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Development of a Support Group Curriculum: Building Self-Esteem with Adolescent Girls

Elaine S. Korsch
Augsburg College

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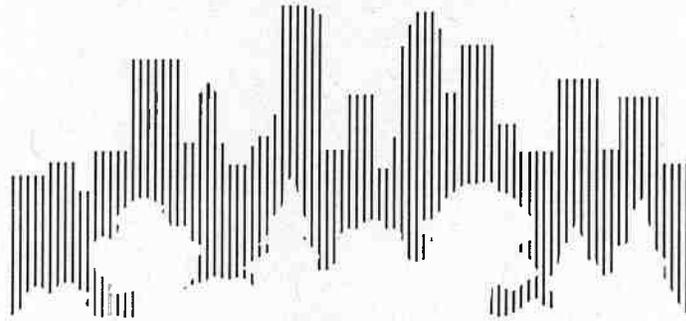
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**MASTERS IN SOCIAL WORK
THESIS**

Elaine S. Korsch

**Development of a Support Group Curriculum:
Building Self-Esteem with Adolescent Girls**

**MSW
Thesis**

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**Development of a Support Group Curriculum:
Building Self-Esteem with Adolescent Girls**

by

Elaine S. Korsch

A thesis

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of Augsburg College
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of :

Elaine S. Korsch

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirements for the
Master of Social Work Degree.

Date of Presentation:

May 10, 1996

Thesis committee :

Carol F. Kuebler Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

Mary Hopmann LICSW
Thesis Reader

Dennis Marcant LICSW
Thesis Reader

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Development of a Support Group Curriculum : Building Self Esteem with Adolescent Girls

Methodology: Program Development

Elaine S. Korsch

May 10,1996

In the past few decades educators, social workers and psychologists have been examining the role self esteem plays in young people's development and have explored why adolescent girls as a group show lower self esteem than adolescent boys. The purpose of this project is two fold: 1) to research those factors that influence the development of self esteem for young girls during the time they move into adolescence and 2) to develop a support group curriculum that addresses those factors that put young girls at risk. The curriculum is designed for girls age 12-14 and is to be facilitated by a female social worker. It is to be used in a group setting in the school enviroment. By using the group process, the curriculum provides opportunities for discussions, collaboration, and building connections with other young girls.

DEVELOPMENT OF A SUPPORT GROUP CURRICULUM BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM WITH ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In the past few decades, educators, psychologists, therapists, and social workers have been studying the role self esteem plays in young people's development. Their research has led to numerous insights about this issue and has explored a number of areas. The concept of self-esteem and adolescents has been examined in relation to age, gender, family relationships, peer relationships, participation in sports and the media. This paper will consider gender analysis of self esteem and the question of adolescent girls as a group demonstrating lower self esteem than boys.

The Minnesota's Women's Fund (1990) presented its report on the health and well being of adolescent girls in Minnesota based on data from the Minnesota Adolescent Health Survey. The survey was administered in the 1986-1987 school year to 36,284 youths in the seventh through twelfth grades in the state of Minnesota (Minnesota Women's Fund, 1990). The survey asked questions about students' home life, their interactions with parents and peers, school performance, levels of stress, self esteem and body image, use of drugs, suicide attempts and sexual behaviors. The demographic composition of the sample was comparable to the population in public schools across Minnesota. The data were analyzed by gender and the results showed:

Girls appear to act out distress in self directed, quietly disturbed behaviors. Boys tend to engage in acting out behaviors, such as fights, homicides and vandalism. Compared to boys the same age, more girls report having a distorted body image and being at high risk for eating disorders or chronic dieting. Proportionately more adolescent female are at higher levels of emotional stress and are more likely to make suicide attempts than boys. Adolescent females are more likely to report having been sexually or physically abused, and a majority of these females reported not having discussed this experience with anyone else or having sought help.

(Minnesota Women's Fund, 1990 p.5)

In 1991, the American Association of University Women announced the results of its survey "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging Women". Roughly 3000 children, 2,374 girls and 600 boys, between grades 4 and 10 were surveyed in 12 locations. The sample was stratified by region. Then a random sample was taken across each strata and cluster proportionate to the number of school children in each state. Children were asked 92 questions about their attitudes about school, self-esteem, view of gender roles, classroom experiences and career aspirations. Self-esteem measures were grouped into six broad categories: individual or personal self-esteem, family importance, academic confidence, isolation, voice, and acceptance. The report concluded that when girls enter the first grade, they have the same levels of skills and ambitions as boys (AAUW, 1991). However, by the time they reach high school, doubts have eroded their dreams. Compared to boys, girls emerge from adolescence with reduced expectations for their futures and much less confidence in themselves (AAUW, 1991). Incongruity was found when the data were analyzed for ethnicity. The AAUW (1991) study found that 65% of Black girls in elementary school expressed high levels of self-esteem and 58% still felt happy with "the way I am." This contrasted with the drops in self-esteem for white and Hispanic adolescent girls in relation to appearance, confidence, family relationships, school, talents and personal importance.

The 1995 Minnesota Student Survey provides another comprehensive picture of Minnesota Youth (Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, 1995). The survey was taken by students in grades 6, 9, and 12. In 1995 approximately 133,000 students participated. It includes questions about school, activities and health. It specifically asks about behaviors that put young people at risk: alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, violence, sexual activity and suicide attempts. Also it asks for adolescents' perception about positive and negative aspects of their lives and environment whether they feel cared for, whether they feel safe, their worries, their moods, whether they have been sexually abused and how they feel about themselves. This same survey was

administered in 1989 and 1992 and the results show a comparison over six years. Tobacco and marijuana showed marked increases since 1992 for all three grade levels (Mn.,1995). Suicide attempts increased slightly from 1992 among 6th and 9th grade students and the highest increases were among females in grades 9 and 12. More females than males report being victims of sexually abuse. Without some interventions, many of these young people will continue to resort to harmful behaviors to manage their stress.

Reactions to these studies have been widespread. Concern sparked by these surveys heightened a sensitivity to the needs of young girls. The Ms. Foundation developed the idea of " Take our Daughters to Work Day"(Executive Summary,1994). Curriculum changes and equity for girls have been encouraged in schools across the country. Gender equity provisions were written into " Goals 2000: Educate America," the federal education reform act of 1994 (Executive Summary,1994). The development of the New Moon Magazine, a magazine for girls and their dreams, was published by girls in Duluth, Minnesota. The YMCA of St.Paul began " Operation Smart", a hands-on science and math program for girls in fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Other programs include the culturally relevant Girl Scouting programs of the Land of Lakes Girl Scout Council and the Girls Achieving Leadership Skills (GALS) of the United Cambodian Association of Minnesota (Winegar, 1995). Programs offering information, publications, catalogues of resources, books and services for girls spread nationwide. There are indicators that helping girls develop skills, especially those involving overcoming challenges can improve young women's self-esteem (Minnesota Women's Fund, 1990).

Adolescence

Adolescence is a time of great change. Historically, psychologists often referred to this developmental period as one of storm and stress and difficulty for adolescents (Hall, 1904 cited in; Simmons, Rosenberg, & Rosenberg, 1973). Adolescents experience biological and social changes associated with puberty, changes in their friendships and in

the ways they interact with other youth of the same and opposite sex, changes in their relationships with parents, and changes in the school environment as they move from elementary to junior high. Physical changes associated with puberty and changes in their school environments can be difficult for individuals to adjust to. In addition, life circumstances such as economic status, cultural influences and family composition and interactions have an impact on individual development (Rubenstein, 1991). Certainly these changes pose important challenges that adolescents must successfully overcome to maintain development.

Rubenstein (1991) states that it's more clinically useful to divide adolescence into three developmental stages: early, middle, and late - each with their own characteristics. Early adolescence usually occurs between the ages of 10 and 14. The focus is on independence and identity. Thinking is concrete and what is real and important happens now. Young people become less interested in their parent activities. Middle adolescence usually occurs between 15 and 17. Independence and identity are highlighted and conflicts around these issues may reach their highest level (Rubenstein, 1991). Peers become very important and the peer culture is very influential in determining life style. Late adolescence occurs between the ages of 18-21. Young people are able to function independently and able to make decisions, listen to family advice and use it when necessary. Peers continue to be important but adolescents between the ages of 18-21 are able to evaluate peer influence.

Although adolescence can be a time of emotional highs and lows, most teenagers go through this period relatively well, even with their predictable experimentation and risk taking behavior (Rubenstein, 1991). However, significant problems that do arise for teens are not simply "outgrown" but may indicate a real need for help. Adolescents today face serious problems and they and their families may not have the resources to resolve them.

Research Question and Overview of Curriculum

Life transitions through adolescence bring on new challenges for young people. During this time of transition the differences among teens tend to widen and the at risk adolescents become more noticeable. Low self-esteem is a serious problem for many young girls partly because it's linked to other problems. Prevention and intervention strategies suggested (Minnesota Women's Fund, 1990) are: provide more educational choices for females, prevent violence against women and girls, replace negative media messages with realistic ones, provide positive role models and provide places for girls to turn and dialogue with other young girls and female adults. This paper will address the following questions:

1. Among young females between the ages of 12 and 14, which young girls are most at risk for social, emotional or other health problems?
2. What factors contribute to the development of self-esteem for young girls?
3. How might a young girls' support group that addresses the concerns of adolescent girls contribute to female psychological development and self esteem?

In order to address these questions, the factors that influence the development of self esteem for young adolescent girls will be examined. A support group curriculum that addresses those issues will be developed to provide a framework for discussion. The curriculum is designed for girls age 12-14 and is to be used in a group setting in the school environment. The group facilitator will be a school based female social worker. Through the group process, adolescent girls will have the opportunity to use their female relationships as models for self knowledge, self affirmation and self identification.

The target population will be a group of 8 to 10 girls ranging in ages from 12 to 14 and selected from a junior high or middle school setting. The girls will be referred by teachers, social workers, counselors, coaches, advisors or parents. Identifying behaviors will include low academic achievement, sporadic absenteeism, few friends or struggling with friendships, non involvement in sports or noticeable low self esteem. There will be

an individual interview with each girl to explain the group format and content, establish their goals, and assess for appropriateness and fit for group. The Piers-Harris Self Concept Scale will be used as an evaluation tool and administered as a pre and post test.

The curriculum consists of eight sessions that meet once a week. The 45-60 minute sessions include an introduction activity, a brief presentation of a current issue, an activity and small group discussion and session evaluation. Each session will cover a different topic: opening session, transition/change, participation in extra-curricular sports and activities, peer relationships, body image, family relationships, media messages, and closing session. A variety of mediums will be used for each activity including art, role play, small group discussion and other experiential activities. The participants will be asked to fill out an evaluation after each session focusing on the format and content of the session.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Adolescence is a stage of life distinct from either childhood or adulthood. Youth are changing physically, maturing sexually, and markedly expanding their knowledge of themselves and the world around them. The self is a social construction; that is, the self-concept represents the incorporation of the attitudes that significant others hold about self (Harter, 1990). Parents, classmates and close friends in particular represent the primary source of feedback. This paper will address the basic processes of adolescent development and those factors that produce the typical features of adolescent self esteem. The six specific areas that directly affect young people on a daily basis: the family, the peer group, the school, their body image, leisure activities and the media will be examined to assess the role they play in the development of self esteem.

Conceptual Framework

Adolescent Development Theory

Numerous theories have been offered to account for development during adolescence. These theories can be placed into three major explanatory categories; nature theory, nurture theory, and interaction theory (Talwar & Lerner, 1991). The first category stresses that biology or the person's nature is the source of adolescent development. Nurture theories stress that experience, learning, and environment are the major sources of variables influencing behavior and change. The third group, "interaction" theories, maintains that there is a blend of nature and nurture factors that determine development. The perspective that serves as a framework for this paper is Erickson's psychosocial theory, an interaction model (Talwar & Lerner, 1991).

One of the main tasks of adolescence is to achieve an identity - "not necessarily a knowledge of who we are but a clarification of the range of what we might become, a set of self references by which we can make sense of our responses and justify one's

decisions and goals" (Erickson, 1968 p.155). Erickson's theory describes eight stages of psychosocial development. In each stage the person has to develop a capacity (an ego function) to meet social demands. Thus each stage involves an ego crisis, the resolution of which depends on whether the person meets the demands of society and develops appropriate ego capabilities (Erickson,1968). The core concept in Erickson's theory in regards to adolescence is the development of ego identity and the identity crisis as being the most prominent and essential characteristic of adolescence.

Most theorists agree that there are different stages to the development of identity (Harter, 1990). These include selecting and preparing for a future career, re-evaluating religious and moral beliefs, working out political values, and adopting a set of social roles, including sex role and anticipation of marriage and parenthood. "Erickson anticipated that within each of these domains the adolescent should first experience identity diffusion, followed by experimentation during a moratorium period, culminating in identity formation involving choice, commitment and consolidation" (Harter, 1990, p. 377). Identity formation requires an individuation process in which one differentiates the self from parents without becoming totally disconnected. One must not only make a commitment to certain choices but also has to give up others (Harter,1990).

Historically, identity formation in males has the cultural expectations of autonomy and differentiation from others, whereas female identity has reflected the cultural expectation of connectedness and the establishment of intimate relationships (Harter, 1990). The socialization of females involves concern for relationships and emotional bonds, whereas males are encouraged to pursue a path of independence and individual achievement. Recent literature on the psychology of women (Gilligan, 1982) has challenged whether separation and individuation are ever realistic psychological goals for women. While males must separate and individuate from their mothers to make a masculine identification, the female develops in relation to, not in separation from, primary love objects. This differential development in girls results in more fluid

boundaries between self and others, and consequently results in richer affective experiences of empathy and attachment ego (Berzoff, 1989). Gilligan and Brown write, "the female self is a relational self. It develops in a web of interconnections and it is within the community of relationships that female identity occurs"(1982 p.79).

The task of identity exploration and commitment may be more complex for females than males, to the extent that women may attempt to establish identities in a greater number of domains such as those of family, peers, intimate relationships, as well as career, political beliefs, and athletics (Harter, p. 380). The options for women about these domains are becoming more numerous and therefore, potentially, more confusing and conflicting. For those women who aspire to a career, the challenge remains to integrate their work and family roles, whereas for men career development still appears to be the primary issue (Harter,1990).

