



new hampshire
WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

To: Chairman Ward and members of the Senate Education Committee
Re: Testimony in SB 151, relative to mental health education
Date: January 31, 2023
Position: Ought to pass

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation invests in equality and opportunity for New Hampshire women and girls through research, education, advocacy, and grantmaking.

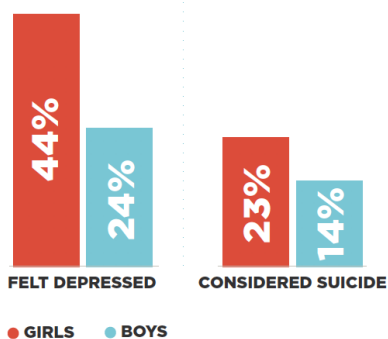
We respectfully encourage the Committee to recommend SB 151 Ought to Pass because we believe this legislation will have a positive impact on girls. NH girls have higher rates of depression, considering suicide, and higher rates of making a plan to attempt suicide than their male peers. This bill makes sure that students are taught about mental health and ways to seek help which will provide girls the tools and resources to seek help

Girls' Mental Health

New Hampshire girls are more likely to suffer from poor mental health than boys.¹ Girls living in the Winnepesaukee and Greater Sullivan regions have the highest depression and suicide consideration rates.² Girls of color are more likely to feel depressed and to consider suicide.³

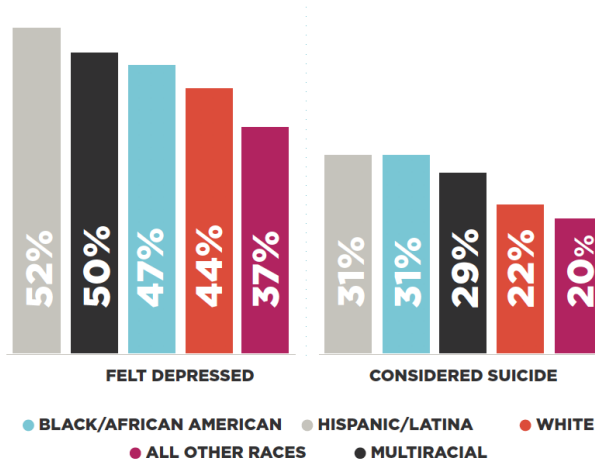
DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE CONSIDERATION BY GENDER

New Hampshire Department of Health Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2019, Question 25 & 26.



GIRLS DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE CONSIDERATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

New Hampshire Department of Education, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2019, Question 25 & 26.



^{1, 2, 3} New Hampshire Department of Education. "Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Question 25 & 26." 2019.

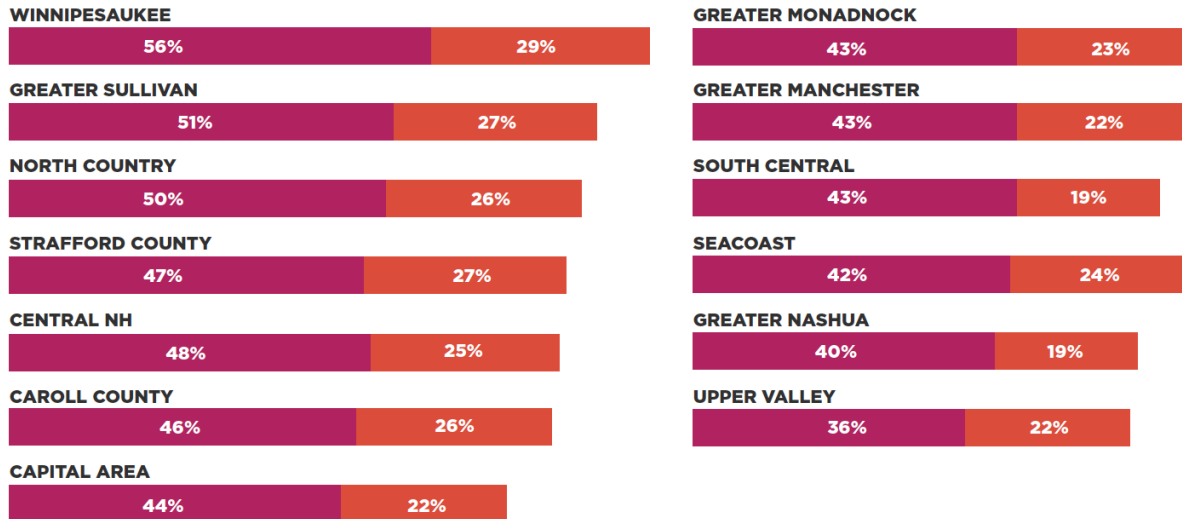
⁴ World Health Organization. "Adolescent Mental Health." 2020. <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>.

Teens with poor mental health are at increased risk of adverse effects such as drug or substance use, poor academic performance, and low self-esteem.⁴

GIRLS DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE CONSIDERATION BY REGION

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2019, Question 25 & 26.

● FELT DEPRESSED ● CONSIDERED SUICIDE



The data presented here is from 2019, before the pandemic. We anticipate these rates to increase once we have data for 2020 and 2021, when youth were frequently learning from home and isolated from their peers and school resources.

This bill does not require a specific amount of time or specific curriculum requirements for schools, but it may make all the difference in the world for some students.

Conclusion

Knowledge of and access to mental health resources save the lives of youth, particularly girls, girls of color, and girls in certain rural areas of the state, who have very high rates of depression and considering suicide. We respectfully urge the Committee to recommend SB 151 Ought to Pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Devan Quinn
Director of Policy
devan@nhwomensfoundation.org
