



### Confidence, curiosity and connection through a shared experience

Sue Ann Nnamani and her daughter Emmy-Ann (aged 8) attended the 2025 Festival of the Girl in London, marking their second year at the event. Already familiar with the festival after being introduced to it through friends in 2024, they arrived with positive expectations and a sense of excitement about what the day might offer. Interviews conducted immediately after the event and one month later show how the festival created moments of joy, reflection and inspiration for both parent and child, with effects continuing well beyond the day itself.

### Vibrant space to explore interests and imagine new possibilities

Throughout the day, Emmy-Ann immersed herself in a wide range of activities, including the Sister Motion film workshop, a finance session, yoga, and a voting activity. She described the festival as *“impactful, fun, lots to do, lots to think about, lots of new friendships to be made.”* Sue Ann echoed this enthusiasm, describing the festival as *“a great way to get your child exposed to the things they may not already think is possible.”*

Having attended previously, the family felt confident navigating the space and following Emmy-Ann’s interests. Sue Ann highlighted the value of everything being brought together in one place: *“The kids just gravitate into whatever their interests are.”* This freedom to explore helped Emmy-Ann try new roles and activities without fear of judgement.

### Building confidence through representation and hands-on participation

## Festival of the Girl: Evaluation of Festival of the Girl 2025



Case study: Sue Ann and Emmy-Ann

A key moment for Emmy-Ann was returning to the Sister Motion workshop. The previous year, she had taken part as an interviewee; this time, she felt confident enough to step into the role of director. Reflecting on the experience, she explained: *“Sister Motion showed me that not just boys can be on TV... it shows me that not just boys can be weather men, girls can be weather women too.”*

Another powerful experience came from visiting the Nubian Princesses stall. Emmy-Ann shared how it changed the way she felt about her appearance: *“I used to not like my puffy hair... but that shop made me feel that it doesn’t matter what type of hair you have, you can still keep going in your life.”* These moments helped reinforce a sense of self-belief rooted in who she is, rather than how she looks.

### Learning together as a family

The festival also prompted wider conversations between Sue Ann and her daughter. Information and activities introduced Emmy-Ann to global issues facing girls, including barriers to education. She connected this to what she already knew about Malala Yousafzai: *“All she wanted to do was learn... she said she doesn’t care if she has to sit on the floor.”*

Meeting women who shared their own lived experiences also proved meaningful. One encounter, with a woman who had been diagnosed with ADHD later in life, resonated deeply with both mother and daughter. As Emmy-Ann herself has ADHD, she described feeling reassured: *“I felt happy to know someone else that has the same condition as me... to know that I’m not the only one.”* For Sue Ann, this experience prompted reflection on her parenting approach: *“I think now I’m clearer on the ways I can support Emmy-Ann and improve my communication with her.”*

### One month on: confidence in action

A month after the festival, Emmy-Ann was still talking about the event and thinking about who she might bring along next time, explaining that she wanted to *“make another girl happy”* by inviting her. Sue Ann also noticed changes in Emmy-Ann’s behaviour and confidence. Emmy-Ann explained that she had felt more confident to face her fears since attending the festival, such as picking up a spider despite being scared, and speaking more confidently at school. Emmy-Ann proudly recalled delivering a speech: *“I made a very lovely speech, and I made sure I spoke loud and clear.”*

Perhaps most strikingly, the festival helped Emmy-Ann imagine herself in a new creative role. Inspired by what she had seen and heard, she went on to write and publish her first book, *Worms and Grub*, just weeks after attending. Sue Ann reflected: *“She probably never thought in a million years that she’d have her first book... She’s now able to inspire others.”*

### Extending impact beyond the child

Sue Ann also emphasised the importance of involving fathers and wider family members in conversations about gender and confidence: *“Girls aren’t just modelled by their mothers, it’s also a duo partnership.”* Since attending, she has become an advocate for the festival, encouraging others in her network to take part in future years.

Sue Ann and Emmy-Ann’s experience evidences how Festival of the Girl can create moments of joy and discovery that continue to shape attitudes, confidence and aspirations. Through hands on activities, positive role models and shared reflection, Emmy-Ann gained the confidence to try new things and express herself more boldly, while Sue Ann gained new insights into how best to support her daughter. Together, their story highlights how the festival can spark changes that ripple out into everyday life, families and wider communities.