

Classroom Guide

USA WEEKEND's 11th Annual Teen Report and National Survey Results: Teaching About Teens & Self-Image

USA WEEKEND's Annual Teen Survey produced some highly teachable results about the self-image of students in grades 6-12. Here's how to use your students' natural interest in themselves to explore and the forces — from parents to newspapers — that shape their world.

What's in the Classroom Guide

- Pages 1-4: **Teaching Ideas for Grades 6-12.** Strategies are grouped by theme: "The Big Picture," "Influences and Pressures," "The Looking-Glass Self" and "Defining Depression."
- Page 5: **Activity Master, "How to Tell if a Friend Is Depressed."** A critical thinking activity designed to help your students distinguish between a serious illness and sadness.
- Page 6: **Blank Survey Form.** Lets your students take (or retake) the survey to familiarize themselves with the important issues it raises.
- Page 7: **Key Results of the National Survey.** Enables your students to compare their views with those of the 272,400 students in grades 6-12 who responded last fall.
- Page 8: **"Sneak Preview" of USA WEEKEND's May 1-3 Issue.** An advance look at the magazine's lively coverage of the survey's revealing findings.

About This Guide

Last fall, in partnership with Channel One News, USA WEEKEND conducted a survey for its 11th Annual Teen Report, "Teens & Self-Image." A record 272,400 students responded through the magazine, its Web site, its NIE school program, participating newspapers and Channel One News.

About 57% of the respondents were girls. Some 26% were early adolescents – students in grades 6 and 7 – while the rest were in grades 8-12. Though the findings lack scientific precision, they do shed a telling light on the attitudes of a vast cross-section of young Americans.

In general, the students who took part in the survey felt pretty comfortable with themselves. Yet an overwhelming majority want to improve themselves in some way. And, disturbingly, depression and suicide are real concerns.

This eight-page Classroom Guide suggests ways you can use "Teens & Self-Image" to raise issues like these in the context of the courses you teach. The discussion questions, grouped under four themes, help students explore ways that schools, religion, families, newspapers and electronic media shape teens' views of themselves and their world.

Page 8 of this guide presents a "sneak preview" of the contents of the May 1-3 issue of USA WEEKEND. Containing interviews with young people and experts, this special coverage of "Teens & Self-Image" will deepen your students' grasp of the issues it raises.

Ask your NIE coordinator how you can get a copy of the magazine. Also, you can download the relevant articles from www.usaweekend.com.



Getting Started

Before distributing copies of the blank survey form, have students volunteer their ideas on what questions it might contain. Ask them to imagine that they have been assigned to find out how a group of people — teenagers in France or Japan, for example — feel about themselves.

What sort of data would they need to get a fix on the group's general mood and sense of itself? What would students want to know about the pressures that the group feels — to succeed academically, socially and in a future career? Why might it be useful to learn how much of their behavior is influenced by religion, parents, teachers and other kids? What help would it be to know how the adults in their country view them, or how many of them have ever experienced real depression? After discussion, tell students that USA WEEKEND's 11th Annual Teen Report and National Survey, "Teens & Self-Image," provides a way for them to explore those questions further.

Distribute photocopies of the blank questionnaire. Give students 10 minutes to complete it. Afterwards, have a team of student volunteers tabulate the responses and report the results at the next class.



Exploring National Results

Distribute photocopies of the national results (page 7 of the guide). Explain that everyone who responded to the survey was an adolescent. Adolescence is a period of growth and change that starts between the ages of 10 and 14, depending on the individual, and lasts until around ages 19-21. Tell students that the survey provides a snapshot of adolescents in America during the 1997-98 school year. Then review the results individually, or adapt the following four themes to the course you teach.



Theme 1: The Big Picture — Questions 1, 8, 14

1

Overall (Q1), most kids (93%) feel good about themselves. But there are differences as well, related to gender, ethnicity and religion.

The Gender Factor: While 58% of the boys feel "really good" about themselves, only 43% of the girls do. Why the gap? Are girls conditioned to be harder on themselves — or are they simply more realistic than boys?

