

Health & Science



Teenage Pressure Surveyed

Girls growing up in the 90's may have more opportunities than any previous generation, but they also face more pressure on every front from school to sex. According to a survey of 1,000 American teenagers by Seventeen Magazine and the Ms. Foundation for Women, girls, even when they get better grades than boys, feel less self-confident, worry more about school, feel depressed more often, and are more likely to be pressured to have sex before they are ready, and which they later regret.

"This is a generation of girls who, on the surface are very sophisticated, socially and sexually, but in reality they're not prepared to handle the situations they find themselves in and make good decisions for themselves," said Caroline Miller, Editor-in-Chief, Seventeen Magazine.

How They See Themselves

More than fifty percent of the female respondents also say they have trouble handling criticism (53%), are so worried about how others feel that they ignore their own feelings (52%), and have a hard time saying what's really on their minds (50%). Nearly half of them -- 48% -- wish they could stand up for themselves more often.

Boys fare better than girls across the board ranking higher than girls on all measures of self-esteem. Forty-five percent (45%) have a hard time handling criticism, 39% ignore their own feelings because they're preoccupied with how others feel, 46% find it difficult to say what they really feel, and 36% would like to stand up for themselves more than they do.

How They Judge Themselves And Are Judged By Others

One source of their insecurity is the fact that teenagers feel other people judge them on superficial traits, while teenagers themselves judge their worth by more meaningful measures. For girls, nearly half -- 45% -- believe being a good friend is their most important trait, yet only about one-quarter -- 26% -- think other people judge them most on this quality. At the other end of the scale for these teenagers is their appearance.

Merely 5% of girls surveyed say they measure their own worth by how they look. But six times that amount -- 30% -- think others judge them most on how they look.

Boys and girls judge themselves equally on intelligence, with just 14% saying it's their most important trait. Only one-tenth of boys -- 10% -- say others judge them on how smart they are. Girls think others care even less about their IQ. Only 5% say that intelligence is the trait that others judge them on most.

"Girls know what's most valuable about themselves -- and they're waiting for the world to catch up," said Wilson. "Being judged on their appearance -- rather than on their abilities -- has a devastating, silencing effect on girls. Because they feel others doubt them, girls distrust their own opinions and are reluctant to stand up for themselves."

What Makes Them Depressed?

Girls report feeling depressed more often than boys do. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of female respondents report feeling depressed a few times a month or more, compared to only 51% of boys. Almost three girls in ten -- 28% -- admit to getting the blues daily or a few times a week. Twenty percent of boys say they are frequently depressed.

Why Do Most Girls Have Sex?

When girls were asked "Why do most girls have sex?" almost three-quarters -- 73% -- replied "because boyfriends want them to." And more than half (53%) of those responsible for exerting sexual pressure -- the boys -- agree!

When asked if women have to work harder to achieve the same level of success as men, the majority of respondents think they do. Sixty-seven (67%) of girls and 61% of boys say women have to put in more effort to reap the same rewards as men do.

Despite the odds, girls remain optimistic about their future job prospects. They are ready to work harder, with two-thirds (65%) expecting to earn half or more of their family income when they are married.

"Immunize '96 Campaign"

Free Vaccinations Throughout Oregon At Over 115 Locations

Only 67 percent of Oregon's children are adequately immunized by age two. To help increase immunization rates, a partnership of health professionals, health care systems, business owners, local and national organizations and government agencies are launching a month-long immunization educational campaign as well as holding Free immunization clinics throughout Oregon during April 21-27.

The Oregon Preschool Immunization Consortium (OPIC), a statewide public and private partnership, has helped generate immunization awareness for four years. Its efforts have helped increase the number of infants who receive vaccines each year. OPIC's goal is to raise immunization levels in Oregon to 90 percent of two-year-olds having been ade-

quately immunized by the year 2000. "Immunizations protect our children against ten preventable diseases," said Megan Osborn, chairperson for the Immunize '96 Campaign. "So many parents put their children at risk by not having them adequately immunized on schedule. We need to reach parents and let them know that during this campaign there are free vaccines available in all counties in Oregon."

For "Immunize '96 Campaign," over 115 health departments and public clinics will offer Free immunizations during National Infant Immunization Week, April 21 - 27 in all counties throughout Oregon. Individual county health departments will determine dates and locations of their clinics during that week. As well as education the public

through television and public service campaigns, this year OPIC will receive help from McDonald's restaurants. Over 150 McDonald's restaurants throughout the area will carry local information about immunization sites and provide educational materials that include trayliners, leaflets and immunization records cards.

"McDonald's has a commitment to children and families, and they can reach so many people in our area," said Nancy Church, chairperson for OPIC. "We turned to them for assistance because we know that they can help get this important immunization message to thousands of parents."

In addition, members of the Rotary International, Kiwanis International, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon National Guard and American Legion Auxiliary local chapters will

assist with the campaign and clinics throughout Oregon communities. Schools, day care facilities and other local organizations will receive immunization information and a list of local clinic sites.

Family physicians and pediatricians are also making a special effort to make sure their patients are fully immunized.

In 1994, OPIC launched its first statewide free immunization drive, where nearly 7,000 individuals were immunized during the event. Last year, the one-day April 22 campaign immunized more than 4,100 people throughout the state.

For more information on immunizations, contact your health care provider, local county health department or the statewide SafeNet line at 1-800-SAFENET.

Officials Propose Oregon Health Plan Changes

Advocates worry that changes recommended in the Oregon Health Plan will make it harder for as many as 5000 poor people to qualify for coverage. State officials are recommending changes to the innovative plan to offset cost overruns and shortfalls.

