



Count Girls In: Empowering Girls to Combine Any Interests with STEM to Open Up a World of Opportunity

Karen Panetta , Katianne Williams

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Maybe you have a daughter who loves cooking, soccer, and musicals. Maybe she's a social butterfly, an athlete, a fashionista, and a humanitarian who wants to change the world. Be honest—do you think, Well, she's clearly not a math and science kid? Do you assume that certain classes and careers won't appeal to her? Count Girls In challenges these assumptions and presents a totally different way of thinking: there is a place for all girls and young women—not just the science fair winners and robotics club members—in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, if we can keep their (and our) minds and options open and meet them where they are.

To succeed in STEM fields today, girls don't have to change who they are. A girl who combines her natural talents, interests, and dreams with STEM skills has a greater shot than ever before at a career she loves and a salary she deserves. *Count Girls In* encourages parents and other adults to raise authentic young women who have the confidence to put STEM to work in a way that best serves them and their passions. The authors, both STEM professionals, present compelling research in a conversational, accessible style and provide specific advice and takeaways for each stage of schooling, from elementary school through college, followed by comprehensive STEM resources. This isn't a book about raising competitive, test-acing girls in lab coats; this is about raising happy, confident girls who realize the world of opportunities before them.

Count Girls In: Empowering Girls to Combine Any Interests with STEM to Open Up a World of Opportunity Details

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Meghan says

I also received this book as an advanced reader's copy looking for more books that inspire young women in america. STEM learning has a HUGE impact in our schools and libraries and the stories displayed in this book reflected inspiration and motivation to young women across the world. It is important that everyone knows that in this decade more people especially women have the power more than ever to aspire to be anything they want to be and share their story with the world. This will definitely be a favorite among our readers. 5 stars!

Aderonke says

This is a very informational book about how to get girls involved and KEEPING them involved in STEM. For the most part, it is a parenting book about how parents can support their daughters and raise them in a way that exposes them to STEM no matter what else they enjoy. It talks a lot about interdisciplinary studies with STEM (combining art, music, etc.) and even gives examples of careers that involve these skills together. The book goes through all stages of raising a daughter from kindergarten to college.

Although parents will appreciate this book most, it is useful for female-identifying people themselves or siblings who want to help their sisters out. I learned a lot about how I can help my middle-school aged sister and my college-searching self to stay committed to STEM despite the stigma and discrimination against women that prevails, discouraging us from continuing our passion in it.

I do recommend the later sections for people in my boat but parents should definitely take the time to read/listen to the whole thing.

Andrew says

Great resource

This book is a great resource for anyone with a daughter in helping them explore the world of STEM possibilities. It provides great insight into a child's Development and interests at each phase of life while providing ways to guide and nurture STEM interests. Some of the writing was a little drawn out and makes some assumptions here and there. A few parts were a little slow to get through, but overall I certainly enjoyed it and will use what I read throughout my daughter's childhood.

Allie says

very good book, I gave it to my sister in law who is a teacher and it gave her great insight !

Jessica Kaufman says

Great resource for parents and teachers who want to make sure every kid stays open to opportunity.

~Dani~ LazyTurtle's Books says

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With every week that goes by, our society integrates more and more technology into our every day lives. By the time our generation's children have grown up there will be job positions opened up for tech careers that haven't even been invented yet. Of course we want to set our children up for success in their futures. According to Panetta and Williams, the way to do that is to foster an interest in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics).

But young girls face challenges that their male peers don't. Even as our culture has progressed leaps and bounds in the past century in regards to gender equality, there is still a subtle message conveyed to many young girls and young women that STEM is a boy's world. *Count Girls In* attempts to confront that message by opening up a conversation about where that message comes from and how we (usually unknowingly) perpetuate it.

I mean, most parents probably do not specifically tell their daughters *"No you can't be a scientist or an engineer. Go practice your receptionist skills!"* And this book does not accuse anyone of doing that. Rather, they assert that the message comes from our unconscious emphasizing of "isn't that pretty?" in conversations with girls and then they see that their brothers and male friends are encouraged towards things like robotics, getting their hands dirty, building things!

Most importantly though, this book gave dozens of examples of ways to get involved and foster a curiosity for how things work. One of my favorite parts of this book was the idea of meeting girls where they are.

For example, there was a section about the release of Lego Friends, a series of Lego sets in purples and pink marketed toward girls. There was backlash at its release because of the gendering of the product. But the fact was...they sold! Which meant that more girls than ever were playing with Legos, more girls were building things, expanding their imaginations and creative thinking.

Most girls like pretty things. And that is okay! A woman can be feminine AND be successful in a STEM field. A young girl can like to play with pink and purple blocks instead of green and blue. Either way, she is learning to imagine and create. Neither has to be sacrificed for the sake of the other. The point is, we don't have to take dolls out of our girls' hands and force boxed science experiments down their throat to foster a love of science. We can work with them, meet them where they are.

Does she love dolls? Try teaching her how to sew clothes for them. This introduces the concept of imagining

the overall product and then breaking it down into manageable steps to make it a reality. Not only does this teach a valuable skill, it can give them the self-confidence to attempt *more*.

This was just one of dozens of examples of how to meet girls where their interest already lies and growing on that. From grade school, it went on to middle school and the psychological pressures and changes that come with puberty and how to continue working with them all the way into high school and college.

I got this book from a visit to the library but I will likely be grabbing a copy to keep at home because, as a mother of a young girl, I found the thought and advice in this book to be invaluable and the presentation of their arguments was right on point.
