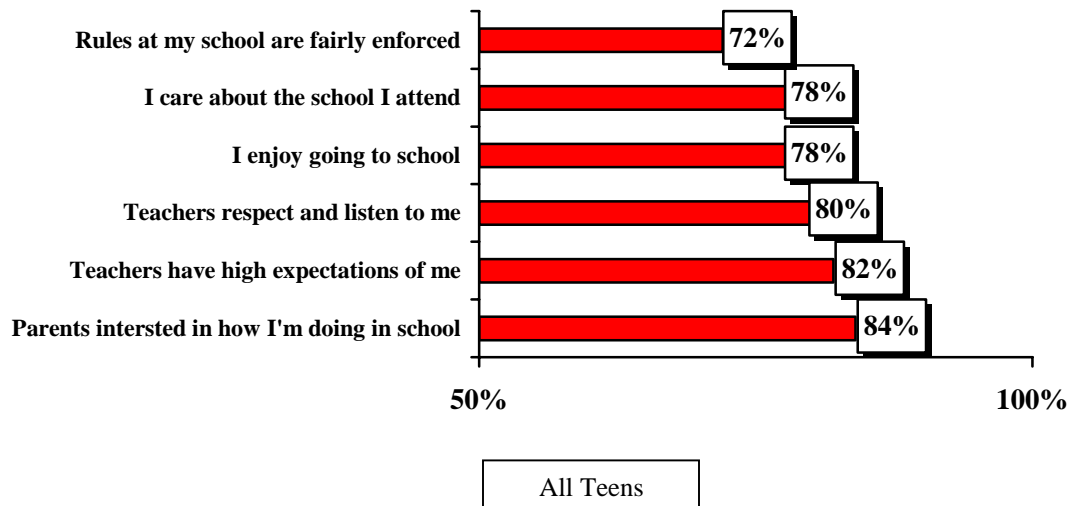


## SWYS 2005 NEWS - TEACHERS & PARENTS PLAY POSITIVE ROLE IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE



### **Southwest Wisconsin Teens Who Strongly Agree or Agree**

Eight out of ten 7th through 12th graders in southwest Wisconsin say their teachers have high expectations of them and their teachers respect them and listen to their opinions. Thirty-four percent of 7th and 8th graders say the cost of participation in school activities keeps them from participating as much as they would like to. Parents can play a positive role in the grades teens earn at school by expressing interest in what their teen learns in school and checking to see how they are doing in their course work.

Those are among the findings of the Southwest Wisconsin Youth Survey (SWYS) survey conducted by 15 school districts in the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) District 3 as reported by UW-Extension. The school districts of Argyle, Belmont, Benton, Black Hawk, Cassville, Cuba City, Darlington, Fennimore, Iowa-Grant, Ithaca, Lancaster, Platteville, Potosi, River Ridge, and Seneca, surveyed more than 3,700 students in September of 2005. UW-Extension faculty in Crawford, Grant, Lafayette, and Richland counties are involved in processing and presenting the findings. The survey was funded by participating school districts and the Grant County Drug-Free Coalition.

"The survey found that 75% of teens, who strongly agree that their teachers respect and listen to them, and 77% of teens, who strongly agree that their teachers have high expectations of them, report getting B's or better in their course work at school", says Tom Schmitz, Grant County UW-Extension Youth Development Educator. "Only 37% of the students, who strongly disagree that teachers respect and listen to them, and 41% of students, who strongly disagree that their teachers have high expectations of them, report B's or better."

"More than seven in ten students who strongly agree that their parents are interested in what they learn and how they are doing in school, report getting B's or higher in their courses at school. Less than 43% of the students who strongly disagree report getting B's or better", says Bev Doll, Grant County Family Living Agent.

"The study also shows that parent conversations with their teen about the teen's post high school plans, high levels of parental monitoring, and consistent enforcement of family rules are related to higher grades as reported by the students, says Jessie Potterton, Lafayette County Youth Development Educator. "In addition, a higher percentage of teens who say their parents would report them to school officials for a school code violation, also report getting B's or higher in their school work."

"Overall 67% of all students report getting B's or better in their course work at school. While 57% of teens who agree the cost of participating in school activities limits their participation in school activities report getting B's or higher", says Amy Mitchell, Crawford County 4-H Youth Development Agent. "The survey found that 34% of 7th and 8th graders report the cost of school activities prevents them from participating in as many school activities as they want to, this level of concern decreases as the students get older to 31% for 9th and 10th graders and 27% for 11th and 12th graders."

"Cyber bullying is becoming a growing problem today. Eleven percent of the students reported they had been cyber bullied sometime in the past year," according to Pam Hobson, Richland County 4-H Youth Development Agent. "The incidents of cyber bullying seem to be most prevalent amongst the 8th grade students. Twenty-five percent of both female and male students reporting being cyber bullied in the past month were 8th grade students."

Other findings in the study include:

- Students who spend time outside of the school day in extra curricular activities, studying, non-school activities (music lessons, church meetings, 4-H) and students who do chores at home report higher grades than those who do not
- 78% of students say they care about the school they attend
- 78% of students say they enjoy going to school, and
- 72% of students say rules in their school are fairly enforced

A full report on the SWYS survey results is due out this spring. Hobson, Schmitz, Doll, Mitchell, and Potterton are also giving community presentations on the data. For more information on the survey contact your local school district, Schmitz and Doll at 608-723-2125, Potterton at 608-776-4820, Mitchell at 608-326-0223, or Hobson at 608-647-6148.

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