

TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS TO WORK[®]

A Girl is Watching. What is She Learning?

SCHOOL GUIDE



he report card is in! More than **48 MILLION** people — one in six American adults — participate annually in the momentous, grassroots education campaign, **TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS TO WORK[®] DAY**. Every April, on the fourth Thursday of the month, girls from Alabama to Alaska accompany parents, relatives, teachers, and adult friends to **LEARN FIRST-HAND** what goes on in the American workplace. Girls punch the clock at offices and canneries, news rooms and retail stores, fire stations and fishing wharfs. **WHEREVER THEY GO**, girls get an education. Girls learn how to sell a product, track a meteorite, legislate law, conduct an orchestra, negotiate a raise, **BRAINSTORM**, bandage, navigate, weld, compute, collaborate, sauté, invent, you name it. Girls have the opportunity to see work as an integral part of women's lives — and are given good reason to believe in the **PROMISE OF SCHOOL.** ➤➤➤



 **MS. FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN** 

120 Wall Street, 33rd Floor, New York , NY 10005 1-800-676-7780

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WORKING IT OUT

CLASS ACTIVITIES FOR GIRLS AND BOYS



TAKE  OUR DAUGHTERS TO  WORK[®] 

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WORKING IT OUT

ESPECIALLY FOR BOYS



Activities to use in
conjunction with
**TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS
TO WORK® DAY** and
throughout the year!

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TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS TO WORK[®]

A Girl is Watching. What is She Learning?

OUTREACH GUIDE



hanks to the combined, concerted efforts of adults across the country, **MILLIONS OF GIRLS** will punch the clock and learn first-hand what goes on in board rooms, city halls, concert halls, and union halls on **TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS TO WORK[®] DAY** this coming April. From Alabama to Alaska, legions of Americans work together to **ORGANIZE** the special day for girls. Parents talk with neighborhood groups, school officials, and chambers of commerce about the **MERITS** of taking girls to work. Schools help to match girls with businesses in town. Many employers, like *The New York Times* and Ortho Pharmaceutical Corporation, have organized workplace **COMMITTEES** to plan lively, engaging activities for girls. And numerous states and towns, including Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, California; and Madison, Wisconsin have **OFFICIALLY PROCLAIMED** the fourth Thursday in April **TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS TO WORK[®] DAY. ➤➤**



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THE FACTS

On Girls and Working Women

Not long ago relegated to the sidelines in most every public arena, girls today live on **centerstage**.

Girls voice their opinions in classrooms and on committees, make the grade in math and science classes, and compete with one another—and with boys—on soccer, baseball, even football fields. Young women graduate with honors from military academies and medical schools. More women than ever are making America work, supporting their families, and **advancing** as engineers, chefs, doctors, lawyers, carpenters, chief financial officers, astronauts, firefighters—you name it—even attorneys general and secretaries of state. An astounding picture, especially in light of so many **options** denied our own mothers and grandmothers earlier in this same century.

We mark and **celebrate** these hallmarks on Take Our Daughters To Work® Day, the fourth Thursday in April. Girls and women have made—and are making—such strides in the 20th Century that it's sometimes tempting to think the struggle for gender equity is over. The picture—on the face of it—looks bright. Yet recent studies on girls and working women indicate that there's much **progress** still to be made. So... along with a well-deserved pat on the back on Take Our Daughters To Work® Day, we invite you also to consider the persisting **challenges** and doors to be opened on girls' behalf. The following facts provide an overview.

" I dream of becoming President of the United States. I know, because of Take Our Daughters To Work® Day, that my dream is possible. I must do well in school and stay focused."
Erin Ferris, 12

Written by Lisa Sjostrom

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The Work World

Women in the Workplace

- Women make up 46% of the work force today.¹ By the year 2005, two out of three new workers will be women, and women will comprise 48% of total paid workers.²
- In corporate America women hold just 2% of the power positions, no matter how you define them—by title, by paycheck, or by responsibility for the bottom line.³
- Women passed a milestone in the board room in 1996, for the first time holding more than 10% of the directors' seats at the nation's 500 largest companies.⁴ Yet of these same companies, only 61 can count a woman among their top 5 earners or can say that 25% or more of their officers are women. (Only 13 do both.)⁵