Self Esteem

Efforts to understand adolescent development, thoughts, behaviors and feelings, have often involved the study of self esteem. Questions that often are asked when exploring self-esteem and adolescents are: why do some youth hold the self in high regard, whereas others have very poor self-esteem, what impact does high or low self-esteem have on adolescents' emotional reactions and behaviors, and what function does self-esteem serve in the lives of teenagers? The literature reveals that positive self-esteem serves as a buffer against stress and is typically associated with a wide range of productive coping strategies (Harter,1990). In contrast, individuals with low self-esteem are more at risk for emotional and behavioral problems such as anxiety, depression and lack of motivation. This section shall consider the definition of self-esteem, the cultural implications and the methods and instruments to measure self-esteem.

There is a growing consensus among researchers that self esteem is an image of self that is made up of factors including academic competence, social competence, parental approval, and appearance (Flansburg, 1993). Each of these factors, however, plays a larger or smaller role in an individual's self esteem, depending on the value each individual places on these various areas. For William James, (1982) individuals possess a sense of self esteem based upon how adequately one performs in domains where one considers success to be important. In contrast, Charles Horton Cooley, (1902) stated that self esteem was a social construction involving the incorporation of the attitudes of significant others. The teenager who feels she is receiving support and positive regard from significant others such as parents or peers will express positive regard for the self in form of high self esteem. Thus the individual imitates the attitudes that others hold toward him or her and those reflected appraisals are what Cooley calls the "looking glass" model. Harter (1990) concluded that both theoretical formulations are relevant in understanding the determinants of self-esteem.

Self-esteem and the way we examine it is strongly affected by cultural values and expectations. Often the research measuring self-esteem fails to take into consideration individual factors such as development, cultural, religious, and situational differences. What one person believes to be low self-esteem may be viewed as resistance to cultural expectations by another. Self-esteem is acknowledged primarily in the western European - American context. The AAUW (1992) report concluded that Black girls express high levels of self-esteem from elementary school through high school. Hispanic girls are much less confident and positive than Black girls and go through a crisis in some ways even more profound than that of white girls. Harter(1990) explains that the comparable differences in self-esteem is because the values of their cultures are different and the domains will be judged differently. For example there is a stronger connection between school grades and self-esteem for whites than for Blacks. Harter (1990) stated that

African Americans students in segregated or racially isolated schools have higher self-concepts than those in desegregated schools. The recognition of potentially different pathways to self-esteem must be considered.

Self-esteem has been difficult for researchers to define and measure as evidenced in the following quotations. " Ambiguous definitions of the construct, inadequate measuring instruments, and lack of theory have plagued self esteem research" (Harter,1990). "Measurement of self esteem is a complex task primarily because of the difficulty in establishing a solid theoretical basis as a framework" (Juhasz,1985). The mutability of what self esteem is makes measuring it problematic, especially quantitatively: more than 200 tests have been designed and used (Flansburg,1993 ; Adler, 1992). Many of these tests combine evaluations across diverse domains such as academic competence, social competence, behavioral conduct, and appearance into a single summary score. It is believed that a more fruitful approach is to tap discrete domains of self-esteem separately, since adolescents typically have different self-esteem in each of these areas.

The Piers- Harris Children's Self Concept Scale has been the instrument suggested to be used with this curriculum. Self-concept as assessed by this instrument is a relatively stable set of self-attitudes reflecting both a description and an evaluation of one's own behavior and attitudes (Piers, 1984). It is an 80-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess how children and adolescents feel themselves. The tool also provides six cluster scales: 1) behavior, 2) intellectual-school status, 3) physical appearance, 4) anxiety, 5 popularity and, 6) happiness and satisfaction. The scale may be administered individually or in group.

The Piers-Harris appears to be a highly reliable instrument. Test -retest reliability coefficients range from .42 to .96 and internal consistency estimates for the total score range from .88 to .93 (Piers, 1984). The reliability figures compare favorably with other

measures used to assess personality traits in children and adolescents. Estimates of the content, criterion-related, and construct validity of the Piers-Harris has been obtained from a number of empirical studies. These studies have used a variety of approaches including item analysis, intercorrelations among the scales and items and comparison of the responses of various criterion groups. Again, the Piers-Harris has been compared to other scales designed to measure similar constructs. The Piers-Harris is intended solely as a screening instrument. It should not be used in isolation. Other methods such as clinical interviews, peer nominations, and observations of the child should be used to supplement, corroborate and investigate the scale results (Piers, 1984).

Harter (1990) indicates that social support in the form of approval and confirmation from others carries a powerful influence on self-esteem. Harter (1990) suggests that the identification of the sources of self-esteem, competence in the domains such as academic, social competence, physical appearance or happiness that are important to the self, as well as social support, is critical to understand in order to develop and plan for interventions for adolescents. For the purpose of this research the definition of self-esteem will include: self-attitudes, self-descriptions and the incorporation of the attitudes that significant others hold about self. The scores of the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale, the forms of approval and confirmation received by others in the group, observations of the social worker and self evaluations will be used to evaluate one's self-esteem.

The Role of Groups

Social Group Work

Social group work is a method of social work that helps persons enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences and cope more effectively with their personal, group, or community problems (Konopka, 1983). Its core tasks are; (1) to assess, clarify, and help individuals with the interaction of their inner motives and the demands of their social environment, and (2) to help change the social environment if it is

detrimental to the social development of individuals (Konopka, 1983 p. 30). Social group work functions within the fields of health, welfare, education, and recreation as a helping method. The method of working with people in groups has generally taken place in such locales as community centers, settlement houses, YMCAs and YWCAs, residential treatment centers, schools, and so on.

The curriculum has been designed to be facilitated by a female school social worker. The leader will need to operate with the knowledge of small group behavior and the understanding of concepts such as power, roles, norms, and, boundaries. Practitioners who understand how groups develop can act with a higher degree of consciousness and skill focused upon assisting groups in their maturation (Berman-Rossi, 1993). A more highly developed group is a group better able to satisfy members needs (Berman-Rossie, 1993). The worker serves to model and facilitate a sense of connectedness. Presenting herself as a caring and respectable professional, she implicitly teaches the helping process (Wasserman & Danforth, 1988).

Social group work may complement or supplement individual, family or community modalities. The dimension of mutual aid operating in groups is one primary factor that differentiates group work from other modalities of practice. When the mutual aid process operates, dynamic forces are released that are often referred to as change mechanisms or therapeutic factors (Northern, 1988). Unlike the "one worker, one client system," in groups there are multiple relationships and interactions to be understood and used for particular purposes (Northern, 1988). Group work provides a climate of peer support, cohesiveness, quality of relationships, knowledge and skills, decrease of isolation, an installation of hope and the enhancement of self-esteem and personal identity. People can grow and change through their relationships and interactions with others.

The group work models that have been selected to be used with this curriculum are those commonly called the growth group or mutual aid group. The term "growth" in

group work stresses members coming together to develop their potential and increase their socio-emotional health rather than socio-emotional illness (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). Growth groups provide a supportive atmosphere in which individuals can gain insights, experiment with new behaviors, get feedback and grow as human beings. Composition of growth groups may be either diverse or consist of membership with similar characteristics to enhance empathy and increase the supportive element of the group (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). Growth orientated groups are found in a variety of settings.

The mutual aid and support process supports open expression of feeling and sharing of information relevant to the purpose of the group (Shulman & Gitterman, 1986). Sharing ideas and experiences fosters an atmosphere in which many positive changes can occur. First there is a sense of validation, of belonging, of universality of experience and feeling (Brandler & Roman, 1991). The realization that others experience and feel the same helps reduce the sense of alienation and loss suffered during the crisis. Thus the member feels entitled to the full range of emotion and is helped to move to a more objective understanding and ultimately to a resolution. Sharing of feelings provides a reality-testing base where members' ideas are accepted, confronted and challenged by others. Through this process of support, advice and validation, the individual has been given to and equally as important, has given to others (Brandler and Roman, 1991). The result is an increase in self-esteem and the ability to see oneself as having the capacity to give to others.

Groups in Schools

Schools are major determinants of self perception in children and youth (Tredennick, 1993). Schools are second only to home environments in the determination of children's self concept and attitudes of self acceptance or self rejection. Schools provide an ideal setting for interventions which foster self-esteem due to the broad

outreach possibilities, availability of clientele, and the natural potential for group formations (Tredinnick,1993).

Two studies (Tredinnick, 1993 & Calhoun, 1979) were found about group interventions in schools. Tredinnick (1993) completed a study for the purpose of providing short term group interventions for enhancing self concepts in students and determining the results of such interventions. A six week group intervention was facilitated with a total of 94 public school students, 51 males and 43 females, in grades 5,6 and 7th, within the school setting. A total of 13 well being groups were facilitated over a period of two years for the purpose increasing self esteem. The groups averaged 8 students and met once weekly. Selection of the students was based on teacher, counselor, and school social worker referral. Criteria considered for referring students included 1) academic failure; 2) low achievement test scores, 3) poor socialization skills and 4) family difficulties. Participation was voluntary and parental consent was required to participate. Students completed the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale prior to and following the group. Group activities were structured to facilitate discussion about likes and dislikes, similarities and differences, stress and coping skills and self-esteem. At the conclusion of the group process, students had significantly increased their scores ($p \leq .01$) in the six cluster areas (behavior, intellectual, physical appearance, anxiety, popularity and happiness) of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Tredinnick, 1993).

Calhoun (1979) reported on an innovative project with a small group of high school girls, all of whom had a very low self-concept. This project was a cooperative effort with a regional service agency and a suburban school district. It was the primary goal of this program to meet the specific needs of children who have been referred for diagnostic and clinical evaluation. In a local high school five females , in grades 9-12 were identified as experiencing low academic success and had been placed in special classes. A fashion model, also a certified teacher of cosmetology with experience in

public relations, was selected to work with these girls. The choice of facilitator was based on the assessment that the girls feelings of worthlessness were reflected in their appearance. After three sessions there was noticeable change in the appearance of all five girls. On the evaluations, the girls indicated that they saw the leader as an interested and helping adult and they positively identified with her.

Because of the favorable outcome of this study a pilot study was planned and implemented with three other school districts. Three small groups were identified composed of 10 -12 ninth grade female students having poor self-concept. Six weekly one hour sessions were constructed for these students. The content of the six sessions included activities to: introduce each other, use make up, discuss personal appearance, self-esteem, and innovations to fashion. The role of the fashion model was to present the course material and take a personal interest in each of the girls. The self-esteem was measured by a pre and post test using the Hudsons Index of Self-Esteem and the Self Appraisal Inventory. All three groups showed significant improvement in self-concept scores following the treatment program. The overall increase in post test measures on the Self Appraisal Inventory were statistically significant beyond the .025 level for all four scales (Calhoun, 1979). For the Hudson's Index of Self Esteem the group post-test means were consistently lower across all districts (Calhoun, 1979). High scores are indicative of poor self-concept.

Student self-concept is linked to relationships with other students, with teachers and to academic performance (Beane, Lipka, and Ludwig, 1980, cited in Tredinnick, 1993). Short term group interventions in the school setting can have a positive and significant effect on self-esteem. Working with groups is a natural place from which to begin understanding individuals (Brandler & Roman,1991).

Strength's Perspective

Using the strength's perspective means emphasizing the positive qualities and attributes of the client and framing them in an accessible and useful way for the client (Weick, Rapp, Sullivan & Kisthardt, 1989). The strength's perspective draws the focus away from the negative aspects or problems of the client. "In 1958 the Commission on Social Work Practice included as a main objective to the field to 'seek out, identify and strengthen the maximum potential in individuals, groups and communities' (Bartlett, 1958 p.6; cited in Weick et al., 1989).

The words of Smally (1967) show how the profession provides the necessary foundation for an approach to helping people that is dedicated to the development of people's strengths:

The underlying purpose of all social work effort is to release human power in individuals for personal fulfillment and social good, and to release social power for the creation of the kinds of society, social institutions, and social policy which make self-realization most possible for all men [or women]. Two values which are primary in such purposes are respect for the worth and dignity of every individual and concern that he [or she] have the opportunity to realize his [or her] potential as an individually fulfilled, socially contributive person. (p.1)

In focusing on a person's strengths, the individual will be more likely to continue development along the lines of those strengths. An assumption is made in the strength's perspective that the quality of growth is enhanced by attending to the positive attributes (Weick et al., 1989). Emphasizing deficits has serious implications and limitations, but considerable advantages can be found when focusing on strengths (Cowger, 1994). The principles that guide the strength's perspective are that people have the capacity to determine what is best for them and make choices based on their own best sense of what they need. People can identify the resources available within themselves and their lives.

Basic group work includes identifying the strengths, helping members to recognize and appreciate them, and facilitating improved use of the strengths (Fike & Rittner, 1992). " Grace Coyle (1948) wrote, 'Because of man's essentially social nature his fullest growth comes only as he uses his expanding powers in conjunction with and

for the benefit of others' (p.9). Group work is animated by values of social responsibility, interdependence and belief in the power of the group members to determine their purpose and direction (Fike & Rittner, 1992).

The research about resiliency closely resembles that of the strength's perspective. The research on resiliency stresses the importance of environments that encourage the healthy development of all people through caring and support, high and positive expectations, and opportunities for active participation and contribution (Bernard, 1995). Warner and Smith (1992) found that competence, confidence, and caring can flourish in children, if children encounter persons who provide them with the secure basis for the development of trust, autonomy and initiative. It has been recommended that school based interventions stress the importance of close, mutually reinforcing, and growth-enhancing relationships between adult and children (Bernard, 1995).

Current Issues of Young Females

Transitions / Change

Transitions are critical periods for students because they are points of maximum discontinuity and change (Entwisle, 1990). The transition into junior high often requires a shift from the intimate neighborhood elementary school with a self-contained and personalized classroom to the junior high with many teachers and hundreds of students. Moving from elementary to junior high school increases stress for adolescents because students move from being "top dog" to "bottom dog." Transitions are a crucial period for study since it is at these times variances among individuals tend to increase and those unable to cope are more noticeable (Entwisle, 1990).

