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Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP):
Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Session Report
for Exeter Seniors

Senior Housing in Exeter, NH
Authors | admin

About the New Hampshire's Women's Initiative (NHWI):

The New Hampshire Women's Initiative (NHWI) is a new non-profit organization dedicated to continuing the legacy of success of our merging partners: the Commission on the Status of Women, the Women's Lobby and Alliance, and the Women's Policy Institute. The NHWI mission is to advance social, economic, and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.

The NHWI has a unique governance structure. Its board is supported by both a Founding Mothers' Panel, comprised of the founders of the merging partners, and a Gender Ambassadors Panel, a group of young women leaders who are interested in better understanding and re-framing the dialogue around gender equality issues in New Hampshire. This multi-generational sphere of influence will help the NHWI leverage both the rich history and accomplishment surrounding women's issues in New Hampshire and at the same time craft a new path forward for gender equality born out of contemporary thinking and needs.

About the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP):

The goal of the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP) is to support the mission of the NHWI by informing its research, outreach, and advocacy with a better understanding of the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them. GAP members will work toward that goal by hosting Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State. The Listening Sessions will be facilitated focus groups consisting of six to ten participants engaged in a formal discussion for up to ninety minutes using pre-determined questions. Results will be documented and shared with the NHWI Board. The Listening Session participants will come primarily from the existing networks of GAP members and are expected to be primarily women, however the method can be adapted to reach other networks and populations, including men.

About the Network Facilitators:

The first round of listening session hosted by GAP members took place in the fall of 2011. The listening sessions generated so much interest that participants, board members, and other colleagues wanted to be a part of the process and host their own sessions! The NHWI Board and GAP members enthusiastically support this extension of the listening sessions to others in our community. Network Facilitators use the same facilitation packet, including the note takers table, and draft a report based on the content of their session.

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Introduction and Background

Methods:

Gaining insight into a community with the use of focus groups is a commonly used approach to qualitative research. Qualitative research is a systematic approach to understanding human thoughts, behaviors and motivations through thoughtful survey design, observation, and inquiry.

The GAP Listening Sessions are designed like focus groups where a facilitator and note-taker work together to gain insight into participant's thoughts and feelings about contemporary gender equality issues facing young women and men in NH.

Prior to conducting the listening sessions, each facilitator and note-taker is provided a facilitation packet that details instructions for conducting an effective focus group. This includes instructions for the specific roles of the facilitator and note-taker, the length of the session, and how to draft the report after the listening session.

Location

The listening session was held at the Senior Housing in Exeter, NH.

Listening Session Format

The listening session followed a traditional focus group format, which included a two to three minute allotment per question, per person. Each session was designed to last two hours including introductions, participant feedback, a participant exercise, and concluding remarks.

The Listening Session was conducted using an agenda and script provided in the facilitation packet (Appendix A: Listening Session Script). The participants introduced themselves by first name, occupation, age, and town of residence.

Summary of Findings:

The Summary of Findings is organized by each question asked at the listening session. Synthesis of material will occur at a later date when all of the listening sessions have been conducted. Please note that participants are identified only by a number to protect their privacy.

1. What brought you here today?

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Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
6	Curiosity, getting input from others, what people feel about treatment of women in the workplace. Sees as very mpv?	
1	Natural continuity – was active in Seacoast; of the work of [org]– seen as next steps?	
3	Curiosity?	
2	Curiosity?	
4	Surprised, thought we had fought these battles already	
1	Commented about media. How young girls are portrayed borage of commercial advertising. TV greatest culprit. Wants to help young girls to fortify themselves against the impact. Bulimia / anorexia.	
4	Agrees toddlers and tiaras wonder what kind of people don't see the inherent danger of this message all wary to raise child with values they should have	
3	... will always be with us because of exploitive use have to fight against it. ??	
3	Was not encouraged to get further education	
6	They spend money of education. Your husband will take care of you.	
4	Commented on LBT's	

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	comments about his daughters – smart	
6	Raised to respect your parents – did what was told – shocked and a ... to stand up for oneself. Working in different positions interesting. Education for living – fortunate to have wonderful friend, s... during hard times in work places much different – different then with some prominent not enough	
1	Commented on money divide salary difference	
2	Defined jobs – secretary, nurse, teacher – wanted to be a stewardess vs. flight attendant. Had to be a nurse back then. Walked in a shoe shop as ... girl ... - always knew she would go to college – major in English with a minor in Arch. – Adult but ... earlier. Assumptions to be married.	
2	Parents ... high school graduate	
3	Daughter is a physician	
1	Would like to see us look at what your options were but the disturbing options to children today, not just girls but boys too – [redacted] – how hard it is to raise young boys – boy son computer games – so much ... could	

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	<p>have earned 3 college games. Boys mature 3 to 4 years later than girls, not just the future of our girls but who their mates are going to be.</p>	
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2. How do you define gender equality?

