sure that girls have Girl Power!"***

***Donna E. Shalala  
Secretary***

***U.S. Department of Health and Human Services***

Girl Power! is a national public education campaign sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services with leadership from the Office of the Secretary, the Office on Women's Health, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. The Girl Power! campaign combines the latest knowledge about girls' lives with messages and materials designed to be appealing to girls themselves.

Put your power behind Girl Power! and make the world better, one girl at a time.

For more information:  
Call 1-800-729-6686  
TDD 1-800-487-4889

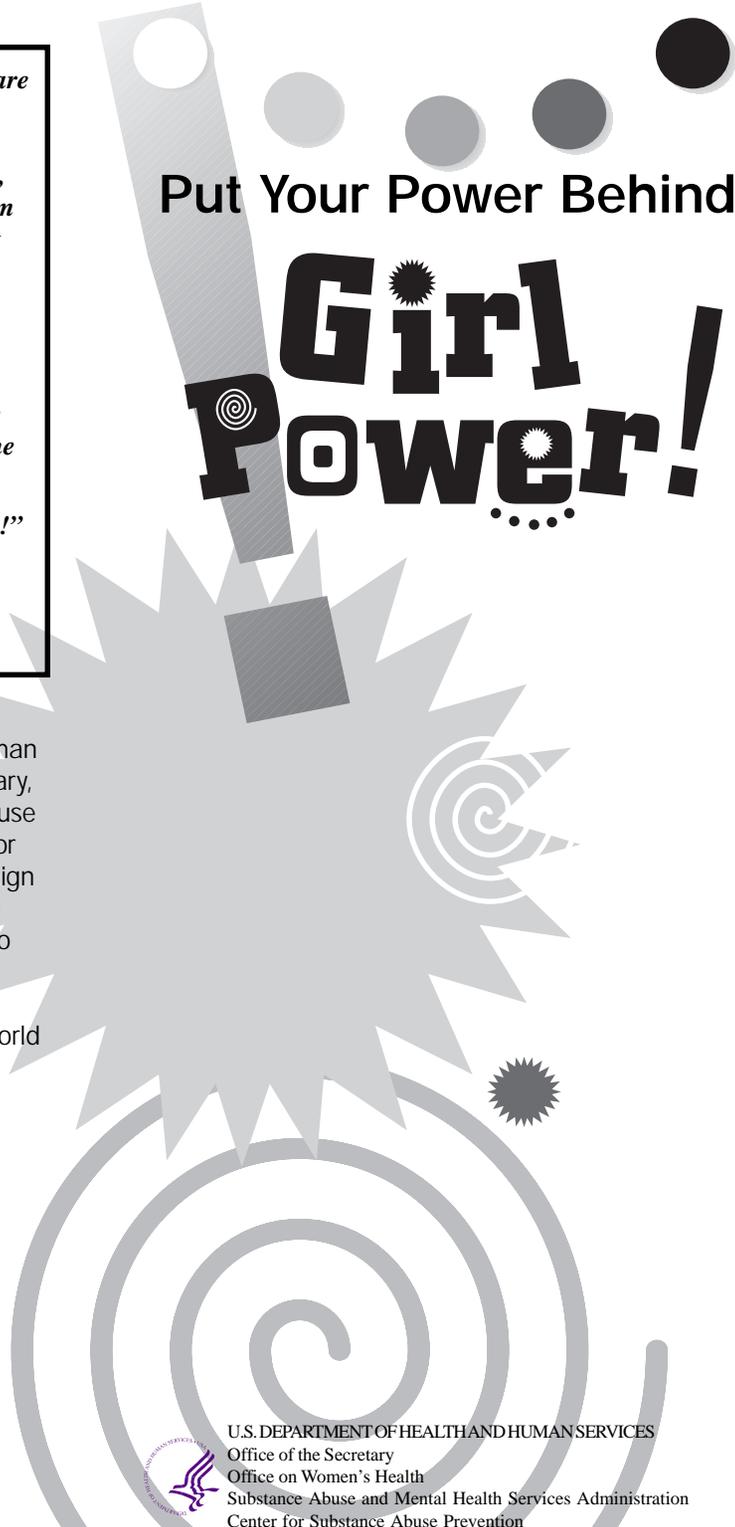
Or visit the Web at: [www.health.org/gpower](http://www.health.org/gpower)

Write to:  
Girl Power!  
11426 Rockville Pike  
Suite 100  
Rockville, MD 20852

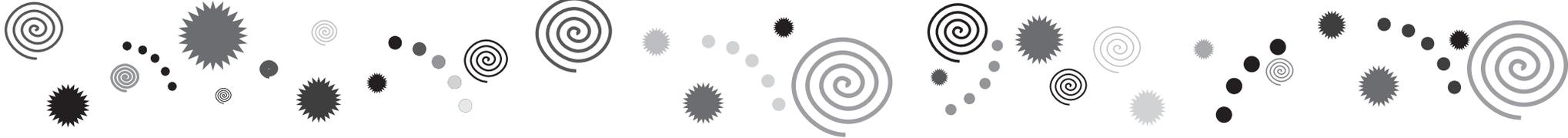


Put Your Power Behind

**Girl  
Power!**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Office of the Secretary  
Office on Women's Health  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention



# Girl Power!

Is...

- ☉ The power that girls have to be the best that they can be—confident, fulfilled, and feeling good about themselves.
- ☉ Helping girls make the most of their lives and encouraging girls to pursue their own interests and talents.
- ☉ Telling all girls that they are worthy of success, that opportunities do exist, and that expressing themselves is okay.
- ☉ Being healthy—physically and mentally.
- ☉ Girls growing into strong and competent women.

## Why Girls 9 to 14 Need Girl Power!

The transition from childhood to adolescence occurs during these years. This is often the time when girls start to lose the Girl Power! they had in childhood. During this transitional time girls begin to respond differently to what others say. For example:

- ☉ Girls who performed well in the classroom at ages 9, 10, or 11 often perform less well in school at age 14.
- ☉ Girls in their early teens are often encouraged to place more emphasis on their personalities, social skills, looks, and abilities to please others rather than develop their own interests and aspirations.
- ☉ Some girls who earlier experienced adult and peer approval for demonstrating athletic abilities before puberty are often discouraged from participating in many sports once their bodies show signs of maturing.
- ☉ This is often the first time that girls are exposed to drug use and other risky behaviors.

## What You Can Do

- ☉ Talk with girls and listen to them.
  - ☉ Believe in girls and their abilities by praising girls' attempts as well as their achievements.
  - ☉ Help girls understand that alcohol, tobacco, and drugs are unhealthy, dangerous, and illegal.
  - ☉ Actively support girls' goals by providing as many opportunities as you can for them to participate in sports, the arts, and other positive activities of interest to them.
  - ☉ Help girls to perform their best in school.
  - ☉ Encourage girls to be active and exercise.
  - ☉ Plan special activities that you can enjoy together.
  - ☉ Be there for them when they need help.
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