The Race Factor: As a group, 46% of the white respondents felt "really good" about themselves. Among minority-group respondents, however, the figure rises to 56%. Why the gap? For clues, students might examine the

results of Q14. Fully 71% of all respondents say that their race or ethnicity has no impact on the way they feel about themselves. Yet when it does make a difference, the effect on self-image is usually positive, especially among minority respondents. Ask: How might a minority-group identity (or, for that matter, an ethnic identity like Italian-American or Jewish) help give people positive feelings about themselves? (By giving them a sense of belonging, of being "special," etc.)

Note: Members of minority groups make up 28% of the survey respondents. About 10% are African-American, 8% Hispanic, 3% Asian-American, 1% Native American, 3% multiracial and 3% other.

The Religion Factor: Fifty-six percent of the students who identify themselves as being influenced "a lot" by religion (Q8) say they feel "really good" about themselves. That compares with a "really good" from only 44% of the students who say religion doesn't influence them at all. What is it about religion — especially during adolescence, a period of searching — that might help boost young people's self-esteem? (Perhaps a sense of belonging to a group, ready answers to troubling questions, a compass during a confusing period in life. Religion, after all, is concerned with explaining the meaning and purpose of life, offering hope for the future, and providing moral guidance — precisely the sort of rudder that many adolescents crave.)



Theme 2: Influences & Pressures — Questions 2, 5, 7, 8

2

Briefly introduce students to the ideas of Erik Erikson (1902-94), the Danish-American psychoanalyst and disciple of Freud who divided human life into eight stages of development. In Erikson's view, we mature by moving from stage to stage. At each stage we must overcome a series of personal crises triggered by our need to adapt to changes in ourselves and our environment.

In the fifth stage, adolescence, the crisis involves the search for identity — for who we are. In this quest, peer groups (companions of similar age and background) become essential. Adolescents' peers help them piece together the images of themselves that they have gathered as sons or daughters, students, workers and friends. In that way, Erikson says, young people finally get a sense of who they are and where they are going.

Positive Pressures: One way we change is to strive to become more like people we admire. Have students examine the results to Q2, which asks them to identify qualities they admire in others as well as themselves. What are the top five qualities the survey respondents

admire most in others? (Honesty, good sense of humor, intelligence, kindness and self-confidence.) What are the five qualities respondents feel describe them? (The same five, but in a different order: kindness, honesty, sense of humor, intelligence and self-confidence.) In students' opinions, why do popularity, wealth and toughness end up at the bottom of the list both of most admired traits and of those respondents' feel they have?

Negative Pressures: Turn students' attention to Q7, which focuses on pressure not just from peers but from the media as well. What are the two greatest pressures respondents feel here? (To "look a certain way" and "have a boyfriend/girlfriend.") Have students help you identify the sources of all six of the pressures listed here. (For example, pressure to look a certain way could come from advertisements, from body shapes held up as ideal by TV and movies, and from the idiosyncratic dress of various student groups. The pressure to have a boyfriend/girlfriend can come both from without — the example of peers and romantic stories — and from the biological changes that occur during adolescence.) Why might Erikson argue that these pressures are positive, not negative? (Because they force adolescents to make choices in a way that helps them discover who they are, allowing them to pass into young adulthood, Erikson's sixth stage of life. The crisis for young adults, Erikson theorized, involves resolving the conflict between needing and fearing intimacy.)

Mixed Pressures: Explain to students that socialization is the process of learning those social, mental and physical skills that equip us to function effectively in human society. The family is a key agent of socialization. And so are schools, religious institutions, peers, TV and all the other items listed in Q8. Ask: How do the forces listed here, from parents to celebrities, shape us socially, mentally and physically? What's positive about each influence? What, if anything, might be negative? About 70% of respondents identify parents as the major influence. Ask: How might movie ratings, v-chips and parental "advisories" on CDs be socializing influences?

Room for Improvement: Refer students to Q5, which asks respondents to check off achievements that would make them feel better about themselves. Not surprisingly, 85% of both boys and girls want to change something about themselves. What motivates them to want to get better grades (49%), lose weight (49% of girls), bulk up (47% of boys), or improve in any other of the areas covered in the survey? How are the sources of these motivations like — and unlike — those they identify as sources of the negative pressures in Q7?

Charles H. Cooley (1864-1929), a sociologist, developed the idea that the way we see ourselves is a reflection of the way others see us. He called this image "the looking-glass self." In short, he believed that our self-image is produced through interaction with others. If we think others approve of us, for example, we approve of ourselves. Cooley's observation, like Erikson's, is one of many theories that purport to explain how socialization works.