Several studies have been conducted to assess the impact of school structure and transition on self esteem. Simmons, Rosenberg & Rosenberg (1973) conducted a cross sectional study to investigate whether adolescence is a period of disturbance for the child's self image and if so, at what age and under what social conditions the disturbance

is the greatest. Data were collected from 2,625 public school children in grades 3 through 12 in Baltimore City in 1968 using individual interviews with the students and 5 minute interviews with the parents. Prior to the interviews indexes based on the Guttman Scale were developed to measure the four aspects of the self image i.e. self consciousness, stability of self, global self esteem, and self attitude. Their findings showed that young people in early adolescence, particularly young girls between the ages of 12 and 14, exhibited heightened self consciousness, greater instability of the self image, slightly lower self esteem and a less favorable view of opinions held of them by significant others. Evidence presented suggested that the child's environment may have a stronger effect than one's age (Simmons et. al; 1973).

In 1974 -1976 Simmons along with Blyth, Van Cleave and Bush (1979) conducted another study with 798 school children from the Milwaukee Public Schools to examine the impact of the movement into early adolescence upon the self esteem of children. A key aspect of this study was to replicate the Baltimore study and to extend its findings. The same exact indices (i.e.; self consciousness, stability of self, global self esteem and self attitude) were used to measure self-esteem (Simmons et. al; 1979). Children were followed from sixth to seventh grade in two different types of schools. One school structure was a K-8 which involved no change of schools for the child and the other school structure was an elementary, K-6. The independent variables; school types, pubertal development, and early dating behavior, were stratified to control for changes in the students' school environment in which the students were in, pubertal development and social behavior. Findings indicated that young girls who have recently experienced multiple changes (i.e. changed schools, have reached puberty and begun to date) had the lowest self-esteem. Among boys, in contrast, early pubertal development was an advantage for self-esteem (Simmons et al. 1979).

Eccles, Wigfield, Flanagan, Miller, Reuman and Yee (1989) examined change across the junior high school transition, from 6th grade to 7th grade, in children's general

self-esteem, as well as changes in their self concept of ability in and valuing of math, english, sports and social activities. Twelve school districts were recruited for the project. Students were recruited from their sixth grade math classes and again in their seventh grade math class. The sample included approximately 1,450 students. The study had a 2 year, four wave design. Students completed questionnaires twice each year over the 2 years of the study. The results after two years showed self esteem declined across the transition to junior high, but increased during 7th grade. Self-concept levels of ability for math, english and social activities declined after transition, but perceptions of social ability increased during seventh grade. Overall boys reported higher self esteem than girls at all testing periods. Observed gender differences in beliefs about the different activities showed: 1) boys had higher self concepts of ability for sports and math than did girls and 2) girls had higher concepts of ability for English (Eccles et al. 1989).

The move to a larger, impersonal junior high may be too much for some adolescents. For young girls, the school structure change and pubertal development can be extremely stressful (Simmons et al. 1979). The issue of school size is probably more critical at this age of 12-14 than after junior high. A secure, predictable and responsive environment may be a beneficial aid for young adolescent females at this vulnerable time (Entwisle, 1990).

Participation in Sports and Extra - Curricular Activities

Adolescents spend a significant portion of their time time engaged in leisure activities. For some it may mean socializing with others, engaging in hobbies and sports, listening to music or watching television. Leisure activities can take place in formal, structured settings or in such informal settings as street corners, shopping malls and neighborhood playing fields. These activities can occur when adolescents are in the company of friends or family but also when they are by themselves. Sports, games and activities involving music are among the primary leisure arenas in which adolescents

(typically males) participate (Fine et al. 1990). Girls' leisure activities have been less well studied, perhaps because they frequently occur in private settings rather than in public (Fine et al. 1990).

Arguments in favor of interscholastic sports competition for adolescents stress many benefits which include: promotion of autonomy and self definition, opportunities for sociability, competency assessment, and skill development (Zarbatany, Hartman, & Rankin, 1990). Sports are believed to contribute to physical well being, social adjustment and self-esteem. Browne and Francis (1993) completed a study in which they examined the perceptions of social competence and family dynamics among adolescent participating in a school sponsored sport, (baseball), and an independent sport, (skateboarding). Subjects, aged 12-19 years, predominantly males, completed a questionnaire consisting of FACES III, a social competence scale, and other items related to school performance, sports commitment, and perceptions of adult attitudes. The survey was administered to skateboarders attending two regional competitions and the baseball players were surveyed at practice sessions.

The study (Browne & Francis, 1993) found the skateboarders had positive feelings about themselves and their social abilities despite the belief that adult attitudes toward skateboarding were generally negative. PAR, Perceived Adolescent Relationship Scale, item responses indicated that both groups viewed themselves as being attractive, popular and socially skilled. Respective means for participants were 4.6, 4.7, and 4.9 (skateboarders) and 4.9, 5.1, and 5.4 (baseball players) on a 7-point scale (Browne & Francis, 1993). Skateboarders believed that adult attitudes toward the sport were relatively negative, $M=3.66$; baseball players felt adult attitudes toward them were positive, $M= 1.7$ (Browne & Francis, 1993). In this study there is a positive relationship between physical activity and the promotion of a positive body image, positive feelings about self and reduction of stress (Browne & Francis, 1993). Also, the results suggest

that positive outcomes (e.g., higher self-esteem and popularity among peers) may accompany participation in non-traditional sports, even those devalued by adults.

Three articles were found that addressed participation in sports and other activities and the effects on self-esteem (Jaffee & Richter, 1993; Wilson Report, 1988; and Fit To Achieve, 1991). In 1988, the Women's Sports Foundation published the Wilson Report, which reported findings regarding the influence of parents and family factors on girls' participation in sports. The report was based on the responses of 1,004 mothers and fathers and 513 of their seven to 18 year old daughters who were interviewed by telephone. The report claimed that 87% of girls between the ages of seven and 10 were active in sports and 75% of girls 15 to 18 years of age were active in sports. Reasons cited for the decline were lack of opportunity to play, feelings of inadequacy about their skills and lack of time (Wilson Sporting Goods Co., 1988). The degree to which parents support and encourage their daughters to play were important to them. The findings also pointed out that for black teens the sport experience may be different. Black parents reported that economic factors, money for equipment, transportation to practices and games and traditional attitudes towards girls, " boys make fun of girls who play sports" added challenges to their daughter's participation.

The Youth Sports Institute of Michigan conducted a study, sponsored by the Athletic Footwear Association, in which 10,000 10 to 18 year olds responded to a questionnaire. The potential benefits of physical activity listed by both girls and boys were improved self-esteem, enhanced assertiveness, emotional stability, independence and self-control (Fit To Achieve, 1991). The study also found that sports participation declines among 13 -18 year olds. The problem of adolescents dropping out of sports was analyzed for gender. The reasons girls gave for discontinuing involvement were: 1) they lost interest, 2) they were not having fun anymore, 3) there was too much pressure, 4) they needed more time to study (Fit To Achieve, 1991).

The Melpomene research (Jaffee & Ricker, 1993) sampled 67 girls ranging in age from 12 -17 years from the Minneapolis / St. Paul metropolitan area and from rural Minnesota. Arrangements for the focus groups were made in collaboration with three public schools and a variety of organizations, including the Girl Scouts, YWCA, community centers and the Minneapolis Park Board. Each group consisted of 3 to 12 girls for a total of 10 groups. The sample was geographically, economically and racially diverse. Two questionnaires, one about self-esteem and the other about physical activity were administered. The AAUW, (American Association of University Women) Self-Esteem Index was duplicated for the study to measure confidence and self-esteem. A focused group discussion for 1 and 1/2 hours followed. The topics included the girls' views on sports, confidence, and risk taking behaviors. Facilitators for the focus groups were part of the research team. All discussion groups were audiotaped. Based on the data gathered, a positive correlation between participation and self-esteem was indicated (Jaffee & Ricker, 1993).

Adolescents enjoy relatively more free time and fewer responsibilities than adults and have lots of time to fill. Adolescents choose leisure activities they enjoy , according to their cultural context and the resources available to them (Fine, Mortimer & Roberts, 1990). Participation in sports provides positive self-esteem through challenge, achievement, risk taking and skill development (Jaffee& Ricker, 1993). Girls engage in physical activities to have fun, yet adolescent girls over the teen years drop their participation in sports and physical activity. Melpomene (1993) recommends that: opportunities for girls need to be provided at all skill levels, to keep sports fun, emphasize positive role models, and be a fan. In addition, girls leisure time has been less well studied and obtaining further research about girls leisure patterns would be beneficial.

Peer Relationships

Forming relationships with parents and other adults is a central element of the unique developmental tasks of childhood but by adolescence the role of peer friendships as a source of activities, influence, and support increases dramatically (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Adolescents typically report that they enjoy their activities and friends. With friends they feel that they are understood and can fully be themselves. Friends spend time simply talking about themselves, other adolescents, events in the wider world. They relax, joke, watch TV, videos and participate in sports. The ability to develop friendships during adolescence is especially important because they help ease the transition from childhood to adulthood (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990).

The increased importance of peer relations is reflected in the amount of time adolescents spend with friends. " In the United States teenagers average 20 hours a week of non classroom time with peers compared to 2 to 3 hours reported in Japan and the Soviet Union" (Savin - Williams & Berndt, 1990). Peer friendships may cross barriers of race, sex, social class, and age. They may be plentiful, sparse, intense , superficial, stable or unstable. Interactions with peers during adolescence occupy more time for many youths than interactions with family or solitude.

Savin-Williams & Berndt (1990) propose that friendships increase one another's self esteem, provide information, emotional support and advice. Friends also contribute to an evolving sense of identity of having a place in the world. Through self disclosure and by allowing oneself to become vulnerable, adolescents share with one another their most personal thoughts and feelings and become sensitive to the needs and desires of others in the process acquire a deep understanding of the other and self (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). This intimacy has critical significance for future interpersonal relationships and is crucial to developing a sense of connectedness with others and differentiating the self.

Various studies have reported that emotional closeness and trust are more characteristics of girls than boys relationships. Several articles (Lackovic-Grgin & Dekovic, 1990; Berzoff, 1989; & Frankel, 1990) were found that discussed the contribution of significant others to adolescent self esteem, the role of attachments in female adolescent development, and girl's perception of different aspects of peer relationships.

Lackovic-Grgin and Dekovic (1990) examined the contribution of how significant others view an adolescent to their self esteem. Their sample consisted of 399 adolescents, both male and female, in either elementary or secondary school in three cities in Yugoslavia. The subjects were divided into 3 age groups: seventh graders, ninth graders, and eleventh graders. All data were obtained anonymously via a self report questionnaire administered in a group setting during class hours. The subjects were asked to rate five sets of three items as: 1) I myself think I am...; 2) As a student, my teacher thinks I am...; 3/4) As a daughter my mother / my father thinks I am...; 5) As a friend, my friend thinks I am... It was expected that the impact of perceived evaluation would decrease as the adolescent becomes older but this was not true for the females. The perceived evaluations of teacher and mother seems to be especially important for both males and females. The significant amount of variance for the perceived evaluations of teacher and mother was 59% for males, $F(2,62) = 44.59, p < .01$, and 60% for females, $F(2,104) = 79.04, p < .01$ (Lackovic-Grgin & Dekovic, 1990). For girls there is also a significant increase in the impact of friends' evaluation as they move from early adolescence to middle adolescence.

Female friendships and how they contribute to female psychological development were examined by Joan Berzoff (1989). Her paper discussed how adolescent girls use their relationships to clarify their identity and differentiate themselves from their family of origin. The research sample consisted of eighteen woman, in their thirties, who had valued female friends and who had reached late

adolescence at an all female college during the height of feminism. Through extensive interviewing and psychological testing they were asked to describe the functions their friendships served in promoting their psychological growth. Four important developmental phenomena emerged :

1. Woman saw female friends as models who expanded their views of themselves.
2. Woman described friends as mirrors who provided feedback and enhanced self knowledge.
3. Female friendships were described as functioning like journals: promoting insight and providing transitional functions.
4. Women described creating empathic contexts with valued female friends which function as holding environments. (Berzoff,1989).

Berzoff (1989) found that friendships and journals serve important functions for adolescent girls . They provide self-affirmation, self-knowledge, and self-cohesion.

Berzoff (1989) stated "by helping girls develop through attachments with peers one can more fully realize the complexity of their relational experiences"(p.119).

Karen Frankel (1990) examined specifically the dimensions of peer social support and the dimensions of peer social stress for middle school girls. In her study she also explored whether girls differentiate their perception of social resources. The subjects were middle school students in a Midwest college town. Students from two middle schools participated. Instruments included individual interviews, pilot questionnaires, revised questionnaire and measures of demographics, and sociometrics. Findings showed that early adolescents have intricate views of their social milieu resources. It was found that girls can discriminate their perceptions of resources between best friends and general friends. Distinct dimensions of support which included emotional support, problem support, and behavioral demonstrations of support were described.

For the most part adolescents thoroughly enjoy the time they spend with their friends. Such times are sources of fun, activity, and support. Close and supportive friendships have beneficial effects on psychological, social and academic adjustments (Berzoff,1989). Young women are able to differentiate the dimensions of support offered by friends, distinguish between best friends and general friends, and use these relationships for self-affirmation, self-knowledge and connectedness (Frankel, 1990).

Body Image / Physical Appearance

The body image is a part of a young girl's self-esteem. It involves thoughts and feelings one has about themselves, and the personal mental picture of the way one looks, and how one moves and experiences physical sensations. Fontaine (1991) writes that the social influence on body image begins in infancy and continues throughout life. As early as kindergarten, children receive positive and negative recognition from their peers based on body image. Thin children are more likely to be chosen as leaders, and fat children are more likely to be left out of games. By the time children are 7 and 8 years old, their concept of body size and physical attractiveness matches the impossible cultural ideal (Fontaine, 1991).

Melpomene (1991) states that the body image is the picture of our physical selves that we carry in our mind's eye. Often that image has little resemblance to how we actually look. Our attitudes, perceptions and value judgments overlay the mental picture, giving us an emotional rather than an objective view. In a Montreal study (Bodywise Women,1991) 36 male and female subjects, seven to twelve years of age completed a self esteem and body esteem questionnaire. Sixteen of the subjects were more than 15% overweight. These children had a lower opinion of their bodies and personal appearance than normal weight children. Authors also found children who are dissatisfied with personal appearances are also dissatisfied with aspects of their lives unrelated to looks

such as: intellectual, school status, behavior, and anxiety. Boys don't seem to be nearly as dissatisfied with their body shape as girls are.