What Women Earn

- Women are over-represented in low-paying jobs. More than 60% of women working year-round and full-time get paid less than \$25,000 per year.⁶ More than 1 in 4 working women have administrative support jobs or clerical jobs, with 1994 median weekly earnings of \$374 per week, 20% to 30% less than women in non-traditional fields.⁷
- Even when women hold the same jobs as men, they don't earn the same pay. Whether a doctor or lawyer, an elementary school teacher or secretary, a truck driver or waiter, a man is likely to take home more money than a woman in the identical position.⁸
- For every \$1.00 earned by white men, white women earn 75 cents, Black women earn 63 cents, and Latina women earn 56 cents.⁹ Women lose on average \$420,000 in salary and pension over a lifetime of earnings because of unequal pay.¹⁰

Girls in School

Girls In the Classroom

- ✦ Teachers are more apt to attribute boys' failure to lack of motivation, while girls' failure is attributed to lack of ability.¹¹ In fact, girls report that teachers and other adults often don't believe they are capable of doing things girls themselves believe they can do.¹²
- ✦ Although more girls than ever before aspire to have meaningful work and careers as adults,¹³ 4 in 10 girls do not have definite plans for high school course selection; girls are less likely than boys to enroll in important classes such as pre-calculus or physics; and girls' actual course choices follow predictable, sex-stereotyped patterns—despite girls' capacity to do otherwise.¹⁴

Funding and Scholarships

- ✦ Although both boys and girls encounter academic difficulties, boys' needs in areas like reading and learning disabilities attract billions of dollars of assistance. School budgets provide far fewer resources to assist girls in common problem areas of math and science.¹⁵
- ✦ Both the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) and SAT consistently underestimate the abilities and college performance of young women as compared with young men. Females earn higher grades than males in both high school and college but receive lower scores on both the math and verbal sections of these tests—as a result, young women are penalized in college admissions and scholarship award decisions.¹⁶

"The value of having adolescent girls see the diversity of positions available to women in the workplace is inestimable. Too often, adolescent girls imagine only the most traditional employment opportunities for themselves. Take Our Daughters To Work®... provides an opportunity for youngsters to see their parents in different roles with different responsibilities."

Lorraine C. Parker, Judge,
Superior Court of New Jersey

Take Our Daughters To Work®

Take Our Daughters To Work® What's the Day Really About?

We now know, based on a plethora of recent research, that adolescence is a critical time in girls' development. During this often confusing transition into womanhood, girls struggle fervently to maintain a distinct sense of self confidence and worth. Unfortunately many struggle in vain—and exhibit any number of distress signals, from self-doubt to disordered eating to unwanted pregnancy to depression...

Take Our Daughters To Work® Day was designed as an intervention. Think of it as a nationwide, pro-active response to publicly champion girls' health and confidence for one day.

Although not a silver bullet, Take Our Daughters To Work® Day certainly keeps girls—and the adults in their lives—headed in the *right direction*.

Girls in Math and Science

- ✦ It is during the crucial middle school years that many girls lose confidence in their math and science abilities—even though they can do the work. By high school, only 1 in 7 girls say they are good at math, and teenage girls are less likely than boys to find science interesting.¹⁷
- ✦ Math skills are a critical filter for progressing into a higher-paying career;¹⁸ yet high school girls, even those with exceptional preparation in math and science, choose math/science careers in disproportionately low numbers.¹⁹
- ✦ The gender gap (favoring boys) is closing in both math and science achievement for all students. However, the gap in science achievement is increasing for top students, those most likely to enter the field.²⁰

Hostile Hallways: Sexual Harassment in School

- ✦ According to a 1993 Harris Poll, 85% of girls say they have been sexually harassed during their school lives (compared to 76% of boys).²¹
- ✦ Sexual harassment disrupts girls' education. After being harassed, 1 in 3 girls don't want to go to school or speak up as much in class. More than 1 in 5 girls score lower on a test or paper or drop out of an activity. And 2 in 10 girls doubt whether they have what it takes to graduate from high school.²²
- ✦ When sexual harassment goes unchecked in schools, girls may come to expect that it will also be tolerated in the workplace. Surveys show that from 40% to 65% of working women have been sexually harassed at work.²³