The questions on appearance ("looks" — Q4 & Q9) and on the way adults view teens (Q11 & Q12) give students an opportunity to explore Cooley's notion of the looking-glass self. Point out that in Q4, two thirds of all respondents (and nearly three quarters of all girls) report being "somewhat" or "not at all" satisfied with their looks. In Q9, about two thirds of the respondents say that they believe looks are important when it comes to making friends, succeeding in life and being respected.

How might the socialization agents listed in Q8 have shaped the respondents' image of their appearance? Where do we, as a culture, get our ideas of beauty from? (Interestingly, while 37% of minority-group members say they are "very" satisfied with their looks, only 28% of all white respondents are similarly satisfied.) Suppose the kids "not at all" satisfied had been raised in isolation on a desert island. Without a frame of reference (a "looking glass") that went beyond their families, how might these kids have responded to Q4? What is it about a larger society that might lead them to be dissatisfied with their looks?

What role do adults play in helping children create their images of themselves? Q11 suggests that 36% of the respondents don't feel adults give their opinions much weight. In Q12, 18% of all respondents (25% of minority respondents) "can't remember" when an adult last said something encouraging or supportive. Ask: Assuming Cooley's theory makes sense, how do you think these respondents' self-image might have been affected by the attitudes of the adults around them?

Help students understand that sadness and depression are not synonymous. Begin by writing "3% - 5%" on the chalkboard. Explain the figures by telling students that, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), each year 3 to 5 percent of all teens experience clinical depression. Clinical depression is a bleak "down" period of at least two weeks in duration that engulfs its victims in self-doubt and feelings of hopelessness.



Follow-up Activities

Now refer students to Q15, in which 71 percent of all respondents report being “really depressed” occasionally or often. Ask: “What’s wrong with this picture? Here we have seven out of 10 kids reporting depression, when the NIMH puts the figure closer to four in 100.” (Clearly, most of respondents confused depression with the more fleeting periods of sadness that everyone feels now and then.)

As the answers to Q16, Q17 and Q18 remind us, depression is a real and treatable problem. But help students understand that while sadness is an emotional state, depression is an illness. While sad people need to be comforted, depressed people need to be treated; and at least 90 percent of the time, treatment is effective. “If sadness is like walking through a muddy swamp,” says psychiatrist Ian Magill of Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, “depression is like flailing helplessly in quicksand. When it overtakes us, we feel powerless, lost, with no options.”

It’s no wonder that depression, a serious health problem, is tied to poor performance in school, alcohol and drug abuse, and feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness. The NIMH reports that depression in older teens (age 15-19) leads to suicide about 2,000 times a year in the U.S. About 330 more suicides occur among kids age 10-14. After accidents and homicides, suicide is the main cause of death among teens.

Distribute copies of the activity master, “How to Tell if a Friend Is Depressed.” Talk students through the introduction and review the checklist, “Symptoms of Depression.” Then have them apply the checklist to each of two fictional case studies — one of a girl who seems devastated by her poor performance on an algebra test, the other of a boy who exhibits many of the symptoms of clinical depression

Afterwards, discuss the students’ diagnoses. Which one seems clearly depressed? Why? When Sally says, “I’m really depressed, I guess,” is she using the language correctly? What word might she substitute for “depressed”? (Perhaps “unhappy,” “sad,” “disappointed,” etc. — words that express emotional states, not an illness.)

Follow up with the section on “Seeking Help.” Remind students that depressed people who say things like John’s “I’d be better off dead” must be taken at their word. Steps they might take to insure that their friend gets help include speaking with a guidance counselor, a teacher, their own parents or other adults.

Refer students to Q6 and Q10. About 42% of all respondents to Q6 (and 48% of all girls) say that a friend understands them best. And 20% of the respondents to Q10 report that they have no adult to confide in. Tell students that statistics like these are reminders of the important role young people can play in making sure their peers find help.