A women's perception of her own body is often based on what she thinks someone else finds attractive (Bodywise Women, 1991). By high school the obsession with weight and dieting becomes extremely common among girls (Bodywise Women, 1991). In 1983 faculties at the school of Nursing at University of Penn. and at Temple University looked at body weight, body image and perception of fad diets in adolescent girls. They studied 203 fourteen to eighteen year olds living in middle class rural and suburban areas. Eighty-three percent said they wanted to loose weight, 14% wanted to gain and only 2% wanted to maintain. Of the 83% that desired weight loss. 56% wanted to loose 10% of their actual body weight inspite of the fact 62% actually fell within the average range for body weight.

A primary task of early and middle adolescence is to achieve a new and positive sense of self in response to the many changes that occur at that age. Perhaps the most dramatic change are the biological and physical changes that require a change in the body image. Puberty itself is a key developmental challenge for adolescents. Puberty may elicit a wide array of emotions. The child may feel alternately excited and frightened, pleased and dismayed by the changes (Brooks - Gunn & Reiter, 1990).

A national probability sample of children and youth of the United States drawn by the National Center for Health Statistics is known as the National Health Examination Survey (Dugan et al. 1985). Data were collected on 5735 adolescents' physical and psychological status. The sampling was appropriately stratified to represent the target population with respect to age, race, sex, religion and population density (Ducan et. al., 1985). Using data from the National Health Examination Survey, Ducan, Ritter, Dornbusch, Gross and Carlsmith (1985) investigated the relationship between maturational timing and body image, school behavior, and deviance. The majority of girls at each stage of sexual maturation wished to be thinner while boys on the average were

satisfied with their weight. Timing of maturation in girls affects their response to the questions regarding weight satisfaction. Sixty nine percent of the early maturing girls and only 27 % of the late maturers wished to be thinner (Ducan, et al. 1985). By contrast, the early maturing boys were most satisfied, with 67 % wishing to remain the same weight (Ducan, et al.1985).

During adolescence looks are more critical for girls than boys. Girls consider physical attractiveness to be more important than do boys, yet girls are more dissatisfied with their appearance than are boys (Harter, 1991). Among teens, physical appearance consistently correlates most highly with global self-esteem (Harter, 1991).

Family Relationships

The family is generally considered an important context for the development of a child's self-esteem (Gecas & Schwalbe,1986). It is the place where our initial sense of self is formed through intimate, intensive and extensive interactions with parents and other family members (Gecas Schwalbe, 1986). Parental behavior that indicates positive evaluation of the child, such as support, participation, and interest in the child, should be positively related to the child's self esteem (Gecas,1970, Rosenberg,1965, and Bachman, 1970). The main effect of parental support, interest, and participation seems to be that it conveys to the child information about his or her inherent worth. Four articles (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986; Barber & Thomas, 1986; LeCroy, 1988 and Wenk, Hardey, Morgan, & Blair, 1994) were found that addressed the issue of parental behavior and self-esteem.

Gecas and Schwalbe (1986) focused their study on the relationships between parental behavior(as reported by mothers and fathers), children's perceptions of parental behavior and the effects of these perceptions on various aspects of children's self evaluation. They sampled 128 families each consisting of a mother, a father and a child in late adolescence. This survey was part of a follow up study of families studied three years earlier. The initial study was based on a classroom -administered questionnaire survey of

762 high school sophomores and, interviews with a matched sample of their mothers and fathers. The follow up data about the relationships were obtained by means of questionnaires mailed separately to each family member.

Three dimensions of parental behavior were considered in this study: control, support, and participation. Control refers to the degree to which parents attempted to limit their child's autonomy and direct his /her activities. Support refers to parents helping their children, showing affection, and expressing approval for their actions. Participation refers to parents spending time with their children and sharing activities with them. Identical questionnaires were given to both the adolescent and the parents. Gecas & Schwalbe (1986) found that adolescent self-esteem is more strongly related to adolescents' perception of parental behavior than it is to parental reports of their behavior. Boys' self-esteem was more strongly affected by parental control, while girls' self esteem was more strongly affected by parental support and participation. The single most important variable for boys self-esteem is the decrease of father's control (the standard beta coefficient .537, $p < .01$) (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986). By contrast, the girls self-esteem is most positively affected by father's support ($p < .05$) (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986). The findings suggests that boys self-esteem may depend more heavily on self attribution related to action and its consequences, while girls self-esteem may be more of a function of reflected appraisals (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986).

Barber & Thomas (1986) studied 527 college students regarding dimensions of fathers' and mothers' supportive behavior. The four separate dimensions they factored included: general support, physical affection, companionship and sustained contact. A self report survey was administered to an sample of 527 male and female college students. The survey consisted of a set of 16 demographic and social class items, 42 parent behavior items and 20 items measuring self esteem and religion. The findings indicated that for sons, companionship from mother and sustained contact from father, are two parental variables most strongly predictive of self-esteem. For daughters, general

support from mother and physical affection from their father significantly account for variance in self-esteem (Barber & Thomas,1986).

The importance of intimacy was recognized in a study by LeCroy (1988). The subjects consisted of 85 adolescents, 43 males and 42 females, ranging in ages from 15 to 19. The students were asked to complete a questionnaire during their physical education class in high school. Intimacy was measured by an inventory developed by Walker and Thompson (1983). Representative items included: spending time together, enjoying the relationship, and loving each other. Self-esteem was measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. The findings confirm that there are important differences between intimate attachments to mothers versus fathers, with fathers having greater impact on adolescent functioning.

A more recent study by Wenk, Hardesty, Morgan & Blair (1994) addressed the involvement of mother and father as it influences the well being of sons and daughters. Longitudinal data drawn from the National Survey of Children were analyzed using regression techniques. Three independent measures of well being: self-esteem, life satisfaction and mental health, were analyzed. Examined in this analysis are 367 male and 395 female respondents who reported having a mother and a father(or stepfather) in the home. Children's perceptions of their relationship with a mother and a father seems to be most important in determining how children feel about themselves. The analyses show that both mother and father are important for the well being of boys. For girls, feeling close to father has a significant positive effect on girl's self-esteem ($b = .12$) and life satisfaction ($b = .18$). Receiving enough love from father has a positive effect on mental health ($b = .09, p \leq .1$). Emotional involvement with mother is also important for the well being of girls. Treatment as a grown up by mother has a positive, but not significant effect on girls ($b = .09$) and spending time with father affects girls' mental health ($b = .12$) (Wenk et al; 1994).

These studies (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986; Barber & Thomas, 1986; LeCroy, 1988; and Wenk et. al.; 1994) show that parent involvement, support and intimacy between adolescents and parents is important for the development of self-esteem for young people. Gecas & Schwalbe (1986) found that adolescent self-esteem is more strongly related to adolescents' perception of parents' behavior than it is to parental reports of these behaviors. LeCroy (1988) found that mothers seem to receive higher ratings on intimacy and support by both male and female adolescents. These finding seems to be consistent with the traditional view of parental roles. Physical affection and behavioral involvement from fathers are found to be a significant predictor of self esteem in daughters (Barber & Thomas, 1986). So even though adolescents spend lots of time with their friends, parental support and involvement of parents remain important.

Media Messages

Literature indicates that the mass media- television, radio, newspaper and magazines, records, video, and films- play formative roles in American teenagers' lives (Fine, Mortimer & Roberts, 1990). Research on adolescents and mass media can be organized in terms of time-related and content-related studies. Fewer studies use media as a dependent variable (for example, as an element in understanding how adolescents spent their time, or as an indicator of family, peer relations or the role in the development of self-esteem. The most common type of research addresses whether and how exposure to media influences audience beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. This section addresses how the mass media contributes to a young person's socialization.

Part of the environment of nearly every adolescent currently growing up in the United States is daily exposure of a variety of media. American adolescents on average listen to music for about four hours a day and watch TV for another two hours (Arnett, 1995, Leming, 1987, Lichty, 1989). Teen age adolescents watch more movies than any other segment of the population. More than four million adolescent girls monthly

purchase magazines such as Seventeen and Sassy (Arnett, 1995). Add to this videos, books, newspapers, and the total time spent with media exposure is a large part of the daily experience of adolescents.

Children on the average watch 21 hours per week of television (Harris Poll,1995). By the time a girl has graduated from high school, she will have spent more time watching television than in the classroom (Harris Poll,1995). The average American is exposed to more than 2000 ads every day and will spend a year and a half of his or her life watching television commercials (Minnesota Women's Fund, 1995).

It is important to recognize the role of the media in the lives of adolescents and that people differ in the uses they make of media products. Young people choose media according to their particular personalities and needs. Adolescents draw materials from media that contributes to their socialization. According to Arnett (1995) there are seven principle sources of socialization; 1) family, 2) peers, 3) school, 4) community, 5) the media, 6) the legal system and, 7) the cultural belief system (Arnett et al; 1995). Three goals of socialization are 1) impulse control, or development of a conscience; 2) role preparation and performance; and 3) the cultivation of sources of meaning- what is to be valued (Arnett et al; 1995). These are things children and adolescents must learn and adults must possess in order to function adequately in their culture. Adolescents have greater control over their socialization on the dimensions of the media than they do from school, community and the legal system. This results in great deal of diversity in the media and a difficult task for parents to impose restrictions upon.

Arnett (1995) studied the role of media in the socialization of adolescents. Five most common uses of media by adolescents can be specified: entertainment, identity formation, high sensation, coping, and youth culture identifications. Adolescents like adults often make use of the media simply for entertainment, as an enjoyable part of their leisure time. Again an important task of adolescence from the Erickson's theoretical perspective is identity formation, the cultivation of one's values, abilities, and hopes for

the future. Adolescents may use the media for gender role identity. Adolescents take ideals of what it means to be a man or a woman partly from the media. They use the information provided in the media to learn sexual and romantic scripts. Magazines are a medium where gender role identity is an especially common theme. Nearly half of the space of the most popular magazines for teenager girls is devoted to advertisements, mostly for fashion and beauty products (Arnett, 1995, Evans et al. 1991).

Adolescents tend to be higher in sensation seeking than adults (Arnett, 1994) and certain media provide the intense and novel stimulation that appeals to many adolescents. The audience for "action " films is composed mostly of adolescent boys and young men. Adolescents use media to relieve and dispel negative emotions. Several studies indicate that "Listen to music and Watch TV" are the coping strategies most commonly used by adolescents when they are angry, anxious or unhappy (Arnett,1995). Larson (1995) suggests that adolescents often listen to music in the privacy of their bedroom while pondering the themes of the songs in relation to their own lives, as part of the process of emotional self regulation. In the course of early adolescence, during this transition time when conflict and stress increase, there is also an increase in time spent listening to music. Although television watching has decreased in adolescence, teens watch television on the average of two hours a day (Lichty, 1989). During this time its for coping purposes. Larson (1995)reports that teens use television as a way of turning off the stressful emotions. Television is also an important medium for information.

Media consumption gives adolescents a sense of being connected to a larger peer network. It is a source for youth culture identification. No matter where they move within the United States , adolescents will find peers in their new area who watch the same television programs and movies and listen to the same music. Music, particularly is a medium for the expression of adolescent specific values (Arnett, 1995 & Roe, 1985).

Advertisements are only one source for the ideas about women (and girls) that are generated in the mass media and popular culture... Popular music, advice columns,...

television shows, and other cultural materials carry explicit and implicit suggestions regarding the appropriate social roles for women and men. Evidence does exist that mass media does influence young people's beliefs about sex and sexual behavior. Teenagers report turning to mass media for information about norms of dating behavior, presumably to learn how to interact with the opposite sex (Roberts, 1993).

In *Recasting TV : Girls View* (Harris Poll, 1995) 2000 school age children were surveyed about their TV preferences and viewing habits. Girls were far more critical of the characters and wished for characters that share their dreams and aspirations, and who would deal realistically with the issues they face every day. They want more realistic and educational programs. They want TV to show more ethnic diversity, more adventures for girls, and more programs with a message. Girls would like programs that help people deal with the pressures surrounding sex, suicide, drugs, AIDS, divorce and violence (Harris Poll, 1995).

The mass media is no different from other information resources in that there is tremendous variations in what people listen to, how they interpret it and how they use the information. The questions include; " does the adolescent learn from mass media," "which adolescents learn what", "under what conditions and to what end?" (Fine, Mortimer and Roberts, 1990).

Rising interest about young girls among teachers, social workers, psychologists and researchers alike makes this review of current knowledge about adolescent girls and the development of self-esteem timely. However, the key issues of adolescence are not new. The core developmental tasks remain: becoming emotionally and behaviorally autonomous, dealing with the physical changes, developing friendships, acquiring an education and resolving issues of identity and values. The next section includes the development of a support group curriculum to provide the opportunity for young girls to discuss these issues.

CURRICULUM DESIGN

Description of Curriculum

This curriculum is designed to be used with adolescent girls between the ages of 12-14 who are currently enrolled in junior high school or middle school. The curriculum is divided into eight sessions which address key issues relevant for adolescent girls as identified by the research in the literature review and is grounded in the natural stages of group development. The key issues include: 1) transition, 2) the physical, social and emotional changes, 3) participation in sports or other extra curricular activities, 4) peer relationships, 5) parental relationships, and 6) the media. Each session includes an opening, an activity related to one of the topics, an opportunity for discussion, a homework activity, and a session evaluation. The activities are developed to address the different learning styles (ie; auditory, visual and kinesthetic). In addition the sessions are designed to reflect the stages of group development beginning with low risk activities and gradually incorporating those activities that require mutual trust and more self disclosure (Berman-Rossi, 1993). An introduction and closing activity are included in each session to address transition into and out of group and from session to session. The homework activity asks the group members to reflect on specific questions related to the weekly topic and to share their reflections as the opening activity in the next session.

The curriculum is to be used in a small group setting in a school environment. The group would consist of 8-10 girls with an adult female facilitator. Sessions are designed to be held for one hour once a week.

Objectives of the Curriculum

- (1) To increase self esteem of young female adolescents.
- (2) To provide knowledge about how the physical, social and emotional changes during adolescence impact the development of self-esteem.

