

The Future of MEDIAGIRLS—A Community Update: Part II

It is with a heavy, yet optimistic heart that I'm writing to share an important update about MEDIAGIRLS with you. The Board has reached a unanimous decision to dissolve our organization and end operations/programming effective **June 30, 2022**. While this will end one chapter of MEDIAGIRLS, it is certainly not the end of our story. As an important member of our MEDIAGIRLS community, we wanted to share more details about our plans for the future with you.

Not only will the benefits of our curriculum be carried by the thousands of individuals we've touched, but we are very excited to announce that our #REALMEDIAGIRL programming will live on with [Girls' LEAP](#)! I will share more about the fantastic work Girls' LEAP is doing further on in this letter, and why we felt like they were the right organization to carry on the #REALMEDIAGIRL workshop.

How We Arrived Here

Since our founding in 2014, MEDIAGIRLS has had a significant reach:

- We've partnered with more than 40 schools, clubs, and girl+-centric organizations to deliver our workshops.
- Nearly 3,200 girls+ and more than 2,000 parents have participated in our programming.
- More than 60 "graduates" of our workshops have become Youth Advisory Board Members, remaining engaged in our mission and supporting our advocacy work.
- Over 50 college volunteers have served as trainers to teach our program.
- We expanded our audience outside of Massachusetts, reaching girls+ and parents in Texas, California, Canada, and beyond.

In addition, earlier this year we launched an updated and improved #REALMEDIAGIRL curriculum, with newly designed slide decks, more in-depth scripts, inclusive content for girls+, engaging new activities, and content focused on our new #REAL Outcomes.

At the same time, while many individuals and families have struggled financially with the disruption of work and life, our fundraising activity has struggled in kind. We have simply been unable to raise the consistent level of financial support needed to continue our work.

Like many other organizations and businesses both nonprofit and for-profit alike, the COVID-19 pandemic had an extraordinary impact on MEDIAGIRLS. For two years, our in-person workshops—the heart of our programming—have seen a dramatic reduction in participation. While technology certainly offered an alternative, we found that virtual sessions have been unable to replicate the dynamic interaction that makes our #REALMEDIAGIRL workshops so special.

Our plan to scale pre-pandemic was to license our workshop with schools, yet getting into schools has been our biggest hurdle. Therefore, we shifted to focus more on partnerships with community organizations. We realized, in this shift of our programming model, that it makes the most sense to collaborate versus compete with other girl-serving organizations.

While this was a hard decision for the Board to make, it is one that we are all very excited about. This is largely due to the fact that we believe we have found an incredible organization to help grow the MEDIAGIRLS legacy.

The Path Forward - GIRLS' LEAP

It's important to note this is a voluntary decision. We do not have any debts and this is not a bankruptcy. Our board was unanimous in believing the mission of our organization was more important than ever. Mental health and emotional well-being statistics are alarming. Studies show that COVID-19 increased global rates of anxiety and depression in 2020 by more than 25%. The fact that we have all spent more time alone, with our screens, is a contributing factor. And teenage girls+ feel this acutely.

That's why it was important for us to find a like-minded non-profit organization who also believes in our mission—and who also focuses their efforts on serving and championing the physical and emotional safety and well-being of girls and gender-expansive youth. We wanted to find a path forward that enabled our new and improved #REALMEDIAGIRL curriculum to reach more girls+, parents, and educators.

We're delighted to share that Girls' LEAP will be adopting our programming (the transfer of assets is pending the Attorney General office's approval). Girls' LEAP has been working with youth in the Greater Boston community for nearly 25 years and has consistently evolved and strengthened their programming to address emerging issues youth face. LEAP works to disrupt the violence that surrounds all girls and gender-expansive youth by amplifying their voices, emboldening their courage, and imparting critical life and self-defense skills so they can take on challenges with confidence. For youth today, managing their social media presence is a critical life skill—both to protect their mental health and to amplify their voices in a productive way. The MEDIAGIRLS curriculum will be integrated into their after-school and in-school community programs for youth ages 8-18, their year-round Teen Mentor Program, as well as their Youth Speak Outs, facilitated discussions with youth led by their Teen Mentors

We encourage you to sign up for their newsletter to stay up to date with what's going on and if you would like to continue supporting the #REALMEDIAGIRL program

www.girlsleap.org

GIRLS' LEAP [NEWSLETTER](#)

SUPPORT GIRLS' [LEAP](#)

We Remain Grateful

I can't convey enough how grateful we are for our donors and supporters—from 2014 through 2022. Without you, we would have been unable to change the lives of so many girls+ and their families. We are celebrating the legacy we leave behind so many REALMEDIAGIRLS we have nurtured and empowered to take control of their social media interactions and identities. We hope you are too! We are excited about the work GIRLS' LEAP will do to carry our vision forward and we will all be cheering them on!

With appreciation,

Eric Roe
Interim Board Chair
MEDIAGIRLS