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
2	Differences in the work force financially. Owner of truck company preferred women truck drivers because they took care of equipment better. ... jobs you would not	Laughter
1	Starts with young children – if course behavior is encouraged. Fire motor vs. gross motor. How boys and girls are raised with attitudes towards each other. How they are raised. Thinks schools do okay with gender though not with intellect. ... Lays ground work.	
6	Agrees home is the most important (mpt). Discipline ... trying to understand lack of discipline today by parents. Parents don't explain why ... of discipline – consequences – parents don't have time / take the time to explain the difference of good and bad	Agrees with

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	and right and wrong. Their ... is being taught to respect girls – good for both genders. Bullying going on in schools upsets her. Where are the parents? What are they doing?	
1	Her ... told her that he would not be a... 3 months does to birth of child - ... - equality with wife – co-parent – paternity leave. Job security in Europe, not here.	... here in us all agree
FAC	Not just women's struggle but men too. Bring them ... together.	
1	NH health studies were not included in taxpayer dollars – who are the tax payers – why are only men studied.	
2	Boys vs. girls; commenting on ... Boys didn't learn to cook or sew. Motor skills ... changed / has been changing doesn't feel so divided – fathers taking care.	
6	Separation between boys and girls was much stranger then than now.	
4	College professors – girls don't need it. "Don't worry your pretty head."	Agreement
1	House husband studies have shown the wives may loose respect for the man. Still prejudice descent amongst	

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	parents when roles reverse	
3	Those ... were not ... different question of gender roles?	
4	Disagrees / questions that statement	Others would too

3. How have you, in NH, experienced gender equality or inequality? Outside of professional setting? What's happening that's important?

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
1	Does not see gender issues at [redacted], though mostly female population	... here in NH later in life
1	[redacted]– ... inequality at ... High school student ... program – equal nurturing progress there	Not quickly ...
6	Daughter-in-law teaches at [redacted]. She teaches an intro program – making babies beautiful – regular class with credits as many boys as girls, was initially shocked that her daughter, kids love her, thinks it's a wonderful class before going on in life.	Head shakes in agreement
6 FAC	Sex and child birth is ... discussed ... to talk class or not beginning of moving towards gender equality	Very quiet exercise / Thoughtful

4. Post-It Exercise!

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
6	All men and women created	Felt a bit confused initially but

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	equal ... constitution	then focused ... intent
2	Commented seeing young boys at local nursing home helping with Bingo game. On of the boys told a story of ... it forward. ... all boys helping with Bingo was their project.	
4	Hosp... ... for years. Bothered her a lot – volunteerism became a liability, nursing homes want outlaw. Failure to ... care.	
Question 5? 1	Activist in ... international for decades – plead ... to consider gender equality as just about women but global – particularly developing ...	

Closing remarks from participants:

None.

Limitations:

Facilitator and Note-taker observations and concluding thoughts:

Appendix A: Listening Session Script

I. Welcome and Introductions (*slightly shortened for this listening session)

- Thank participants for coming
- Distribute participant information sheets (and agendas if using)
- Introduce facilitator and note taker
- Overview of New Hampshire Women's Initiative
 - The New Hampshire Women's Initiative is a new non-profit organization
 - A unification of:
 - The Commission on the Status of Women
 - The Women's Lobby and Alliance

- The Women's Policy Institute
- ***NHWI Mission: To advance social, economic and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.***
- Has a Board of Directors and two advisory panels
 - Founding Mothers
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel
- Objective of Listening Sessions & GAP
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel will support the mission of the NHWI through researching and better understanding the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them.
 - Members of GAP will host a series of Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State.
- Introduction of participants: *First name, age, town, occupation*

II. Overview of the Process

- Description of plan for Listening Session by facilitator
- How discussion will be documented during the Session
- How a report will be prepared after the Session
- Assurance of confidentiality (inform participants that any report will only identify participants by age, zip code, and industry/occupation)

I. Establishment of Ground Rules (*slightly shortened for this listening session)

- Ground rules encourage active and honest participation and a safe discussion environment.
- If a participant violates a ground rule, they will be politely reminded of the ground rule.
- If a participant continues to violate a ground rule, they will be asked to leave the group.

Ground Rules (The 5 A's)

Participants of this group...

- Agree to maintain confidentiality
- Agree that there are no "right or wrong" answers to the questions
- Agree to speak honestly based on our own experiences
- Agree that only one person will speak at a time

- Agree to respond to one another politely and respectfully

II. Discussion of Contemporary Gender Equality

1) What made you interested in attending today's listening session on gender equality?

2) How do you define the term gender equality?

What does gender equality mean to you?

What does gender equality not mean to you?

What issues or subjects do you think about when you think of gender equality?

3) In New Hampshire, have you experienced or observed gender equality or inequality?

III. Post-it Note Exercise

What issues relating to gender equality do you think are most important for the New Hampshire Women's Initiative to address?

(Each participant receives 3 standard yellow Post-it notes and a black sharpie; they must write their top three issues, one per Post-it note. Ask them to put the Post-its up on a white board or wall. Then each person gets one red dot. They must place their red dot on their top issue, which doesn't have to be one of the ones they originally wrote.)

** Facilitator must collect the Post-its and return to the GAP Committee when complete*

IV. Wrap-up

- Do you have any other thoughts or ideas that you really want to share about gender equality in NH? (*not asked at this listening session due to time constraints)
- Thank you to participants by facilitator
- Collect participant information sheets; distribute NHWI information sheets

V. Adjourn