- (3) To acknowledge the importance of peer relationships during adolescence.
- (4) To facilitate the understanding of the role parents play in the development of self-esteem for adolescent females.
- (5) To facilitate the understanding of the role participation in sports or extra-curricular activities play in the development of self-esteem for adolescent females.
- (7) To identify the strengths and assets of each girl.
- (8) To provide knowledge about the impact of the media on female self identity.
- (9) To provide the opportunity for young girls to dialogue with other females.
- (10) To learn about their support system and develop new friendships.

Format of the Curriculum

The group curriculum will be implemented in eight sessions. Each session will be one hour in length. The format for each session will be the same:

- * Check in activity
- * Presentation and activity related to a specific topic.
- * Discussion of the topic.
- * Session evaluation.
- * Homework Activity

Guidelines for Group

Format

Within school settings social workers are frequently called upon to help students with interpersonal problems. While some students cope well with academic and social demands inherent in school settings, others do not exhibit the requisite levels of intellectual and emotional proficiency required to progress through the school system (Rose, 1986). The group work model suggested for this curriculum are the growth group

or mutual aid group. Many students can benefit from a group experience that offers them the opportunity to learn about themselves, share similar experiences and make decisions that benefit themselves and others within their social environment.

The format for this group will be gender specific, facilitated by a female social worker, include a variety of learning mediums (i.e.; short presentations, art and craft projects, role play, small group discussions and other experiential activities) and journaling between sessions. It has been repeatedly documented that girls perform better in interactive and cooperative groups and that boys are more inclined to rise to the challenge of competition in the classroom (Rubin,1992). Girls are more likely to take risks in volunteering answers, when in a safe setting, without feeling there is something personally wrong with them if they answer incorrectly (Rubin,1992). This would seem to indicate that the small group work model could be beneficial in enhancing girls' development.

Journals and diaries are also of therapeutic value to adolescent girls (Berzoff,1989). By actively encouraging girls to articulate themselves through their personal writings, adolescents can gain access to their inner voices (Berzoff, 1989). By encouraging the girls to bring journal entries to the sessions, adolescents can make external their internal dialogue. Journal writing can add a valuable dimension to any group experience. When students have the opportunity to put their thoughts in writing, this often helps to articulate, clarify, and expand on and sort ideas and issues that are important to them (Peterson,1993). They are more likely to remember ideas they want to bring up in group and feel more confident about expressing them. Journals can provide a concrete record of their own development and the experience of self over time (Peterson, 1993). By sharing journal entries with group members, girls may have the opportunity to hear one another's internal dialogue, to learn from one another and to feel less alone.

Leadership

Leadership is the process of guiding the development of the group and its members. The leadership role is most often associated with the designated leader, the social worker, but it is important to distinguish between social worker role and the leadership that may emerge among the group members through the group development (Toseland and Rivas, 1995). Leadership is rarely exercised solely by the leader. The worker encourages members to exercise their own power, taking responsibility for themselves and for the development of the group as a whole. Leadership must be seen as a process within the context of the group and its environment. The worker's leadership skills and intervention strategies should vary depending upon the degree to which the group as a whole and its members can function autonomously.

To define the role for the leader six factors should be considered (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). These factors are: 1) the purpose of group, 2) the type of problem, 3) the environment in which the group works, 4) the group as a whole, 5) the members of the group, and 6) the leader of the group (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). The purpose of the group will help determine the group process. The worker needs to understand the environment in which the group will operate: its setting, the agency's policies and the norms of the larger social systems within the community. Leadership can be influenced by the dynamics of the group. The leaders should use their skills to foster the development of group dynamics and be aware of the stages of group development. Group members will influence the leadership through their own life experiences, the extent to which they participate and the extent to which they share in the leading of the group. And finally the leader, her power, her skills, her personality and her methods for intervention affect how she conducts the group (Toseland & Rivas, 1995).

Groups may have a single facilitator or may have co-facilitators. This may depend upon facilitator's preference, feasibility, policy of the agency and accessibility. This curriculum is designed to be led by a female social worker. Group work entails the

deliberate use of intervention strategies and group processes to accomplish individual, group, and community goals using the value base and ethical practice principles of the social work profession (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). Also, the adult female serves as a role model for the young girls. Often school systems have only one social worker assigned to a building. A female social worker who prefers co-facilitation may invite a female school psychologist, teacher or other school personnel, familiar with group process, to join her.

Group Size

There is no optimal size for group. Size of the group is set according to the number of criteria. Toseland and Rivas (1995) suggest that the size should depend on the objectives of the group, its purpose, needs of the members and requirements to accomplish the tasks. Larger groups (over 14 people) can result in time and energy lost in group management. This curriculum is designed to have 8-10 participants and there are ten objectives.

For the most part there should be some diversity of member coping skills, life experience and levels of expertise (Toseland and Rivas, 1995). Because this curriculum is designed for female adolescents, diversity can be incorporated by composing members from different cultures, social classes, geographic areas, or differing interests, academic levels, and family composition. The differences among members can provide multiple opportunities for support, mutual aid and learning.

Number and Length of Sessions

Often times school groups are implemented during a quarter of the school calendar which is usually nine weeks. The groups are generally set to meet once a week for one period rotating through the day. This may vary within school districts depending upon their school schedule. This curriculum is designed for eight sessions. This allows

one week prior to beginning the group to meet individually with each group participant for an interview, clarification of goals and objectives, formation of a contract, and administration of the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale. The group sessions are designed to be one hour in length; adaptations could be made to accommodate different lengths of class periods.

Closed Membership

Often the choice between open or closed membership depends upon the purpose of the group and the environment. Because of the format of the curriculum, the sequence of the topics grounded in the stages of group development and the structure of the school calendar this curriculum would be better served with membership closed. Toseland and Rivas (1995) state " members of closed groups may form a greater sense of cohesion, greater stability of roles and norms, higher group morale, more predictability of role behaviors and an increased sense of cooperation among members" (p.163).

Criteria for Participation

This group is designed to serve at risk female adolescents. Referrals will be made by teachers, counselors, social worker, coaches, advisors and /or parents. The guidelines for identifying perspective group members might include:

- * truancy
- * low academic achievement
- * few friends or struggling with friendships
- * non involvement sports or extra-curricular activities
- * noticeable low self-esteem
- * family disruption

Intake Procedures / Contract

After potential members have been selected, the social worker introduces them to group. The way members are orientated is important because this process begins the relationship between the leader and the members (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). Orientation can motivate members and clarify their expectations and provide an opportunity to answer any questions. The primary method of introducing members to the group is through an intake interview which is carried out with each member individually or with a small group of potential members (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). This program is designed to meet with each girl individually. Interviews usually explore how members view their issues, how and why they were selected for the group, and how the group may be beneficial to them. The interview usually begins with the social worker explaining the purpose of the group. Group membership and procedures may need to be explained.

If the young girl is interested in participating the parent permission letter is explained and given to her. In most school settings it's school policy that parent/s are informed of their child participating in group and their permission is required to allow a student to miss a class.

(See appendix A and B for intake form and parent letter)

Materials

Using a variety of learning materials can make learning more interesting for all the students. In the classroom students frequently use worksheets and group activities that primarily use this medium get met with resistance. Materials used need to be available, adequate supply for all members, and include clear and legible handouts. The materials needed for each session are listed before the activity. A notebook and/or folder with several sheets of paper stapled together should be made available for the journal assignment. Participant feedback on the helpfulness and usefulness of the material used is also important.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the method by which practitioners obtain information and feedback about their work. The evaluation of the group will use three instruments: 1) the pre and post test based on the Piers-Harris Self Concept Scale, 2) a qualitative written evaluation completed after each session, and 3) an evaluation by the social worker after each session and at the end of the group.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale, subtitled " The Way I Feel About Myself" is a brief, self report measure designed to aid in the assessment of self concept in children and adolescents. Self-concept as assessed by this instrument , is defined as a relatively stable set of self attitudes reflecting both a description and an evaluation of one's own behavior and attributes (Piers,1984). Items on the scale are scored in either a positive or negative direction to reflect this self-evaluative dimension. A high score on the scale suggests positive self esteem, whereas a low score suggests a negative self evaluation. The Piers-Harris is an 80 item, self report that is designed for this curriculum and group to be completed individually during the intake session and then administered in the group on the last session.(See appendix C for testing instrument and score sheet).

Corroboration will be achieved in this program with the use of qualitative evaluations collected after each group session. This evaluation will reflect both the group process and the content activity. These data will be helpful to plan for the next session activities, make adjustments as needed, and provide information about the development of the group process. (See appendix D for evaluation tool)

Evaluation also includes reactions and observations from the group leader. In groups where there are two leaders, meeting together right after the group to share observations, concerns or feedback can be helpful (Toseland & Rivas, 1995). It provides an opportunity to read the participants evaluations and make any changes for the next session. When facilitating group alone it continues to be important to develop a system to record activities that occur during the session immediately following the session. This

assists the leader to evaluate the group dynamics, builds an awareness of the stage of development of the group and feedback about the content of the activity. A form of record keeping may involve writing notes after each session.

(See appendix D for evaluation tool)

SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND:

Teens learn who they are through hearing what others say about them, identifying what they feel and value, and thinking about themselves in relationships to others (Peterson, 1993). Gilligan (1982) proposes that the female self is a relational self, it develops in a web of interconnections. It is in the community of relationships that female identity occurs (p.79). Group discussions give teens an opportunity to gain skill in learning and articulating thoughts and feelings. Sharing their thoughts and feelings in a group helps them to discover what they have in common and how they are different from one another. A support group format can provide an opportunity for young girls to dialogue in a noncompetitive environment.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide the opportunity for young girls to dialogue with other females.
2. To learn about their support system and develop new friendships.

MATERIALS:

1. Poster board
2. Markers
3. Name tags
4. Pencils
5. Notebooks or folders with paper

SESSION ONE

NOTES

1. Pass around name tags.
Have markers available.
(5 minutes)
 - A. Welcome. Introduce self to participants. Make sure everyone is comfortable.
 - B. Overview:
We are beginning an eight week group session for young girls in 7th and 8th grade. You will have the opportunity through discussions and specific activities to talk about issues that young girls face today. Today we will be establishing ground rules for our group and introducing ourselves.
 - C. Establishing ground rules.
Ask if anyone would like to write down the rules for group. What rules would you like to see established for our group? What rules would be necessary to make this a safe place to discuss issues for young girls?
2. Answer any questions.
3. Have a large poster board available.
(10 minutes)
4. Ask questions for clarification if necessary.
Make sure the following rules are included if not mentioned.
 - * confidentiality (anything that is said in group stays in group).
 - * we respect each others thoughts and feelings even though we may disagree.
 - * we listen to each other.
 - * be willing to take risks and yet it's okay to pass.
 - * no put downs of any kind, verbal or non verbal.
5. (20 minutes)
 - D. Introduction Activity.
Please divide up into pairs. Preferably with someone you do not know very well. I would like you to interview each other and get the following information:
 - a. name
 - b. most interesting thing about them.
 - c. something they are good at.
 - d. something they are not good at.
 - e. a woman they admire and why.
 - f. what has been most challenging for them in junior high.
 (Appendix E)

Now go around the group and have everyone introduce their partner.

(10 minutes)

E. Discussion/Sharing

Questions to ask:

What were some similarities you heard about skills, experiences and heroines?

What were some differences you heard about skills, experiences and heroines?

What are some beliefs we have about being female?

(5 minutes)

F. Homework Activity: Something to think about .

In your journal write about

(1) a time you felt good about yourself

(2) the responses you receive when you asked an adult female about a woman they admire and why.

(10 minutes)

G. Evaluation

Before we end please fill the evaluation. The information will help to plan for our next group. (Appendix D)

SESSION TWO

THE CHANGING WOMAN

BACKGROUND:

Some of the most complex transitions of life occur during adolescence. The body changes from a child's to that of an adult; relationships with others take on, new meanings and levels of intimacy, and individuals become increasingly independent (Elliot & Feldman, 1990). Physical changes associated with puberty as well as changes in the educational process can be difficult for individuals to adjust to. Studies show that early adolescents, particularly young girls between the ages of 12 and 14, show greater instability of their self image, slightly lower self-esteem and, a less favorable opinion of their abilities than boys of the same age (Simmons et al., 1979). An important shift in the physical, social, and emotional development for females takes place during this time of adolescent development.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide knowledge how the physical, social and emotional changes during adolescence impact the development of self-esteem.

MATERIALS:

1. Name tags
2. Markers
3. Large sheets of paper

SESSION TWO

NOTES

1. Take attendance.
2. Use name tags again if necessary.
3. Review names and the rules. Ask if anyone would like to add any additional rules.
(15 minutes)
 - A. Welcome back.
 - B. Overview of Session Two.
Today we will begin with a brief check in. Our topic today is about change and transition. There will be a drawing activity and group discussion.
Check in activity:
Please say your name.
Would someone be willing to start and share from your journal. The two questions I asked you to write about were:
 - (1) a time you felt good about yourself
 - (2) the responses you received when you asked another female adult about a woman they admired.
 - C. Activity Presentation:
Adolescence is a time of change especially during the junior high years. You will experience many changes socially, emotionally and physically. These changes occur at different rates and stages for each person. Sometimes we have no control over these changes. However we can deal with our thoughts and feelings about these changes.
4. Hand out a piece of paper to each group member and markers. Use larger sheets of paper if available.
(25 minutes)

Divide the paper into three sections.

First section: draw a picture of yourself when you were age 9.
Second section: draw a picture of yourself today.
Third section: draw a picture of yourself when you will be 24 years old.
Be aware of your hair, your face, your body and your choice of clothes.
5. Ask the following questions.
 - D. Discussion/Sharing
 1. How are you different today than at age 9?
 2. How do you see yourself at age 24?
 3. What are your thoughts and feelings about these changes?
 4. How did you contribute to this change?
 5. What happened that was not in your control?
 6. What will you do to make change happen?

6. Homework activity:
(5 minutes)
- E. "Something to think about "
In your journal write about:
1. A change in your life you experienced this past week?
2. Ask your mother or a woman you are close to how she felt about the changes she experienced during junior high.
7. Hand out the evaluation forms.
(5 minutes)
- F. Evaluation/Closing
Please fill out the evaluation form. Again the feedback is helpful to plan for the next session. Are there any questions before we close?

