



## Why run a girls-only event?

In the tech-centric world we inhabit, a glaring gender disparity pervades the field of Computer Science. Girls-only coding events, such as CodeHers, are a crucial response to the historical and ongoing underrepresentation of women in tech. These specialised events are not born out of a desire for segregation but from a necessity to create environments that encourage and empower young girls to engage with technology and coding.

The stark underrepresentation of women in tech is not a relic of the past but a present-day challenge. In classrooms and workplaces alike, the ratio of males to females is overwhelmingly skewed, with women and girls frequently outnumbered and, by extension, often marginalised. This reality is reflected in the low number of females in tech roles and the disproportionate male presence in Computer Science classes.

Learning, inherently influenced by the environment, can be hampered for girls who face stereotypes and biases in mixed-gender settings, particularly if they are overwhelmingly male. These psychological barriers can lead to decreased confidence and a decline in interest in tech-related subjects. Girls-only coding events offer a counter-environment where these pressures are absent, allowing girls to explore and learn without fear of judgement or competition from male counterparts.

The impact of role models in shaping career aspirations is well-documented, and in the context of tech, the scarcity of women in the field means a dearth of mentors for aspiring young girls. Girls-only events intentionally address this gap by involving female mentors who can inspire participants with their experiences and success stories, demonstrating that a career in tech is attainable regardless of gender.

These events also serve to positively reinforce girls' self-perception in relation to their abilities in Computer Science. They promote the message that girls are not only capable of excelling in tech but that they inherently belong in the space. Such affirmation is crucial in early development stages, where self-concept and interest in future career paths are formed.

The long-term impact of events like CodeHers on the tech industry cannot be overstated. By engaging girls in Computer Science, we are not only addressing gender inequality but also nurturing a future workforce that is diverse, balanced, and capable. The ultimate aim is to normalise the presence of women in tech, making the need for such events obsolete. Until that day comes, the justification for girls-only coding events remains strong.

Proudly organised by students from these schools