Health policy experts around the world look to the health plan as a model for making decisions about how to distribute medical care for the poor. It was established two years ago to insure low-income people basic health care. The plan services 116,000 Oregonians who otherwise

would not have medical coverage. Under the current system a poor person seeking help at a hospital is given an application, coverage begins from the time it was signed.

The new proposal recommends changing the time for the date signed to the date approved. Reducing allowed assets from \$5000 to \$2000, increasing enrolment in managed care, lowering managed care rates and reducing doctor's fees are also recommended.

Dr. Paul Kirk chairman of the Oregon Health Services commission

said he thinks the "principles of the plan have been betrayed."

Kirk was instrumental in forming a list of medical conditions and treatments ranked according to importance and effectiveness.

The list, which Kirk calls the heart of the plan, is used to determine which service would be eliminated in tough economic times.

If the state runs short of money, the number of medical services are to be reduced according to their rank on the priority list. Every one would still have basic care.

State official considered dropping services for the list. But

Hersh Crowford, Oregon medical director said the federal Health Care Financing Administration didn't give the needed permission to cut items in time to make a financial difference. The agency's approval is necessary because costs of the plan are shared by state and federal governments. Health officials recommended the cuts after a service of underestimates and miscalculations.

Sexually Transmitted Disease Awareness Month

The American Social Health Association encourages people to learn about sexually transmitted diseases, one of the nation's most pervasive and urgent health problems, during National STD Awareness Month in April.

Through the National STD Hotline, 800/227-8922, callers can get free, confidential answers to their questions and request free written information on STD's.

ASHA is making information on STD's available to agencies all over the country to use in their local awareness promotion campaigns.

For 1996, the centerpiece of this campaign is a poster promoting

condom use through the slogan "In Your Heart, You Know It's Right."

"We want people to understand that loving safely is a way for couples to show they care about each other," said ASHA president Peggy Clarke.

STDs infect at least 55 million Americans - one in four adults - and are spreading at the rate of 12 million new cases each year. "Despite the prevalence of these dangerous infections, there seems to be an alarming gap between public awareness of STDs and the reality of the epidemic," Clarke said.

"We counsel people to become well informed of the risks posed by STDs and to learn how to protect

themselves and others from possible infection," Clarke said. "Furthermore, we urge couples to share the responsibility of safer sex."

STDs have a disproportionate impact on woman, Clarke noted. Because of anatomical differences, woman are more susceptible to STD infection, less likely to experience symptoms than men are and more difficult to diagnose. Young people are also at high risk for STDs. Two-thirds of new infections occur in people under 25 and one-fourth occur in teenagers.

Bacterial STDs can be treated and cured, but are often undetected. Because chlamydia has no symptoms in

75 percent of cases among woman and 25 percent of cases among men, it has become the most rapidly advancing STD, with 4 million new infections each year. Gonorrhea, also symptomless in many cases, accounts for 800,000 new infections annually.

Both viral and bacterial STDs can place the infected person at high risk for HIV/AIDS. If untreated, chlamydia and gonorrhea are particularly destructive to woman, causing pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility and ectopic or tubal pregnancies. Some strains of HPV are associated with cervical cancer.

ASHA operates the National STD Hotline, 800/227-8922.

Finesse
Barber & Beauty Salon
5808 N. Interstate Avenue
Portland, OR 97217
(503) 289-1132

Full Set.....\$22 & up
Fills.....\$12 & up
Regular Haircuts..\$6
Relaxers..... \$20

Ask about our "Bring A Friend" policy.

Free Adult Health Screening
Free Adult Community Health Screening Program,
sponsored by Providence Health System.

☎ 9 to 11:30 a.m., Thursday, April 4; at Tarkington Square, 357 N. First Ave., Hillsboro, Ore. Call 648-3494.

☎ 9 to 11:30, Thursday, April 11; at Holy Tree Village, 5335 S. W. Murray Blvd., Beaverton, Ore. Call 291-2655.

☎ 9 to 11:30 a.m., Thursday, April 18; at St. Alexander's Catholic Church, 170 North 10th Ave., Cornelius, Ore. Call 359-0446.

☎ 9 to 11:30 a.m., Thursday, April 25; at the North Plains Senior Center, 31450 Commercial Ave., North Plains, Ore. Call 647-5666.

Free screenings include physical assessment, diabetes, blood pressure checks, nutrition counseling, referral assistance to health professionals or community resources, and pharmacist consultation. A special hearing test also will be available.

There is a \$5 charge for cholesterol and glucose testing, unless it is part of the full screening appointment. Please call for an appointment.

SOME BOO-BOOS, A KISS CAN'T FIX.

Polio. Measles. Diphtheria. Whooping Cough. The fact is, once a child contracts a scary disease like this, there's not much a parent can do. It's up to the doctors. And fate. Which makes it inconceivable that 33% of Oregon children still aren't fully immunized by the age of two.

Yes, School Law requires they be immunized by kindergarten. But unfortunately, that law also creates the perception that it's okay to wait until then. People don't realize that waiting puts their infants at risk. Unimmunized infants are not protected. Therefore, they are more likely to get diseases and to have severe side effects from them.

Truth is, 80% of all vaccines can be given by age two. Safely. All it takes is four quick visits to the doctor. Meaning you must follow through with all the shots. They don't have to cost a lot either.

Most important, don't be afraid to ask your doctor, nurse practitioner or health department questions. And keep track of your child's immunization schedule. After all, the one who can best take care of your baby is you.

FREE Immunizations Available - April 21 through 27, 1996

For the times and dates of the clinic nearest you call your local Health Department or 1-800-SAFENET for more information.

OREGON PRESCHOOL IMMUNIZATION CONSORTIUM
INCLUDING MEDICAID