SESSION THREE

ONE'S MANY TALENTS AND SMARTS

BACKGROUND:

Arguments in favor of interscholastic sports competition and activities for adolescents stress many benefits; which include promotion of autonomy and self definition, opportunities for sociability and skill development (Zarbatany et al.1990). Sports are believed to contribute to physical well being, social adjustment and self-esteem. However, not all young people are gifted with physical abilities and strengths. Howard Gardner (1993) believes that human cognitive competence is better described in terms of a set of abilities, talents, or mental skills, which we call intelligences. An intelligence entails the ability to solve problems or create a product reflective of a particular culture or community. Gardner (1993) describes seven intelligences; including: musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, linguistic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To facilitate the understanding the role participation in sports or extra-curricular activities play in the development of self-esteem for adolescent females.
2. To identify individual intelligences.

MATERIALS:

1. Copies of the Self Inventory
2. Pencils
3. Certificates
4. Markers

SESSION THREE

NOTES

1. Take attendance.
2. Use name tags if necessary.
3. Review names.

A. Welcome back.

(15 minutes)

B. Check in with journal.

1. A change in your life you experienced this week.
2. Experiences your mother or another female adult had in junior high.

C. Overview of Session Three:

Our topic today is about our many talents and skills. We will spend some time talking about the different extra curricular activities you participate in. You will complete a questionnaire that identifies your talents and strengths.

Also you will each draw a piece of paper from a hat with the name of a group member. Remember this name and we will use this for a closing activity.

D. Presentation: Some of you may participate in sports, band, choir, or other activities and clubs. Involvement in sports is a means of staying in shape and staying healthy. Physical activity also helps us gain self confidence and competence. However not all of us are athletic. There are many other areas where we can build our self-esteem and develop social skills. Its important to have something that we are good at and that gives us pleasure. Whether its sports, music, art or something else doesn't matter.

2. Hand out the "How am I smart?" Self Assessment tool and pencils.
(20 minutes)

E. Surveys: Please take a few minutes and fill out this survey. Add your points at the end of each section. (Appendix G)

F. Discussion:

1. What did you find out about yourself?
2. What were you surprised to learn?
3. What area would you like to learn more about?
4. What do you like about the activity you now participate in?
5. How does it help your self esteem?

6. If you were in a sport or activity that you no longer participate in, what made you quit?
 7. How can these different smarts help you?
3. Hand each group member a blank certificate. Pass out markers or crayons.
(Appendix K)
(15 minutes)

G. Certificate activity: Take this blank certificate. You are to design a certificate or an award for her about her special talent or smart.

We will then take a few minutes and you will present your person with her certificate.

4. Homework activity

“Something to think about “.

In your journal write about:

1. An activity you participated in and enjoyed this past week.
2. How one of your smarts helped you this week.

5. Hand out the evaluations.

H. Evaluation/Closing

Please fill out the evaluations. Are there any questions or comments before we close.

SESSION FOUR

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

BACKGROUND:

Forming relationships with parents and other adults is a central element of the developmental tasks of childhood but by adolescence the role of peer relationships as a source of activities, influence and support increase dramatically (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Adolescents usually report that they enjoy their friends. With friends they feel they are understood and can fully be themselves (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Friends spend time simply talking about themselves, other adolescents, and events in the wider world. They relax, joke, watch TV, videos and participate in activities. Friends also contribute to an evolving sense of identity ie; of having a place in the world where they belong (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990).

OBJECTIVES:

1. To acknowledge the importance of peer relationships during adolescence.
2. To build a support system and develop new friends.

MATERIALS:

1. Pencils
2. Crayons (yellow, green and blue)
3. Copies of "Circle of Friends"

SESSION FOUR

NOTES

1. Take attendance.
2. Use name tags if necessary.
(20 minutes)

A. Welcome back.

B. Does anyone need help with remembering the names of everybody?
Would you like to use name tags?

C. Overview of Session Four:
We'll begin with a brief check in.
Our topic today is about friendships. You will be completing a map of your friends and a group discussion about these friendships.

Check in activity:

Would someone like to start and share from your journal?
The two things I asked you to reflect on were:

1. An activity you participated in and enjoyed this past week.
2. How one of your smarts helped you.

Presentation: Friends are those people with whom we spend time with and feel good about ourselves. Friends may be from any age group. They may be like us or different from us. What are the ways they may be like us? How might they be different from us. Friendships may include sharing of information, offering material help or providing emotional support. Sometimes friends are referred to as acquaintances, good friends and best friends. What characteristics or qualities determine whether people are acquaintances, good friends or best friends? Close friends are important at all stages in life. However, friendships are important during adolescence because they help you with the growing up you do as a teen.

3. Hand out a piece of paper and pencil to each group member.
(20 minutes)

Directions:

1. Draw a circle (the size of a quarter) in the middle of the paper and put your name in it.
2. Draw other circles around your circle and fill them in with names of your friends.
(include your peers, family members other adults, teachers, neighbors, friends parents, etc.) (Appendix I)

4. Give each girl a yellow, green and blue crayon.

3. Color yellow those people you consider acquaintances.
Color green those people you consider good friends.
Color blue those people you consider your best friends.

Discussion Questions:

Please come back to the large circle.

Would you be willing to answer the following questions?

1. Do you have more acquaintances, good friends or best friends?
2. How do you feel about your friendships at this time?
3. If you have lost a best friend, what has that been like?
4. What's missing in your friendships?
5. How can you fill those missing pieces?

Thank you for sharing with us.

5. Homework activity.
(10 minutes)

“Something to think about”

In your journal write about:

1. An experience with your friends.
2. Ask a grandparent or another older adult about their best friend when they were a teen.

6. Hand out the evaluation.
(10 minutes)

E. Evaluation / closing

Please fill out the evaluation form.

This will help us to plan for the next session.

Are there any questions before we close.

SESSION FIVE

“MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL”

BACKGROUND:

A primary task of early adolescence is to achieve a new and positive sense of self in response to the many changes that occur during this time. Perhaps the most dramatic changes are the biological and physical changes that require a change in the body image. Our body image involves the thoughts and feelings we have about ourselves and our personal mental picture of the way we look, move and experience physical sensations. A woman's perception of her body is often based on what she thinks someone else finds attractive. Fontaine (1991) writes that the social influence on body image begins in infancy and continues throughout life. By high school the obsession with weight and dieting becomes extremely common among girls (Melpomene, 1991).

OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide knowledge how the physical, social and emotional changes during adolescence impact the development of self-esteem.
2. To have each young woman identify her physical body strengths and assets.

MATERIALS:

1. Magazines
2. Scissors
3. Glue
4. Pencils
5. Poster board

SESSION FIVE

NOTES

1. Take attendance.

(10 minutes)

A. Welcome back.

B. Overview of Session five:

We will begin again with a brief check in. Our topic today is about body image and our physical appearance. You will be working in pairs, completing a questionnaire and participating in a group discussion.

Check in activity:

Would someone like to start and share from your journal?
The two things I asked you to reflect on were:

1. An experience with your friends.
2. Responses a grandparent or another adult told you about their best friend when they were a teen.

C. Presentation: From early childhood, our society teaches us that appearance is very important. Feeling attractive is an important part of self esteem. We may learn that we are judged by how we look. Success seems to be promised to those whose appearance matches a certain ideal. We hear and see messages from people and the media about this ideal image. When we believe these messages we can become unhappy. We can spend lots of money and time trying to change our appearance.

2. Bring a large poster board, a collection of different women magazines, glue and scissors.

(25 minutes)

D. Activity:

Write across the top of the poster board: a perfect body is...

Look through the magazines and find 3-4 pictures of the perfect body We will be making a collage with these pictures. You may find pictures of the perfect face, hair , eyes, legs, etc...

When they finished have them share about the pictures they found and glue them down on the poster board.

Question: What are some of the things that influence this view of perfect?

Where and from whom did you learn about the perfect body?

3. Hand out the next worksheet and pencils.
(15 minutes)

E. Please fill out the check list. Place a number by each item. (Appendix J)

The scale:

1. I wish I could change this.
2. I don't like this, but I can live with it.
- 3.It's okay.
4. I like this about me. It's my best feature.

Now add up your scores and divide by 16. A score above a two says that you can live with your body shape and feel okay about it most of the time.

Discussions /Questions:

Which parts of your body do you wish you could change?

Which parts of your body are you pleased with and feel good about?

How do you feel about your score?

Is that an accurate portrayal of your body image?

4. Homework activity.
(5 minutes)

“Something to think about”

In your journal write about:

- 1.A time this week you felt good about your body.
- 2.Ask an adult how they take care of their body.

5. Hand out the evaluation.
(5 minutes)

Evaluation / Closing

Please fill out the evaluation form. Are there any questions before we close?

SESSION SIX

THE FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

BACKGROUND:

The family is generally considered an important context for the development of self-esteem (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986). It is the place where the initial sense of self is formed through intimate, extensive, and intense interactions with parents and other family members (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986). Parental behaviors such as support, participation and interest in the child are positively related to the child's self esteem. Support, participation and interest seem to convey to the child information about her inherent self worth. Studies indicate that adolescent self esteem is strongly related to the adolescent's perception of parent's behavior rather than to parents reports of these behaviors (Gecas & Schwalbe, 1986).

OBJECTIVES:

1. To facilitate the understanding the role parents play in the development of self-esteem for adolescent females.

MATERIALS:

1. Pencils
2. Copies of "The Family Atmosphere" handout

SESSION SIX

NOTES

1. Take attendance

(15 minutes)

A. Welcome back.

This is our sixth session and we have two more sessions left. We will need to begin plan for closure of our group.

B. Check in activity:

Would someone like to start and share something from your journal?

The two things I asked you to reflect on were:

1. A time this week you felt good about your body.
2. Ask an adult how they take care of their body.

C. Overview of Session Six

Our topic today is about your relationships with parents. We'll be exploring what experiences with parents influence our self esteem and help us to feel good about ourselves.

D. Presentation:

The family is generally considered an important influence for the development of self esteem. Families may include a variety of individuals i.e.; parents, grandparents, siblings, other relatives or friends. For some it may be a foster family or group home. It is the place where we first learn about who we are through the interactions with our parents and other family members. How much time your parents or other adults spent with you, their support and interest in you and their praise or disapproval of your behaviors affect how you believe you are cared for.

Hand out worksheet and pencils.
(30 minutes)

Activity: Complete the following worksheet. (Appendix K) You are to write how you feel about yourself in each of the different areas. These areas include:

1. intelligence
2. personality
3. your potential for success
4. ways of handling money
5. your role as a daughter

Then write the comments you heard from your mother, father or caregiver. Also indicate how much time your parent/s or caregiver spent with you in those specific areas.

The fourth column is what you would like to hear or wish they would have done for you. Let's do the first topic, intelligence, together, taking one step at a time.

First, write down your thoughts and feelings about your intelligence. Then, write down those phrases you heard from your mother and/ or father or caregiver. Next, write down how involved your parents were with your schooling. And last, write down what you would have wished for from them. Now, go ahead and work on the next one and finish the worksheet.

When they complete the worksheet bring them back to group.
(10 minutes)

4. Homework activity
(5 minutes)

5. Hand out the evaluations.
(5 minutes)

E. Discussion

Would anyone like to share what you wrote for intelligence? Which area would you like to do next? Who else would like to share?

Questions:

1. How was this for you to think and write about?
2. What did you learn for yourself with this activity?
3. When parents or caregivers cannot be there for you, what do you do?
4. How do you take care of yourself?

F. Closure Activity

Based on the exercise we just completed could each

Something to think about

In your journal write about:

1. Something you hear positive from a parent or caregiver this week.
2. Something you did with a parent or caregiver this week.

G. Please fill out the evaluation forms.

Are there any questions or comments before we close? Thank you for sharing today.

Does anyone have any thoughts about how we should end our group in two weeks.

SESSION SEVEN

REFLECTIONS ON BEAUTY

BACKGROUND:

Part of the culture of nearly every adolescent currently growing up in the United States is the daily use of the media. American adolescents listen to music, watch television, movies, videos and read magazines and newspaper daily. The media plays an important role in the lives of adolescents. Adolescents draw materials from the media that contribute to their socialization (Arnett, 1995). Young people use the media for the development of their conscience, the preparation and performance of their role as an adult and an understanding of their values (Arnett, 1995).

OBJECTIVES:

To provide knowledge and awareness about the impact of the media on female self identity.

MATERIALS:

1. Magazines (Good Housekeeping, Sports Illustrated, Seventeen, Glamour New Moon for Girls, Technology, Ebony and Women s Press)
2. Paper
3. Scissors
4. Markers
5. Pencils
6. Glue

SESSION SEVEN

NOTES

I. Take attendance.

A. Welcome back.

This is our seventh session. Next week will be our last time together. Today we will need to decide how we would like to end our group. Let's take a few minutes now and plan. What would you like to do? Is there a special treat you would like to share? I will have a couple of activities for you to do.

B. Check in from journal.

1. Something positive you heard this week from a parent or caregiver .
2. Something you did with a parent or caregiver this past week.

C. Overview of Session Seven:

Our topic today is about messages we read about women in magazines. You will be working in pairs to find certain messages and themes present in magazines we find in our local stores.

D. Presentation:

Every adolescent uses a variety of media every day. You listen to music, watch television, read magazines or newspapers or see movies or videos. You choose media according to your particular personalities or tastes. Young people use the media for different reasons. What might you use the media for? It might include: to gain information, entertainment, for the high sensation, to relax or cope with stress or as a means to connect with your friends.

There are many messages we receive from the media. Some are hidden and quite subtle. Today's activity will show us this.

2. Give each girl a different magazine. (20 minutes)

Magazines:

Good Housekeeping
Glamour
Sports Illustrated
New Moon for Girls
Teen Magazine
Seventeen
Parent Magazine

- E. I would like you to find in:

Good Housekeeping, Parent or Ebony - a list of all the things that women are doing in the pictures and ads

Sports Illustrated - the number of girls / women compared to the number of boys/men

Technology Magazine
Women's Press Newspaper
Ebony

Seventeen and Glamour - make
a list of what the girls are
doing in the pictures.

Teen magazines - make a list of all
the kinds of advertisements and count the number of
boys

New Moon for Girls write down the titles/themes of
the different articles.

Technology magazines count the number of men
and women in the pictures and ads.

