

# WISCONSIN YOUTH FUTURES

Technical Report #20

Community Self-Assessment Tools

## Youth Support Inventory For Preventing Youth Depression



University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension  
[Cooperative Extension](#)

## Technical Report #20 Community Self Assessment Tools:

# Youth Support Inventory For Preventing Youth Depression

### Instructions

The purpose of the inventory is to identify areas where support for youth in this community is strong as well as areas where it could improve. Each item has been selected because scientific studies have found it to be related to risky behaviors among young people. While no community has all of the supports listed, it is often possible to develop supports when citizens like you think they are important.

In order to begin thinking about the resources available in your community, please rate each item to the best of your knowledge; leave blank any questions you do not have enough information to complete on your own. Several items of the inventory labeled *community data* are completed with the data from the TAP survey or other local information sources. For those items labeled *citizen rating*, fill in the blanks by marking "Extensive", "Limited", "Does Not Exist", or "?". Also note by each statement the specific supports or resources available in the community.

The inventory is usually completed by a committee or coalition, first in small groups and then in the large group. After you have rated the items in the assigned section, discuss each item with your small group. Agree on a small group rating of "Extensive", "Limited", "Does Not Exist", or "?". The "?" means you are not sure whether this support is present or available and your group will need to gather further information to find out. Ratings of "Limited" or "Does Not Exist" are gaps that exist in your community and are areas that may need attention. Select a spokesperson from the small group to report back your ratings to the large group. The members of the large group can accept the ratings of the small group or make changes. The consensus reached by the group assesses the community's strengths and shortcomings in preventing youth depression.

Copyright © 1994 by the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents. Do not copy without permission from the authors.

## Individual Factors

- \_\_\_\_\_ % 1. Percent of youth who report drinking beer, wine or hard liquor once a week or more
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 2. Percent of youth who have had intercourse by age 16
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 3. Percent of youth who report having 5 or more drinks in a row in the past month
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 4. Percent of youth who use drugs other than alcohol regularly
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 5. Percent of youth who report feeling depressed or very sad most or all of the time
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 6. Percent of youth who report that they feel they are a failure

| Exten-<br>-sive | Lim-<br>-ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |    |   |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|----|---|
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 7. | Youth in this community refrain from excessive alcohol and other drug use |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 8. | Youth in this community refrain from early sexual intercourse             |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 9. | Youth in this community feel they are capable                             |

## Family Support

### Parenting Practices

- \_\_\_\_\_ % 10. Percent of youth who would like to talk more frequently with their parents about things that are more important to them
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 11. Percent of youth who report their mother cares about them
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 12. Percent of youth who report their father cares about them
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 13. Percent of youth who report they never, rarely or sometimes discuss personal problems with their mother
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 14. Percent of youth who report they never, rarely or sometimes discuss personal problems with their mother

| Exten-<br>-sive | Lim-<br>-ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |  |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|--|
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 15. Parents spend time trying to communicate with children and be supportive                     |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 16. Parents spend time having fun with their children  |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 17. Parents talk to their children about things important to them in an educational, helpful way |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 18. Parents help their children develop friendships and sources of social support                |

### Parent Education Opportunities

Parenting education is provided in other ways:

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 19. Parent education classes are available and accessible for parents of children of all ages                                |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 20. Books and pamphlets on adolescent depression are available   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 21. Newsletters on child development and parenting are provided  |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 22. Programs are available to help people deal with stressful times (e.g. marriage, parenting, divorce, job loss, and death) |

### Community Support of Parents

\_\_\_\_\_ % 23. Percent of youth who report neighbors would tell their parents if they saw them doing something wrong

\_\_\_\_\_ % 24. Percent of youth who report their parents know the parents of their friends

|       |       |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 25. Neighbors and other adults in the community assist parents in supervising youth |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 26. Parents have opportunities to meet, share and talk with other parents           |

| Exten-<br>sive | Lim-<br>ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------|-------|
| _____          | _____        | _____                | _____ |

27. Community has widely known, generally agreed upon norms and standards regarding issues such as alcohol use, curfews, age of dating, and disapproval of suicide.

## School Support

### Support During School Transitions

\_\_\_\_\_ % 28. Percent of eight graders who report feeling depressed during the past month

\_\_\_\_\_ % 29. Percent of ninth graders who report feeling depressed during the past month

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 30. Depression increases when students enter high school   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 31. The school and community have formal means of supporting students during changes from one school building to another |

### Student Academic Performance

\_\_\_\_\_ % 32. Percent of students who believe they are getting a good and high quality education

\_\_\_\_\_ % 33. Percent of students who report they worry quite a bit or very much about getting good grades

\_\_\_\_\_ % 34. Percent students behind the appropriate grade

\_\_\_\_\_ % 35. Percent students who report they will probably drop out before finishing school

\_\_\_\_\_ % 36. Percent of unexcused absences from school

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 37. Most students find their education relevant and high quality   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 38. Schools and teachers work with students who find school irrelevant or experience academic difficulties |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 39. Summer programs are available for students experiencing academic difficulties                          |

### Student Commitment to School

- \_\_\_\_\_ % 40. Percent of students who report they enjoy going to school
- \_\_\_\_\_ % 41. Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that the rules in school are enforced fairly
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ 42. Most students enjoy school
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ 43. Students are involved in making decisions about school life (i.e. rules for behavior, extracurricular activities, school beautification)
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ 44. Students are given the opportunity to learn skills for successful involvement in school activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ 45. Students are recognized and rewarded for their involvement in school

