

CASE STUDY

Sector: Education

CCL Partners with Women's Professional Forum to Help Girls Become Lifelong Leaders



About

Women's Professional Forum (WPF) of Guilford County, N.C., is a member organization providing support to professional women. In 1984 a foundation was created by WPF members to fund scholarships to help women and girls achieve their leadership and professional dreams. The Women's Professional Forum Foundation (WPFF) helps women and girls through philanthropy and other important development initiatives available through community nonprofits.



The Challenge

After more than 2 decades of successful grant-making, the Women's Professional Forum Foundation decided to explore innovative ways to broaden its impact. What if the organizations in our community currently serving girls and young women had a professionally designed curriculum and toolkit they could use free of charge? After dozens of interviews with community nonprofits, the Forum decided to create a new leadership learning curriculum that would teach fundamental leadership skills to girls and elevate the already important work being done to serve girls community wide.

The Solution

After a thorough competitive analysis, WPF members chose the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) as their partner in the design of the new curriculum. "They determined we had the rigor, the research, and the commitment they were looking for," said Janet Carlson, CCL Products & Tools Developer.

CCL also had significant experience in creating leadership solutions for young girls. CCL associates had designed and integrated leadership content into social justice curriculum at Mount Mary University in Wisconsin, a summer Leadership Development Institute for girls in North Carolina, and multiple Leadership and Debate Clubs for young women in Ethiopia.

The Impact

CCL collaborated with the Forum and with a consortium of local nonprofits to create *Girls Leadership Edge*—an evidence-based leadership skills development curriculum for girls ages 13 to 15. Five, 2-hour training modules focus on self-awareness, defining purpose, communicating effectively, appreciating differences, and resolving conflict.

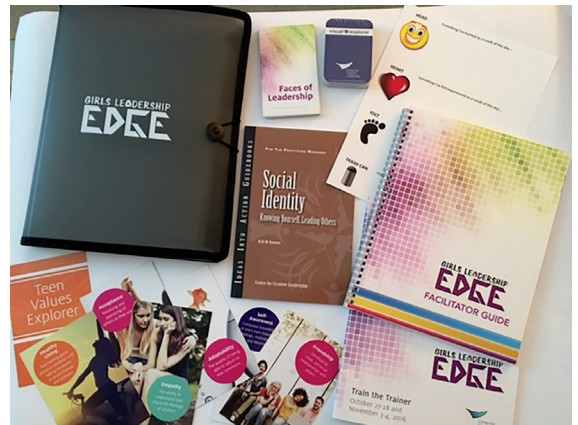
A facilitator's toolkit, student workbook, innovative CCL Explorer™ card decks, and experiential activities bring the program to life—helping young girls develop courage, compassion, and confidence.

Within a year of the program's launch, CCL had trained 18 facilitators from community nonprofits, who then delivered *Girls Leadership Edge* to nearly 130 girls. And feedback indicates the program is making a significant impact.



Facilitators unanimously praise the program and the role it's playing in helping young girls become more self-assured. The girls themselves echo that theme in their description of what *Girls Leadership Edge* has taught them. A few examples:

- Anyone can be a leader, and I am smart.
- I am more confident.
- I learned you should be a constant learner.
- I learned to stop putting myself down.
- I learned to let things go that aren't so important and to hold onto things that are very important.
- I learned how to work better and solve a conflict in a mature way.
- I learned that I can be a leader by being me.
- I learned the true definition of empathy and different ways to show empathy and compassion.



Girls Leadership Edge Toolkit

"CCL has helped us launch a program that we know will pay dividends for years to come," said Judy Piper, Past President of the Women's Professional Forum Foundation. "We're not only making a huge impact on the lives of individual girls, but are creating a new generation of community leaders. We can't wait to see what they will accomplish."