Women's Press notice what is being sold through
the ads and write down the themes of the articles.

3. Bring the girls back
to the circle.

F. Discussion:

Have each group report what they discovered.

What are the messages or beliefs about women
these magazines are trying to send?

What are your thoughts or feelings about these
messages?

What would you like to see or read in the
media?

4. Hand out scissors to
each girl. Bring out a
poster board and several
bottles of glue.

G. Have the girls find pictures or
words of what they would like to see in the media.
Have them create a collage of pictures and write
new messages.

5. Homework activity
(5 minutes)

Something to think about:

Next week will be our last session.

For your journal activity this week I would like you to
make a collage of yourself and where you would
like to be in the next year or two as you finish junior
high. You are welcome to take home magazines.
If you prefer other choices, you may write a story,
a poem or sketch pictures in your journal. Bring
this back for group next week.

6. Handout the
evaluations.

H. Evaluation/Closure

(5 minutes)

Please fill out the evaluations. Are there any
questions or comments before we close.

SESSION EIGHT

“SAYING GOOD-BY”

BACKGROUND:

The final stage of group development is called the ending or termination. In some ways, the termination is also the beginning (Brandler & Roman, 1991). Group members are different from when they began the group: they may have acquired new skills and insight into themselves, found new friendships and developed a new support system. Often group members are afraid of ending. One of the task for the social worker is to help the members to realize that whatever they gained in group experience can accompany them beyond group (Brandler & Roman, 1991).

OBJECTIVES:

1. To learn about their support system and develop new friendships
2. To identify personal strengths and assets.
3. To increase self-esteem of young female adolescents.

MATERIALS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Piers-Harris Self-Esteem Inventory | 4. Completion Certificates |
| 2. Pencils | 5. Snacks/Treats |
| 3. Large sheet of white paper | 6. Markers |

SESSION EIGHT

NOTES

1. Take attendance.
(5 minutes)
 - A. Welcome back. This is our last time together. We will have a chance to talk today about our new information, new friends and new skills to take with you. It is not only an ending but a new beginning.
 - B. Check in with journal.
I would like to save your journal activity for part of our closing activity.

2. Hand out the questionnaires and score sheets for the Piers-Harris Self-Esteem Inventory. Give each group member a pencil.
(15 minutes)
 - C. Self Esteem Inventory: (Appendix C) Before we move to our closing activities I would like each of you to complete this inventory. They are the same questions you answered before we started group. This is one tool we have to measure whether our group was helpful to you. It will take about 15 minutes. If you need help reading the questions let me know.

3. Collect the questionnaires. Thank you for filling this out.

4. Bring a large sheet of white rolled paper. About 4-5 ft in length. Have markers and crayons available.
(15 minutes)
 - D. Activity
Together you will draw a picture of a healthy adolescent girl. Decide how you would like her to look. What will be her physical appearance? How will she dress? Who will be her friends? Who does she live with? What are her relationships like? What does she like to do? What are her beliefs and values about being a woman? Think about what you have learned and thought about these past eight weeks. You may draw pictures or write words that describes your healthy adolescent female.
Questions (Appendix L)
When finished you can share this with the group.

5. Take time to share some treats and beverages.

6. Bring out certificates of completion.
(Appendix M)

E. Ask the girls if they would bring out their collages or writing article. Handout a certificate for each girl and ask them to share their journal activity. Share your own comments about her participation and growth during the eight weeks. Ask the group if there are comments they would like to share.

F. Evaluation/Closure

1. What did you like about group?
2. What would you like to see changed?
3. Should this be offered for other young girls?
4. What will be different for you as a result of being in group?

G. Goodbye. Thanks for coming and sharing about yourself.

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

LIMITATIONS

Due to time constraints, this curriculum has not been implemented to test its feasibility. Topics for further research may be obtained after the curriculum has been implemented with groups of young girls. There are a variety of questions that arise concerning some of the logistics of the curriculum itself such as: 1) Will the content of each session be covered in the amount of time designated? 2) Will the content and the activity facilitate the insight, awareness, and discussion for each topic needed for growth? 3) Is there enough variety in the presentation and activity for the young girls to hold their interest? and 4) Would the curriculum benefit from having two facilitators?

The adult female facilitator comes to the group with her own set of values and beliefs about being female. She has experienced her own teen years with her own set of beliefs, values, and expectations. Entering in relationships with young girls as adult mentors means breaking the false images of perfection and to learn with them. The strong voices and healthy resistance of young girls speak directly to relational conflicts and problems that many woman suffer. It can mean changing ones practices and beliefs. One must be willing to give up the " good little girl things" and the "be nice" standards. In order to successfully empower young women to act on their own knowledge and feelings, the facilitator will need to be aware of her own personal limitations, experiences, biases, and strengths.

This program is designed to be used in the school setting. This limits the selection of students to those who attend the school. It also limits the number of students participating. A school social worker can sometimes be responsible for several hundred children and can usually facilitate only a small number of groups. The sample population

is not a random sampling. Selection becomes biased as students are referred by teachers, parents, counselors, social workers, or advisors.

The evaluation of the program has its limits. Social desirability cannot be controlled for. It is possible for scores to increase on the post test as a result of the special attention received and the desire to please the adult. Because different people place emphasis on different abilities and qualities, it is not always valid to measure specific aspects of experience such as; school, family, appearance, or so forth. Self reports about feelings of inner worth are not consistent over time nor are they easy to interpret. Assessment of childrens self-concept is a complex task requiring clinical sensitivity and a thorough knowledge about childrens evaluations. Research in the literature review talks about the difficulty in defining and measuring self-esteem.

The Piers-Harris Self-Esteem Inventory has a number of specific limitations. The scores are subject to conscious and unconscious distortions by children, usually in the direction of more socially acceptable responses. The original norms were based on data from a Pennsylvania school district and one cannot assume that the findings can be generalized to more diverse school populations. Cultural differences in personality traits and attitudes toward self-disclosure need to be considered. Clinical interviews, peer nominations, parent comments, and observations of a child in a variety of settings should be used along with the inventory results.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Researchers and program directors are calling for more attention to diversity in studying self-esteem. Studies of adolescent self-esteem vary widely among Blacks, Latino, and White teenage girls. African American girls show a much different pattern. They start out with slightly lower level of self esteem and end with a higher level of self-esteem than Latino and White girls (AAUW, 1992). Researchers are calling for further

work that is more reflective of the diversity found among females. Many of the studies found in the literature review for this paper used samples from either White suburban communities or urban cities. We must look separately at the needs of young females of different ethnic cultures who are from families who are working class, middle class, and who are in poverty. Similar issues arise with the need to explore how sexual orientation and disabilities affect the self-esteem of young women. Many avenues for future work with young women are open that would study the impact of race, class, sexual orientation, and ethnicity on the development of self-esteem .

This program is time limited and the interventions are brief. Further research involving longer intervention times and multiple assessment techniques could be beneficial. In addition, the program does not consider a follow up component to observe for consistency of any improvements in self-esteem, academic success, increase participation in activities, and positive social relationships. A re-test administered following a lapse in time may reveal consistency or lack of consistency in levels of self esteem. An interview or meeting with the student the next year would provide some data about her continued personal and social growth. Effectiveness is ultimately measured by future functioning and this cannot be thoroughly studied unless girls are followed through high school.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This research has major implications for school social work. It provides the opportunity for prevention and early intervention services for at risk students. It is believed that if one starts early enough to work with at risk children, provides positive input, and creates an environment where growth is encouraged, one will see positive results with these students despite obstacles or barriers. This encourages the need to focus services on junior high and elementary school students.

Schools have an important role in positively affecting teens. Student self concept is linked to relationships with other students, with teachers, and to academic performance. The literature review has identified this stage of early adolescence to be a critical time for young females. It has emphasized the importance of peers, relationships with parents, and participation in sports or extra curricular activities to be important factors in the development of self-esteem. An awareness and understanding of these issues can assist in the planning and development of programs for young girls. Research on resiliency has shown that the single most important predictor of an adolescent positively overcoming stress and attacks on self-esteem is connectedness to at least one competent adult. Teachers, coaches, counselors, social workers, and parents are crucial in this endeavor. They can be another role model and support for young girls at risk.

This proposed program has major implications for school social work. With the evaluation process and the pre and post test it is a model for practice evaluation. Monitoring and evaluating practice is an important step in demonstrating accountability (Tredinnick, 1993).

CONCLUSION

This project looked at those factors that influence the development of self-esteem for young girls during the time they move into adolescence. It proposed the development of a support group curriculum that addresses those factors that put young girls at risk. A review of the literature indicates that the transition into junior high, the onset of puberty, and the social, emotional and physical changes that happen for girls during the ages of 12-14 can be a critical time for them. Girls consider physical appearance and attractiveness to be more important than boys. Close and supportive friendships have beneficial effects on psychological, social, and academic adjustments. Young girls are able to differentiate the dimensions of support offered by friends and use these

relationships for self-affirmation, self-knowledge, and connectedness. Participation in sports or other activities promote autonomy, self-definition, and provides opportunities for sociability and skill development. Young girls use the media for the development of their conscience, the preparation and performance of their role as an adult, and understanding of their values. Adolescent girls tend to experience the world differently. They differ in the extent to which they are at risk for social, emotional, and other health problems.

Working with the social group work model, the strengths perspective, and providing an opportunity for young girls to dialogue with other girls can be beneficial to the development of their self-esteem and identity. Gilligan (1982) writes, "the female self is a relational self. It develops in a web of interconnections and it is within the community of relationships that female identity occurs." (p.79) This support group program provides opportunities for prevention and early intervention services for at risk young girls. The benefits of working with young women at this time in their development can be enlightening and rewarding.

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APPENDIXES



INTAKE FORM

Introduction to Group:

Hello, my name is _____. I work here as the school social worker. You have been invited to participate in a girls support group. It will be held once a week, for one class period and will go for eight weeks. The purpose of the group is to give young girls an opportunity to talk about their thoughts and feelings about the changes your experiencing at this time. They might include: the change in the school day, the physical changes with your body, the change in friendships or the change in the relationships with your parents. For some students this move to junior high can be very stressful. The group will consist of eight to ten girls and I will be the facilitator. You will be excused from your class and you will need to make up any assignments. Teachers are very supportive of students participating in support groups. Are you interested in participating? If so, I have a few questions to ask you. Then I have a questionnaire for you to fill out. It is a set of statements that tell how some people feel about themselves. I would like you to respond to them. It is a tool for how we evaluate the group. You will fill out the same questionnaire at the end of group.

Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____

Parents _____ Phone _____

Address _____

1. Who do you live with? _____

2. What has been difficult for you in junior high? _____

3. What has gone well for you in junior high ? _____

4. What are your interests, hobbies or activities you participat in ? _____

5. What do you like to do with your friends ? How much time outside of school to you spend with them? _____

6. How might group be helpful for you ? _____

7. What would you expect from group? _____

8. Will you make a committment to participate ? _____

Name _____

(signature)

Appendix A

PARENT LETTER

Date

Dear Parent / Guardian

Your daughter has been invited to participate in a student support group at school. The purpose of the group is to provide an opportunity for young girls to come together and talk about their thoughts and feelings about issues that are specific to them, These include: transition to junior high, physical changes / body image, friendships, family relationships, participation in activities, and beliefs and values about being a young woman. The group is designed to promote self awareness and to develop a support system during a time young girls are experiencing many changes.

The group will meet once a week, for one hour, during the school day. It will run for eight weeks, rotating through the schedule. The school social worker will facilitate the group.

To evaluate the success of the group the participants will complete the Piers-Harris Children's Self -Concept Inventory prior to group and at the end of the eight sessions. In addition, the girls will be filling out weekly evaluations of the individual sessions. If issues are raised during the group or a discrepancy in their scores should show up parents will be notified and a conference will be scheduled to discuss these issues.

If you would like your daughter to participate, please fill out the form below and return it to school. I will then be meeting with your daughter to explain the group and answer any questions. If you have any questions please call me at _____.

Sincerely,

Name

SCHOOL NAME
PERMISSION FORM

Date _____

Name _____ has my permission to participate

in the girls support group and complete the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Inventory.

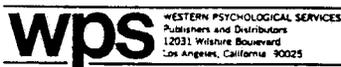
Parent /Guardian _____

Leader's Name _____

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale PROFILE FORM

Ellen V. Piers, Ph.D. and Dale B. Harris, Ph.D.

Published by



Name: _____ Today's Date: _____
 Age: _____ Sex (circle one): Girl Boy Grade: _____
 School: _____ Teacher's Name (optional): _____

Percentile	T	I Behavior	II Intellectual and School Status	III Physical Appearance and Attributes	IV Anxiety	V Popularity	VI Happiness and Satisfaction	Total Score	T	Percentile
85										85
80								80		80
75								78-79		75
70			17					77		70
65				13				76		65
60					12			75		60
55						10		74		55
50								73		50
45		5						72		45
40			6		10			71		40
35							10	70		35
30								69		30
25								68		25
20								67		20
15								66		15
10								65		10
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SAMPLE

W-180G

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THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale

Ellen V. Piers, Ph.D. and Dale B. Harris, Ph.D.

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Name: _____ Today's Date: _____
Age: _____ Sex (circle one): Girl Boy Grade: _____
School: _____ Teacher's Name (optional): _____

EXAMPLE

Directions: Here are a set of statements that tell how some people feel about themselves. Read each statement and decide whether or not it describes the way you feel about yourself. If it is *true or mostly true* for you, circle the word "yes" next to the statement. If it is *false or mostly false* for you, circle the word "no." Answer every question, even if some are hard to decide. Do not circle both "yes" and "no" for the same statement.

Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Only you can tell us how you feel about yourself, so we hope you will mark the way you really feel inside.