The Struggle to Stay in School

- ✦ Many adolescent girls get caught having to choose between private and public roles. Although boys and girls drop out of school at roughly equal rates, teenage girls are 7 times more likely than boys to drop out of school for family reasons, such as needing to care for siblings or elderly relatives.²⁴
- ✦ With the majority of new jobs for the first time in history requiring education or training beyond high school, girls who leave school are headed for financial disaster; one-third of female dropouts live in poverty.²⁵

Girls and Self-Esteem

- ✦ By high school, far fewer girls than boys are simply happy with themselves. Girls are far more likely than boys to characterize themselves negatively, saying such things as "I wish I were somebody else" and "Sometimes I don't like myself."²⁶
- ✦ When asked, "What do you like best about yourself?," twice as many boys as girls say their talents. During adolescence girls tend to shift their focus from all the wonderful things they can do to how they appear in the world. 30% of girls think others judge them by their appearance;²⁷ for white, middle school girls, appearance is the single most important determinant of self-esteem.²⁸

Girls' Struggle to Stay Healthy

Girls and Substance Abuse

- ✦ Among 12 to 18 year olds, girls and boys are equally as likely to have used illicit drugs other than marijuana. And roughly the same proportion of girls and boys are lighting up cigarettes and getting drunk—at younger and younger ages. On average, boys and girls alike now start to smoke at 13 and to drink alcohol at 15.²⁹
- ✦ Teenage girls are the fastest growing population of smokers, many deliberately using cigarettes to suppress their appetites. Over 40% of high school girls identify themselves as smokers and as not intending to quit.³⁰

AIDS

- ✦ The number of AIDS cases among teenage girls (ages 13-19) increased more than 11 times between 1989 and 1995.³¹ One reason for the increased prevalency is that girls who start having intercourse in their teens are more likely to have older sexual partners than those of their male peers.³²

Plumbing the Depths of Depression

- ✦ Rates of depression jump for girls—who show more signs of emotional stress than do boys—during their teen years.³³ Unlike boys, who tend to act out violently and publicly, adolescent girls respond to stress by pulling inward—right when they need to be thinking about how they want to play their role in the public world. After grade school, twice as many girls as boys experience depression.³⁴
- ✦ Teenage and pre-teen girls who are overly anxious or depressed grow up to be roughly 1" to 2" shorter, on average, than other girls.³⁵

Girls and Suicide

- ✦ The suicide rate among teens ages 10 to 14 increased by 120% from 1980 to 1992. Among white boys, the rate rose 86% and among white girls it jumped 233%. The number of attempts have not increased, but the methods and means teens are using are more lethal, making the attempts more likely to succeed.³⁶
- ✦ Adolescent girls are 4 to 5 times more likely than boys to attempt suicide (although boys are more likely to die because they choose more lethal methods, for example guns rather than sleeping pills).³⁷

Disordered Eating and Eating Disorders

- ✦ Many teenage girls are unmerciful critics of their own bodies: 31% of 10-year-old girls say they are afraid of being fat, just at the developmental moment where menarche necessitates added weight gain.³⁸ 5 in 10 girls are unhappy with their bodies by age 13; nearly 8 in 10 dislike their bodies by age 18. Over 50% of girls think they are overweight—and diet—affecting their attention, energy, and performance levels in the classroom.³⁹
- ✦ Girls are far more likely than boys to try to control their weight by purging or abusing diet pills and laxatives. Only 2% of boys but 18% of girls in high school are at serious risk for eating disorders.⁴⁰ The number of girls under age 12 seeking help for severe eating disorders doubled in the late 1980's.⁴¹

Teenage Pregnancy and Childbirth

*"The best contraceptive is a real future."
Marian Wright Edelman*

Pregnancy Rates

- ✦ Although there has been a slight decline in the U.S. teen birth rate over the past three years, it remains 21% higher than one decade ago.⁴²
- ✦ Each year in the U.S. nearly one million adolescents—or 11% of all young women between the ages of 15 and 19—become pregnant. Roughly 85% of these pregnancies are unintended, accounting for about 1/4 of all accidental pregnancies annually.⁴³ 13% of all U.S. births are to teens.⁴⁴