### Teaching and School Practices

School practices are supportive of students:

- \_\_\_\_\_ % 46. Percent of students who agree or strongly agree that if they were having a serious personal problem, there is an adult in the school who they would feel OK talking to

- | Exten-<br>-sive | Lim-<br>-ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |   |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|---|
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 47. The school/teacher has clear rules and expectations for students (i.e. academic performance, drug and alcohol use; what to do if you encounter a problem) |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 48. Students have frequent opportunities to meet with advisors or teachers  |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 49. Schools make an effort to work with students who are antisocial, depressed, withdrawn, isolated, or rejected  |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 50. The school takes special steps to welcome new students  |

## Peer Climate

\_\_\_\_\_ % 51. Percent of students who worry quite a bit or very much about not fitting in with other kids at school

- |       |       |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 52. Youth in my community make an effort to include kids who don't seem to fit in   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 53. School and community campaigns attempt to change school and community norms and practices that encourage sexuality and drug abuse                     |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 54. Clubs exist that encourage academic, athletic, artistic, or other pursuits that require concentration and attention                                   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 55. Sports are available for girls as well as boys  |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 56. Youth who do not use substances, who are not sexually active, and who do well in school are visible, supported, and rewarded                          |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 57. Older youth have an opportunity to interact with and serve as positive role models for youth (e.g., peer counseling, mentoring, or tutoring programs) |

## Community Support

### Economic Conditions

\_\_\_\_\_ % 58. Percent of families with children living in poverty

- | Exten-<br>-sive | Lim-<br>-ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |  |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|--|
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 59. All youth receive equal encouragement to pursue a good job or higher education |

## Neighborliness

\_\_\_\_\_ % 60. Percent of youth who agree or strongly agree that if they had a problem, there are neighbors who they can count on to help

| Exten-<br>-sive | Lim-<br>-ited | Does<br>Not<br>Exist | ?     |   |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|-------|---|
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 61. People know each other and help each other out            |
| _____           | _____         | _____                | _____ | 62. Efforts are made to welcome new families to the community |

## Meaningful Youth Roles

### Recreational/Educational Opportunities

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 63. Opportunities exist for high-risk youth to have fun without drugs and alcohol                              |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 64. Positive ways exist for youth to show their independence and demonstrate their maturity                    |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 65. Adults in the community provide positive role models for dealing with depression and stressful life events |

### Prevention Programs

|       |       |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| _____ |       |       |       | 66. Grade at which girls report most frequent feelings of depression  |
| _____ |       |       |       | 67. Grade at which boys report most frequent feelings of depression   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 68. Prevention programs for students begin early before students begin to report depression   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 69. Prevention programs are in place for youth who are aggressive or antisocial   |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 70. Students have the opportunity to learn such skills as decision-making, personal responsibility, stress management, and refusal skills |



|                        |                      |                               |          |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Exten<br/>-sive</b> | <b>Lim-<br/>ited</b> | <b>Does<br/>Not<br/>Exist</b> | <b>?</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------|

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 71. Services are available for youth who are experiencing problems in interpersonal relations, stressful life events, or loss of a close family member |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|

**Religious Opportunities**

\_\_\_\_\_ % 72. Percent of young people who attend church services or participate in other church activities (i.e. choir, religious classes, and church youth groups)

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 73. Organized religious activities are available for all youth |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 74. Organized religious activities are relevant to youth needs |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|

**Preparation for Adult Roles**

Youth feel connections or ties to the community:

\_\_\_\_\_ % 75. The two people students are most likely to talk to regarding personal problems

|       |       |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 59. Youth have the opportunity to develop personal relationships with adults in the community |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|

|       |       |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 60. Youth have the opportunity to engage in community service that they perceive as useful and important |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|

|       |       |       |       |   |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | 61. Youth are rewarded for meaningful involvement |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|

Copyright © 1994 by the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents. Do not copy without permission from the authors.

Developed by Karen Bogenschneider, UW-Madison/Extension, 1990; Revised 1991, 1994. To reprint, contact Professor Karen Bogenschneider at (608) 262-4070.

**Citation Information:**

Bogenschneider, K. (1999). *Youth Support Inventory for Preventing Youth Depression*. (Wisconsin Youth Futures Technical Report No. 20, 8 pgs.). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension.

©1994 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System doing business as the division of Cooperative Extension of the [University of Wisconsin-Extension](#). Send inquiries about copyright permission to: [Cooperative Extension Publishing Operations](#), 103 Extension Building, 432 North Lake Street, Madison, WI 53706.

University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties, publishes this information to further the purpose of the May 8 and June 30, 1914, Acts of Congress. UW-Extension provides equal opportunities and affirmative action in employment and programming, including Title IX requirements. If you need this material in an alternative format, contact Cooperative Extension Publications at (608) 262-2655 (Voice & TDD), or the UW-Extension Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Programs.

This publication is available online at:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/familyimpact/cats.htm>

Or you may order a hard copy of this publication. Youth Futures Technical Report #20 is \$3.00. Please add \$1.00 for postage and handling and make the check payable to: *University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin Youth Futures*. Send your order to:

University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension  
1300 Linden Drive, Room 130  
Madison, WI 53706-1524  
(608)262-0369  
Fax: (608)262-5335