TOTAL SCORE: Raw Score _____ Percentile _____ Stanine _____
CLUSTERS: I _____ II _____ III _____ IV _____ V _____ VI _____

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W-190A

APPENDIX C

- SAMPLE
- | | | | | | |
|--|-----|----|--|-----|----|
| 1. My classmates make fun of me | yes | no | 21. I am good in my school work | yes | no |
| 2. I am a happy person | yes | no | 22. I do many bad things | yes | no |
| 3. It is hard for me to make friends | yes | no | 23. I can draw well | yes | no |
| 4. I am often sad | yes | no | 24. I am good in music | yes | no |
| 5. I am smart | yes | no | 25. I behave badly at home | yes | no |
| 6. I am shy | yes | no | 26. I am slow in finishing my school work | yes | no |
| 7. I get nervous when the teacher calls on me | yes | no | 27. I am an important member of my class | yes | no |
| 8. My looks bother me | yes | no | 28. I am nervous | yes | no |
| 9. When I grow up, I will be an important person | yes | no | 29. I have pretty eyes | yes | no |
| 10. I get worried when we have tests in school | yes | no | 30. I can give a good report in front of the class | yes | no |
| 11. I am unpopular | yes | no | 31. In school I am a dreamer | yes | no |
| 12. I am well behaved in school | yes | no | 32. I pick on my brother(s) and sister(s) | yes | no |
| 13. It is usually my fault when something goes wrong | yes | no | 33. My friends like my ideas | yes | no |
| 14. I cause trouble to my family | yes | no | 34. I often get into trouble | yes | no |
| 15. I am strong | yes | no | 35. I am obedient at home | yes | no |
| 16. I have good ideas | yes | no | 36. I am lucky | yes | no |
| 17. I am an important member of my family | yes | no | 37. I worry a lot | yes | no |
| 18. I usually want my own way | yes | no | 38. My parents expect too much of me | yes | no |
| 19. I am good at making things with my hands | yes | no | 39. I like being the way I am | yes | no |
| 20. I give up easily | yes | no | 40. I feel left out of things | yes | no |

- SAMPLE
- | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|--|-----|----|
| 41. I have nice hair | yes | no | 51. When I try to make something, everything seems to go wrong | yes | no |
| 42. I often volunteer in school | yes | no | 52. I am picked on at home | yes | no |
| 43. I wish I were different | yes | no | 53. I am a leader in games and sports | yes | no |
| 44. I sleep well at night | yes | no | 54. I am clumsy | yes | no |
| 45. I hate school | yes | no | 55. In games and sports, I watch instead of play | yes | no |
| 46. I am among the last to be chosen for games | yes | no | 56. I forget what I learn | yes | no |
| 47. I am sick a lot | yes | no | 57. I am easy to get along with | yes | no |
| 48. I am often mean to other people | yes | no | 58. I lose my temper easily | yes | no |
| 49. My classmates in school think I have good ideas | yes | no | 59. I am popular with girls | yes | no |
| 50. I am unhappy | yes | no | 70. I am a good reader | yes | no |
| 51. I have many friends | yes | no | 71. I would rather work alone than with a group | yes | no |
| 52. I am cheerful | yes | no | 72. I like my brother (sister) | yes | no |
| 53. I am dumb about most things | yes | no | 73. I have a good figure | yes | no |
| 54. I am good-looking | yes | no | 74. I am often afraid | yes | no |
| 55. I have lots of pep | yes | no | 75. I am always dropping or breaking things | yes | no |
| 56. I get into a lot of fights | yes | no | 76. I can be trusted | yes | no |
| 57. I am popular with boys | yes | no | 77. I am different from other people | yes | no |
| 58. People pick on me | yes | no | 78. I think bad thoughts | yes | no |
| 59. My family is disappointed in me | yes | no | 79. I cry easily | yes | no |
| 60. I have a pleasant face | yes | no | 80. I am a good person | yes | no |

APPENDIX C

Group Recording Form

Group Name _____ Beginning Date _____

Worker's Name _____ Termination Date _____

Session Number _____ Date of Session _____

Members Present _____

Members Absent _____

Purpose of the Group _____

Goals for this Session _____

Activity for Session _____

Analysis of the Session _____

Plan for Next Session _____



Group Evaluation

Date _____

Group Session _____

The part I liked best was ...

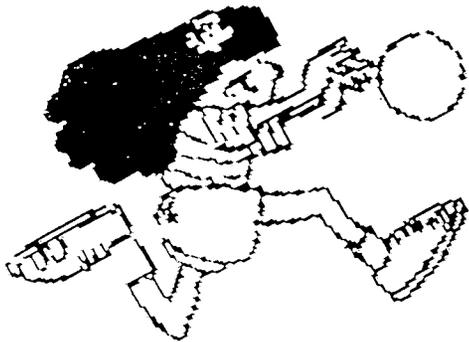
Something I learned about myself was ...

Next time please...

I feel confident that...

I still don't understand ...

And one more thing...



Appendix D

All About Me

Name _____

The most interesting thing about me is.....

A woman I admire is.....

I am good at...

The most challenging thing about junior high is...

I am not good at....



The Changing Woman

Directions: Divide the paper into 3 sections. Draw a picture of yourself at age 9 in the first section. Draw yourself today in the middle section. In the third section draw what you imagine you will look like at age 24.

Age 9

Today

Age 24

HOW AM I SMART?

SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL

Instructions: give a copy of the checklist to each student. Instruct them to check the statements that are true for them. Afterwards, have them count the checks in each category to see where their strengths lie.

Word Smart

- I read a lot.
- I need to either read instructions or listen to them being read aloud to learn a new concept. Watching how something is done doesn't usually help me.
- I'm good at word games like Scrabble and crossword puzzles.
- I love learning new words.
- English is my favorite class.
- I use the dictionary regularly.
- I like learning new languages.
- I keep a journal and write in it daily.
- I have fun saying tongue twisters and riddles.
- My conversation includes frequent references to things I've read or heard.

TOTAL

Logical / Math Smart

- I can add, subtract, multiply and divide in my head.
- Math and science are my favorite subjects in school.
- I love doing brain teaser puzzles.
- I enjoy solving mysteries.
- I see patterns and logical sequences in everyday occurrences.
- I'm more satisfied when something has been measured or analyzed in some way.
- I enjoy scientific experiments.
- I like figuring out why and how things work.
- I keep myself updated on new scientific discoveries.

TOTAL

Spatial / Visual Smart

- I am very sensitive to color.
- I carry my camera with me a lot of the time to record what I see.
- I like doing jigsaw puzzles.
- I enjoy drawing, painting and coloring.
- I get clear images in my head when reading or thinking.
- I would rather look through a photo album than read a book.
- I'm good at reading and interpreting maps.
- I can find my way around new places.
- I enjoy doing mazes.

I visit art galleries and museums regularly.

TOTAL

Body / Kinesthetic Smart

I am involved in a least one sport

I exercise regularly.

I can't sit still for long periods of time.

I enjoy sewing, model building, carpentry or weaving.

I use body language and hand gestures when talking.

I need to do or touch things to learn about them.

I am coordinated.

To grasp a new skill I have to practice it rather than simply read about it.

I can juggle.

I spend a lot of time outside.

TOTAL

Music Smart

I listen to music regularly.

I spend my money on records, CD's or cassettes.

I play musical instrument.

I can keep time to music I hear.

I know a lot of different songs.

I appreciate many different styles of music.

I go to concerts.

I like to have a radio on or music playing while I study, work or read.

I like listening to stories that are read aloud.

I have a fairly good singing voice.

TOTAL

Interpersonal / People Smart

My friends come to me for advice when they have a problem.

I have a lot of close friends.

I like meeting new people.

I sometimes volunteer my time.

I consider myself a leader.

Someday, I can see myself becoming a teacher, tutor or counselor.

Oftentimes I strike up a conversation with people in public places.

I am an excellent listener.

I find people very interesting.

I would rather spend time at a social gathering than stay home alone.

TOTAL

Intrapersonal /Self Smart

- I set personal goals for myself and extend myself to obtain them.
- I like to ponder the important questions about life.
- I know my strengths and my weaknesses.
- I read self help books.
- I keep a diary to record my innermost thoughts and dreams.
- I consider myself to be very independent.
- I like spending time alone and do it often.
- I want to have my own business someday.
- I like learning more about myself.
- I would rather figure my problems out by myself before I ask for help.

TOTAL

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Appendix G

“SMART” Award

Name: _____

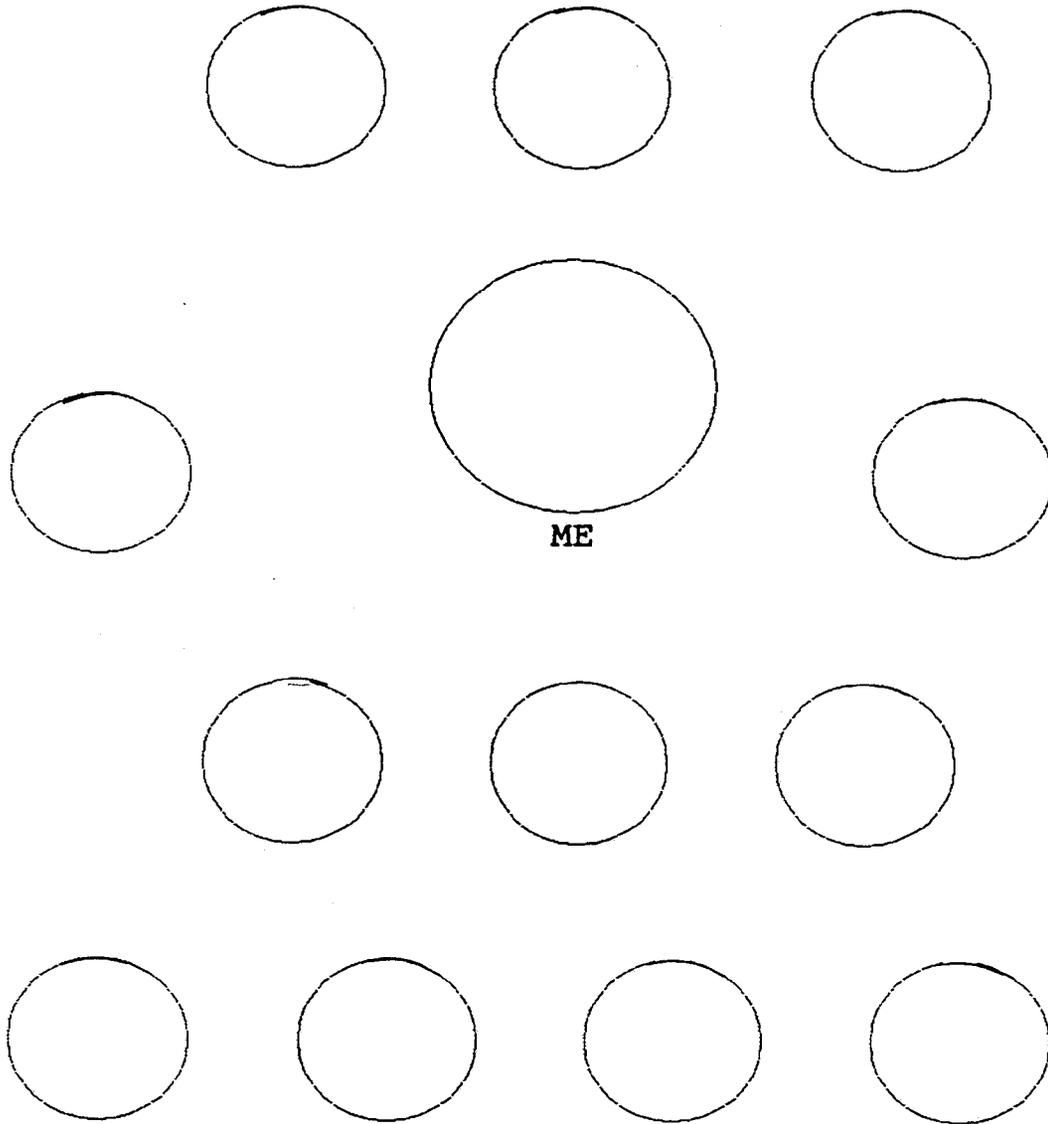
Received this award for:

_____ SMART

_____ Date

_____ Signed

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



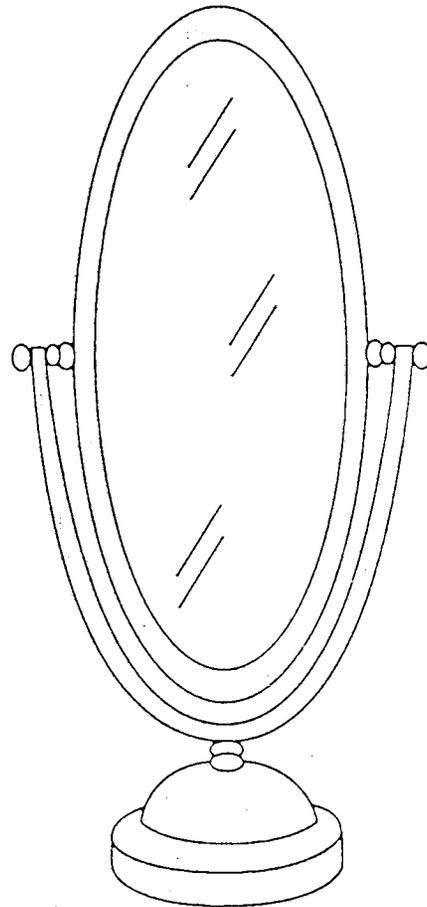
MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL...

Directions: Using the scale below, place the number next to each feature or characteristic that describes how you feel about that part of yourself.

Scale:

1. I wish I could change.
2. I don't like this but, I can live with it.
3. It's okay.
4. I like this about me. It's my best feature.

1. ____ hair
2. ____ eyes
3. ____ nose
4. ____ mouth
5. ____ facial complexion
6. ____ body build
7. ____ arms
8. ____ legs
9. ____ weight
10. ____ height
11. ____ breasts
12. ____ hips
13. ____ posture
14. ____ exercise
15. ____ eating habits
16. ____ health



TOTAL _____

THE FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

ISSUES	OPINION OF SELF	COMMENTS HEARD FROM PARENTS/CARETAKER	INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS/CARETAKER	WISHES
INTELLIGENCE				
PERSONALITY				
POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS				
WAYS OF HANDLING MONEY				
ROLE AS A DAUGHTER				

THE "HEALTHY ADOLESCENT GIRL"

QUESTIONS:

1. What will be her physical appearance?
2. How will she dress?
3. Who will be her friends?
4. Who does she live with?
5. What are her relationships like?
6. What does she like to do?
7. What are her beliefs and values about being a female?

Certificate of Completion

Name

Date

Group Facilitator

