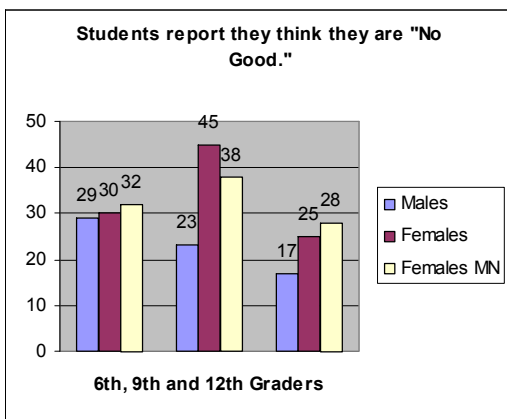


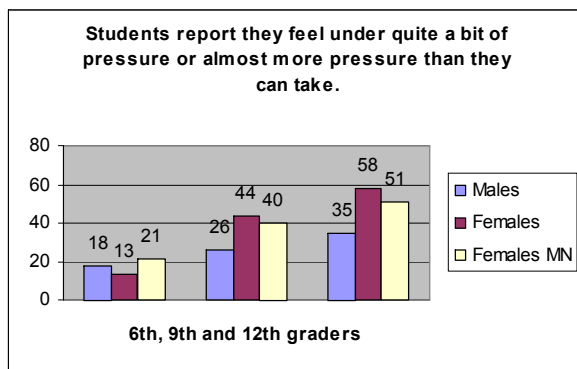
eliminating racism empowering women ywca

GIRLS AT RISK: A QUIET CRISIS-WHAT GIRLS ARE SAYING ABOUT GROWING UP IN MANKATO

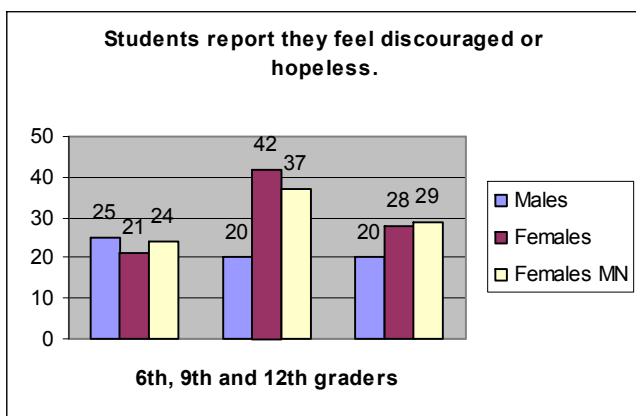
Significantly more 9th grade female students report they think they are no good.



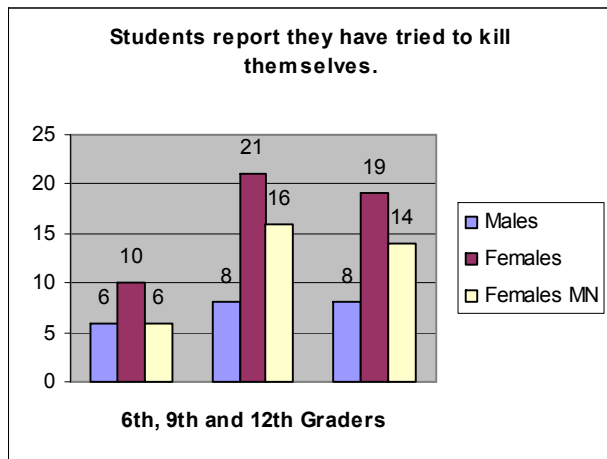
More female students report that in the last 30 days they felt under quite a bit of pressure or almost more pressure than they could take.



More 9th and 12th grade female students report that they feel hopeless.



Significantly more females report attempting suicide. This trend continues and has worsened since 2001.



This information is from Minnesota Student Surveys completed in 2001 and 2004 by 6th, 9th and 12th graders in Mankato Public Schools. The results were compared to findings for the State of Minnesota. Additional data analysis was conducted by faculty in MSU's Dept. of Counseling and Student Personnel.

What you can do

Recognize that this risk exists. Middle school aged girls appear to be at risk in our community. It is clear that there are important connections between messages, behaviors and family dynamics.

Support girls. Support for girls is needed in the family, peer group and community.

Support families in their support for girls. Be open and respect the many family structures that are present in our community today. Help families of all shapes support their daughters.

Stay connected to your kids. Both boys and girls need their parents during the middle school years. They need to be able to talk to both parents, even if it sometimes appears they do not want to.

Both moms and dads make a difference. Many risk factors drop when youth are able to talk to their parents. Risk in the areas of weight/body image and sexual behavior are closely related to whether or not a girl can talk with her father, not necessarily about these topics.

Support friendship. Girls need their friends to remain their friends and to be a part of their support system at this time.

Moderation in activity. Girls who are over involved or under involved in youth activities are more at risk than girls with moderate involvement. Moderate involvement is considered between 6 to 11 hours a week.

Better possibilities. Girls get many strong messages about how they must look and behave to attract boys/men. Girls need positive messages about what they can do and be. Girls also need positive roles models that demonstrate possibilities for them.

Weight and Body Image. Each original risk factor investigated was associated with a negative body image and weight concerns. Place an emphasis on goals and accomplishments that do not relate to weight or looks. Emphasize health.

For more information, contact:

Anne Ganey
Executive Director, YWCA of Mankato
209 South 2nd Street, Suite 314
Mankato, MN 56001
507-345-4629 ext. 29
executivedirector@ywcamankato.org

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