Safe/Unsafe Sex

- ✦ Teenage girls who reported having sex in the previous year used contraceptives 83% of the time. The total number of teen pregnancies annually averted by contraceptive use is estimated at 1.7 million.⁴⁵
- ✦ 30% of girls who say they would change some aspect of their lives for a boy—their interests, their friends—have had unsafe sex, compared to 19% of girls who adamantly refuse to change themselves for a boyfriend.⁴⁶

Motivating Factors

- ✦ In one study of young women who had become pregnant as teenagers, two-thirds had been sexually abused: 55% had been molested, 42% had been victims of attempted rape, and 44% had been raped.⁴⁷
- ✦ According to a recent national survey of nearly 10,000 mothers, at least half of the babies born to teenage girls are fathered by adults. Men aged 20 or over account for 50% of all births among teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 17; about 1 in 5 of all teenage mothers had a partner 6 or more years older. In general, the younger a mother, the greater the age difference between her and the father of her child.⁴⁸

The Costs of Teenage Pregnancy

- ✦ Teenage girls who have babies are less likely to finish school than their peers.⁴⁹ 7 in 10 teen mothers complete high school, but they are less likely than women who delay childbearing to go on to college.⁵⁰
- ✦ In part because most teen mothers come from disadvantaged backgrounds, 28% of them are poor in their 20s and 30s; only 7% of women who first give birth after adolescence are poor at those ages.⁵¹ Teenage parents will make only half as much money in their life times as teens who wait until age 20 to have a baby.⁵²

Violence and Abuse in Girls' Lives

- ✦ More teenage girls than boys report having been physically and/or sexually abused.⁵³ It is estimated that 1 of every 3 or 4 girls is sexually abused—this includes but is not limited to adult-child intercourse.⁵⁴
- ✦ Girls are raped at disproportionately high levels. In 1992 females under age 18 accounted for 51% of rape victims, while they made up only 25% of the nation's female population.⁵⁵
- ✦ History of childhood sexual abuse is correlated with a range of troubles later on: low self-esteem, depression, alcoholism, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, delinquency, and teenage pregnancy.⁵⁶

Girls on the Go: Sports and Exercise

Risks and Benefits

- ✦ The fair opportunity to participate in physical education and sports programs guaranteed by Title IX is a vital health issue for girls. 4 hours of weekly exercise, the minimum practice time of most girls' sports teams, reduces the risk of breast cancer—now affecting 1 in 8 eight women—by 40% to 60%.⁵⁷
- ✦ Lack of exercise also predisposes girls to heart disease, the leading cause of death in women, and compounds the risk of osteoporosis, a condition afflicting 50% of women over age 60.⁵⁸
- ✦ Girls who participate in sports have stronger self-esteem, lower rates of depression, and a more positive body image than girls on the sidelines. They are also more likely to earn higher grades, graduate from high school, stay off drugs, and avoid unwanted pregnancies.⁵⁹
- ✦ Nearly 80% of women identified as key leaders in Fortune 500 companies participated in sports when they were girls.⁶⁰

Girls' Participation

- ✦ Girls mature sooner than boys and need to be introduced to sports earlier to maximize their development, particularly of the central nervous system because its malleability decreases markedly after age 10 or 11.⁶¹ Yet even in kindergarten, boys receive more instruction and encouraging feedback than girls during gym class and physical play time.⁶²
- ✦ If a girl does not participate in sports by the age of 10, there is only a 10% chance that she will be physically active when she is 25.⁶³
- ✦ High-school girls drop out of sports at a rate 6 times higher than that of boys. 30% of high school freshman girls participate in sports; by senior year, the percentage drops to 17%.⁶⁴
- ✦ Numerous obstacles prevent girls from being as physically active as they'd like: unfair treatment by male teammates, the assumption by coaches and gym teachers that girls are not good players, inappropriate levels of challenge, lack of opportunities, and time conflicts with other activities.⁶⁵

"The sole beauty conveyed on Take Our Daughters To Work® Day was that the participating girls gained a sense of confidence that whatever was required to "get a life," they were heading in the right direction to make it happen."

*Debra Edwards, Caseworker,
Department of Social Services, New York, NY*

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