

**Girls Health Symposium  
Greater Bangor Area  
November 12, 2008**

*In Our Communities, what challenges or barriers make it difficult for girls to reach their full potential?*

- \*Lack of knowledge of what their possibilities are—making it easier to revert back to what is familiar
- \*Lack of transportation makes it impossible to take advantage of community resources
- \*Mothers in isolated communities seem stuck themselves
- \*No jobs/many service jobs, no corporate or technology
- \*Limited access to professionals as role models
- \*No exposure to anything else, ie: different cultures, alternative jobs
- \*Fewer programs for girls at the YMCA
- \*Time demands—Kids are overscheduled
- \*Girls hide their true feelings
- \*Pressure to please boys and to not be perceived as negative
- \*Fixation on boys, leading to a dichotomy of looking pretty versus being intelligent
- \*They feel they can be a leader if they are good looking, otherwise not considered a leader/No place for girls of all shapes and sizes to feel comfortable
- \*Teachers need materials—Need to be informed about what is going on in communities
- \*School teachers and administrators traditional views of women are also a drawback—they tend to give advice based on their views and push traditional roles/Lack of support and guidance from adults
- \*There is an assumption that girls aren't good at math or science—Adults modeling stereotypes and not allowing girls to see anything outside the box
- \*Stories about math classrooms and gender dynamics from both teachers and boys do not encourage women
- \*Schools have a large focus on academic numbers and don't allow for extra enrichment
- \*Access to resources determined by income and status of family/Self Segregation based on availability of programs, which are based on societies' ideal of femininity
- \*Media images provide them with an ideal lifestyle and they think that is the way to be--Risky to be different
- \*Pressure to be "cool"

*In Our Communities, What Strengths do Girls Possess?*

- \*Recreational athletic opportunities
- \*In Bangor, easier to overcome transportation availability
- \*The University
- \*Women's Week
- \*Curriculum entitled "It's Your World, Change It"
- \*Parents becoming more aware of daughter's world
- \*Educational Opportunities—Training schools, learning a trade as an option
- \*Understand and be critical of the messages, and challenging those messages
- \*A larger population, networking,
- \*People who have moved back here



- \*Not so rural
- \*Resiliency
- \*They feel they have a lot to offer-leadership
- \*Athletics for girls in HS, marching bands, Jr ROTC
- \*Have a lot of women in leadership positions
- \*Women hunt and do outdoor activities
- \*Are resourceful and tend to work to pay their way
- \*NESCOM at Husson
- \*UTC-United Technologies Center
- \*UMaine works hard to get girls into their non-traditional programs
- \*Women, work and Community
- \*In Lincoln, less focused on body image and more a sense of independence for girls
- \*\*A focus on survival in rural communities
- \*Lots of educational opportunities in this area
- \*The area is becoming more culturally diverse
- \*More role model type services in our communities
- \*Communication
- \*Resourceful
- \*Creative
- \*Willing to verbalize beliefs and opinions
- \*Confident
- \*Intelligent
- \*Urban Advantage
- \*University close by
- \*Variety of opportunities in Bangor not as available in rural areas
- \*More cliques/groups to participate in Bangor as opposed to smaller schools popular-not popular

*What Resources are currently available in our communities to help girls deal with the challenges you identifies and to support their healthy development?*

- \*Girl Scouts
- \*EYH
- \*Y program
- \*Sports Activities
- \*College Tours
- \*College Fair
- \*Civil Rights Teams
- \*Penquis and other nonprofits taking time in school based programming
- \*River Coalition
- \*WRC-expanding horizons
- \*Challenger Learning Center
- \*Discovery Museum
- \*Upward Bound
- \*Faith based communities/Youth groups
- \*Therapy/case mngt
- \*Public Health Nursing
- \*Spruce Run
- \*Learning Center/Career Center
- \*Collaborative groups geared toward creating a collective umbrella of services for families
- \*Psychiatry services



- \*College of the Atlantic
- \*Park Services
- \*Orton Gillingham Training Program
- \*Women's Studies at Universities and Colleges
- \*Science and Math camps—Camp Kieve
- \*Feminist Sensibility
- \*Zoey's Room-Platform Shoes
- \* "Early College for Maine" program
- \*The BAT Transportation System
- \*Good Samaritan

### *What Gaps in Services and Programs for Girls Currently Exist?*

- \*Career Exploration
- \*Diversified Career Environment
- \*Gap with parents education and children's' education (Have to be disloyal to parents to be successful)
- \*Extend Girlhood-Allowed to play/Allowed to explore self before getting stuck
- \*Education outside of school
- \*Communication-What is going on
- \*Transportation
- \*Financial Piece
- \*Liability issues if bus is not available
- \*Many programs fighting for the same money
- \*Focus on one gender, then "what about boys"
- \*Public transportation
- \*Safety of downtown areas
- \*Publishing what is available for the community/Publicity and promotion
- \*Literacy programs
- \*No clearinghouse for all these programs
- \*If you are not involved in sports, there's a gap –what are the other options?
- \*Lifelong, active encouragement and promoting it
- \*Accessibility (in terms of disabilities)
- \*Lack of funding
- \*Organization and/or putting groups together
- \*Someone to go with
- \*Not much in the way of mentoring
- \*Breakdown in familial relationships
- \*Less of a focus on community (church attendance has dropped)
- \*Time/Scheduling is difficult
- \*No opportunity for older girls to mentor younger girls
- \*Girl-led organizations
- \*Girl-focused activities that are real and relevant

### *What would it mean to have access to Hardiness Zones in the greater Bangor area?*

- \*Focal point for girls and adults who are interested in this work
- \*Programs to bring SES gap
- \*Can be specialized or general-Find dreams, form committees, let girls plan their own activities



- \*Alternative creative channels Art/Music/Theater based on feminist value
- \*More women in politics
- \*All girls gym-Not associated with being fat, just being healthy, teach classes, even self defense
- \*Unity and consistency in dissemination of info
- \*Would provide girls with an identity-A place to belong
- \*Would give adult role models a place to display their talents/skills to girls
- \*Would let girls realize their equality regardless of gender
- \*Girls would feel safe in their own skin, free from judgment
- \*Girls would be allies
- \*Create a culture that will help to coach future generations
- \*Build self esteem
- \*Foster Acceptance and Individuality
- \*A safe place for dreaming
- \*Instill hope
- \*A place to be a kid
- \*Education/Shadowing/Internships
- \*High School girls can be ambassadors to museums to lead children's groups as well
- \*Art therapy
- \*Learn life skills
- \*Facility- Outdoor access
  - Pool
  - Club-like atmosphere
  - Tutors
  - Classes offered
  - Kitchen
  - Library
- \*More storytelling
- \*Help us think differently
- \*Girls would never lose their voice, keep it forever and never go away
- \*Believe in their own gifts
- \*Obvious way to introduce the idea of social change—more accessible
- \*Gets the right people talking-coalitions building
- \*Younger girls more accepting
- \*Prevention
- \*Safe place to be who they want to be, expand transportation network
- \*A sense of optimism
- \*Women thinking big
- \*Girls bringing their mothers and grandmothers
- \*Internet information so not isolated
- \*As individuals what we have to offer girls
- \*Women not feeling so isolated
- \*It's a place to begin to learn about themselves and other programs
- \*Healthy sexual identity