



BIO Girls Teen Program  
Mental Health Module Pilot Research Findings  
December 2022

The Mental Health Module was the second module of the BIO Girls Teen Program to be piloted, after Body Image. This module ran weekly in five two-hour sessions from November through December. The sessions covered emotions, anxiety, stress, feelings of worthlessness, and self-compassion. Participants engaged in discussion, group work, mindfulness activities, art projects, and a service project. In addition, all participants made their own Vision Board as a reminder to be kind to themselves.

Before the program started, teens completed a brief set of surveys on emotion regulation (including cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression), self-compassion (including self-kindness, mindfulness, common humanity, isolation, self-judgment, and over-identified), current feelings of anxiety, generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) symptoms over the past two weeks, and stress over the past two weeks. Participants also completed the same set of surveys after the five sessions were over.

Nine participants were enrolled in the program, but data was available for analysis for only six individuals who completed both pre and post assessments. On average, participants missed a total of one session of the program (range of absences was 0 to 3).

*Overall, teens in the program experienced increases in cognitive reappraisal and self-compassion and decreases in expressive suppression, anxiety, GAD symptoms, and stress.*

**100% of participants experienced increased self-compassion.** This means that participants were kinder to themselves by the end of the program.

**Participants SIGNIFICANTLY decreased their feelings of isolation,** a specific component of self-compassion. This means that they were significantly less likely to feel that others were happier than them or that they were alone in their failures by the end of the program.

**5 out of 6 teens experienced decreased stress and GAD symptoms.** This means that participants felt less stress and anxiety by the end of the program.

We were thrilled to see the large impact program content had on participants' self-compassion. We hope that participants will continue to practice the self-compassion techniques taught in



the program in their daily lives and, in doing so, will experience further long-term decreases in anxiety and stress.

It is worth noting that our measures assessed current levels of anxiety and GAD symptoms and stress over the past two weeks. It is possible that participants had particularly challenging events occurring during that time frame, which could lead to higher mental health difficulties.

Participants had positive things to say about the program. All teens reported that they liked the activities in the program, including yoga, scribble art, making an affirmations box, and Vision Boards. They also enjoyed the lessons, stating that they learned new things and that the lessons helped them feel better about themselves.

This module was a success! BIO Girls looks forward to piloting our third module of the Teen Program on Relationships in March.