1. Newspaper Laboratory: It’s fun to study the contents of any newspaper as agents of the never-ending process of socialization. News stories provide examples of desirable and undesirable behavior. Editorials and op-ed pieces shape our thoughts about local, national and international issues. Obituaries offer us narratives of exemplary lives. Cooking and shopping advice provide us with the skills we need to be educated consumers. And ads — even classified ads — try to persuade us that others will think better of us and we will be happier if we take a certain job, wear a certain brand of underwear and see the latest blockbuster movie. Have students clip an item from the newspaper that they feel advances the socialization process and bring it to class, along with a 250-word essay explaining why they chose it.

2. Polling the School: USA WEEKEND’s Teen Surveys are superb ways to introduce journalism and social studies students to polling techniques. First, have your students decide which segment of the school they wish to poll. Second, have them design a strategy — perhaps setting up a “Rate Yourself!” table outside the cafeteria or in a hallway. Third, have them reproduce the blank survey form and go to work. After the results have been tabulated, suggest that students report them in the school newspaper, supported by quotes from students and teachers.

3. Socialization’s Past: History students might want to speculate on how the changing nation altered the self-image of young people. Assign students to research and write reports on how young people’s self-image was shaped during a time when radio, TV, cars, telephones and CDs didn’t exist. Some students might like to explore the notion that major current events — wars, the suffrage and civil rights movements, the Great Depression, etc. — put young people in unique situations that altered their self-images.

4. Thinking Critically: As the enclosed flier explains, USA WEEKEND plans to run extensive coverage of the results of “Teens & Self-Image” in its May 1-3 issue. Have students bring copies of the magazine to class or download the relevant articles from USA WEEKEND’s Web site (usaweekend.com). Ask them to read the articles and select a statement by a teen that strikes them as especially interesting. Finally, have them write that teen a never-to-be-mailed letter explaining why they found his or her statement fascinating. Encourage students to point out in their letter precisely why they agree or disagree with the statement.

How to Tell if a Friend Is Depressed

About four of every 100 teenagers suffers from clinical depression, studies suggest. Depressed teens live with a health problem that can lay them low for weeks at a time, draining their energy and self-esteem.

How can you tell if a friend is really depressed, rather than simply working through a bout of sadness? This activity will help you find out. Read about Sally and John. Then apply the checklist, "Symptoms of Depression," to see which one may be suffering more clearly from depression.

Sally: This morning your friend Sally, 16, seemed teary and upset. "You still want to go to the movie Saturday night?" you asked. "What movie?" she said — and then remembered. "Oh, I guess so." You asked her what was wrong. "I'm tired," she said, "and yesterday was the pits. First, I blew the algebra test. Then my mother wouldn't let me buy a new outfit! I'm just really depressed, I guess. Maybe the movie will make me feel better."

John: One afternoon you ran into John, 17. A top athlete and straight-A student, he looked gaunt and tired. "You losing weight?" you asked. "I guess," he said. "I can't seem to get the appetite for anything anymore — basketball, school, food." "Must be tough to play basketball on an empty stomach," you said. "I quit the team," he replied, "and I'm thinking of quitting school!" "Quit school?" you blurted out. "Are you crazy?" "No, I'm just a loser!" he snapped. "I'd be better off dead!"

Symptoms of Depression*

Check the boxes under Sally or John whenever the answer is yes.

	Sally	John
Does he or she talk about		
Feelings of sadness or "emptiness"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hopelessness, pessimism, or guilt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helplessness or worthlessness?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she seem		
Unable to make decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to concentrate and remember?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have lost interest in activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does he or she complain of		
Loss of energy and drive?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trouble sleeping or getting up?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Losing or gaining weight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headaches, stomach aches, backaches?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has his or her behavior changed so that		
He or she is restless or irritable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
He or she wants to be alone a lot?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
He or she has dropped activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
He or she abuses alcohol or drugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has he or she talked about		
Death?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suicide — or a suicide attempt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Seeking Help: A friend who exhibits several of the above symptoms may need help. Don't assume someone else is handling the problem. Encourage him or her to visit a doctor, a mental health specialist or a counselor. If your friend fails to seek help quickly, talk to an adult you trust — especially if your friend mentions death or suicide. On the back of this sheet, jot down what you would do to make sure a depressed friend finds help.

*Symptoms list adapted from material provided by the National Institute of Mental Health

Teens & Self-Image

Here are the revealing key results of USA WEEKEND's Annual Teen Survey, "Teens & Self-Image." How often do you agree with the 272,400 students in grades 6-12 whose views these results reflect?

