



creating hardiness zones
for girls and women
in maine and beyond

Girls in Washington County: Risks, Strengths, and Resources

Challenges, stresses, and risks girls face in our community:

- They “settle down” and move in with boyfriends at an early age
- They don’t see other options/ there are slim pickings for relationships, work, etc
- Few options, few choices, limited aspirations
- Poverty and economic challenges (Especially right now in Woodland/Calais area following the mill closing. At crisis level, with a serious lack of health care)
- Low motivation, tracked at an early age into a culture of sitting at home and watching TV
- Working parents, less time for kids
- No one listens to them at home, so they end up posting a lot of intimate information on the Web (myspace, facebook, etc).
- Community roadblocks to single gender work
- Drugs and alcohol
- Lack of healthy diet
- How do we better ourselves and not alienate where we came from?
- Isolation (geographic, DownEast culture)
- Mixed messages: Get away from Washington County, Have pride in your heritage

Strengths and positive qualities girls in our community possess:

- Resilient/Tough (pros and cons to this)
- Open to talking/Outgoing
- Love to try new things
- Strong work ethic
- More variety in norms of women’s behavior and activities. Women cut wood, fish, and make dinner.
- More variety in expectations of how women should look
- School is the heart of the community
- Extended family (multi generational)
- People are “hardy” here
- Nature is accessible





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Existing resources that already support girls:

(Consensus that a directory is needed. Gemma is working on compiling a more formal and complete list, which will included contact information.)

- EdGE after school program (Harrington)
- 4-H
- Girl Scouts
- Mothers/Daughters Self-Esteem Group (Calais)
- Women, Work & Community
 - Totally Trades Conference (Calais, Oct 17th)
- Washington County Community College (Calais)
 - Wed night girls and women only rock climbing (\$5)
 - Outdoor adventure activities
 - Rentals Available
 - Will open its doors to girls programming
- Mighty Women
- Women's Health Resource Library (Milbridge)
- Mano en Mano (Milbridge)
 - Latino Community
- DownEast Team Leadership Camp (Lubec Health Center)
- Greenland Point Center (Princeton)
 - Archery, shooting

