



creating hardiness zones  
for girls and women

## Risks and Strengths— According to Girls from Washington County

Three dynamic Washington County girls attended our Hardy Girls outreach meeting on April 28. We asked them what they consider to be the risks facing and strengths of girls in Washington County. The following is a summary of their responses:

### Risks:

- Polluted environment and global warming
- Social pressures: clothes, appearance, size, accent
- Self-consciousness
- “Catfights” over silly things
- Don’t understand people and things who are different
- Social assumptions about what girls/women are supposed to do: Have kids, clean house, take care of everything
- Not being given a change to be yourself, to show people who you are or what you can do
- Having boys think they are better or stronger than you
- Pretending to be something or someone else at school or home
- Lack of places to hang out with friends
- Not enough to do can lead to trouble, drugs, bad decisions
- Too many opportunities to get into trouble: drinking, smoking, drugs, vandalism
- Not a lot of people to trust
- Don’t have skills to solve problems, make good choices and communicate well – can lead to fighting
- Having people tell you to do something you don’t want to do  
*AND/OR*  
Having people tell you to stop something you really want to do or want to have time to finish
- Not a lot of opportunity to travel
- Need more ways to make \$, pay bills, and be able to do want you want to do

### Strengths:

- Girls from different areas get along with each other – including girls from “away” and/or girls from different towns in Wash. C.
- Have common sense and are down to earth



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- Lots of skills
- Ability to make a difference
- Adventurous – just because it hasn't been done before doesn't mean it won't work
- Determined – Girls will prove themselves even when others say they "can't"
- Can prove they are different than people might think
- Girls can help people hear/understand things in different ways and notice things that would otherwise go unnoticed
- Not as much peer pressure in Wash. C. as other places
- Places to swim and be outside
- Community of people who encourage girls
- Supportive families
- Musical opportunities available

#### **Girls Want:**

- Self defense classes and gymnastics close to home
- Preparation for life in the city and/or college

