

DataHaven

Classroom Materials

Title of Material: Female Leadership

Topics Discussed: Female empowerment, leadership, feminism

Skills Utilized: Reading skills, annotating, reflective questions

Format: Individual or in small groups, discuss as a class

In Person or Online: Either

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Cultivating Female Leadership ♀

Directions: Read and annotate the following article on cultivating female leadership and the various approaches that are needed for female empowerment. Then, answer the thought questions.

[“Count Her In: A Status Report on Women & Girls in Fairfield County, Connecticut”](#)

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Supporting organizations that help girls find their voices and gain self-confidence at an early age was underscored by stakeholders (these stakeholders possessed expertise in women and business, education, immigrant issues, employment, health, aging, leadership development, childcare, legal advocacy and social justice).

One stakeholder reflected that young women more often require greater persuasion to run for office or seek leadership roles than their male counterparts. This concern was bolstered by statements from the high school girls that expressed a variety of fears, including fear of failing, of public speaking, and applying to college and being rejected. The middle school girls also felt unworthy of being listened to and understood as many shared that adults in their lives, including some mothers, did not give them adequate attention or support.

Educating men and boys also is part of the solution. Since men currently are more likely to be in organizational leadership roles, it is important that the image of female leadership is not foreign to them either. Men can do their part to increase gender equality in the workplace. Teaching boys the importance of feminism early on is especially important in cultivating female leaders. The middle school girls shared that boys in their classes are already making comments about “boys being better than girls in spelling, sports, math and science.” The young girls also reported that when they stand up for themselves, male classmates call them “feminists” in a derogatory way.

While these comments are potentially lighthearted in nature, they express exactly the beliefs that are harmful to developing equally self-confident boys and girls. From as early as possible, girls need not only more moral support than they currently receive, but also to be told more often that they matter, not just at school, but at home too.

Thought Questions

1. What in the article stuck out to you the most? It can be something you learned, something that surprised you, something that made you upset, or something you have heard of before.
2. According to the article, what are some ways we can cultivate female leadership and empowerment?
3. What role do men and boys play in empowering women? Do you agree with this?
4. Why is having female leadership fundamental?
5. How can *you* help cultivate female leadership and empowerment?