1. In general, how do you feel about yourself?

Really good	49%
Kind of good	44%
Not very good	6%
Bad	1%

2. Which things do you MOST admire in others your age, and which do you think describe you?

	I admire	I am
Smart	56%	66%
Good at sports	52%	53%
Attractive	52%	40%
Good sense of humor	59%	69%
Popular	40%	32%
Rich	35%	10%
Not influenced by others	49%	53%
Tough	31%	40%
Kind	53%	78%
Creative	50%	63%
Self-confident	53%	65%
Honest	60%	75%

3. Do you consider yourself healthy?

Yes 89% No 11%

4. How satisfied are you with your looks?

Very	31%
Somewhat	63%
Not at all	6%

5. Which of the following would make you feel better about yourself? (Check all that apply)

Losing weight	38%
Bulking or toning up	38%
Wearing cooler clothes	24%
Getting better grades	49%
Doing better in sports	36%
Quitting drugs or alcohol	4%
Quitting smoking	8%
Fitting in with a certain crowd	16%
Having a better relationship with my parents	30%
Nothing. I like myself the way I am	15%

6. Who understands you the most? (Pick one)

Parent	28%
Friend	42%
Teacher	1%
Sibling	5%
Boyfriend/girlfriend	10%
Coach	0%
Religious leader	1%
No one	8%
Other	5%

7. How pressured do you feel to do the following things?

	A lot	Some	Not at all
Drink alcohol	7%	16%	77%
Smoke	8%	15%	77%
Take illegal drugs	7%	9%	84%
Have sex	9%	19%	72%
Look a certain way	16%	39%	45%
Have a boyfriend/girlfriend	16%	36%	48%

8. How much influence do each of the following have on your life?

	A lot	Some	None
Parents	70%	26%	4%
Girlfriend/boyfriend	24%	39%	37%
Teacher	25%	55%	20%
Religion	34%	36%	30%
Advertising	4%	32%	64%
TV shows	8%	36%	56%
Other kids	21%	57%	22%
Celebrities (like stars,athletes, musicians)	21%	42%	37%

9. How important are looks when it comes to:

	Very	Some	Not at all
Making friends	20%	47%	33%
Succeeding in life	24%	41%	35%
Being respected	29%	38%	33%

10. Do you have an adult you can confide in, in or outside your family?

Yes 80% No 11%
No, but I wish I did 9%

11. Do you think adults generally value your opinion?

Yes 64% No 36%

12. When was the last time an adult, such as a parent or teacher, said something encouraging or supportive to you?

Today	37%
In the past week	38%
More than a week ago	7%
Can't remember	18%

13. About how often do you have a conversation with one of your parents that lasts longer than 15 minutes?

Every day	32%
A few times a week	34%
A few times a month	17%
Almost never	17%

14. How does your race or ethnicity affect the way you feel about yourself?

Positively	25%
Negatively	4%
It doesn't make a difference	71%

15. Two million teens suffer from severe depression, according to one estimate. Do you ever feel really depressed?

Yes, often	16%
Occasionally	55%
No, never	29%

16. Have you ever visited a mental health counselor?

Yes, voluntarily	7%
Yes, but didn't want to	8%
No, I haven't needed to	77%
No, but I'd like to	8%

17. Have any of your friends ever tried to commit suicide or discussed it?

Yes 37% No 49%
Unsure 14%

18. Have you ever taken prescribed anti-depressant drugs?

Yes 8% No 92%

19. Which of the following after-school activities are you involved in? (Check all that apply)

A youth group, such as Scouts	22%
Volunteer work	17%
Extracurricular class	26%
Sports	51%
Work at a part-time job	20%
I have no after-school activity	23%

THE RESPONDENTS:

Were: Male 43% Female 57%

Lived with:

Both parents	62%
Mother	15%
Father	4%
Parent and stepparent	15%
Other	4%

Were in grade:

6 9%	7 17%	8 21%
9 16%	10 14%	11 12%
12 11%		

Considered themselves:

White 72%	Black 10%
Hispanic 8%	Asian 3%
Native American 1%	Other 3%
Multiracial 3%	

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Teens: How do you rate yourself?

Take this survey to learn about yourself. Then compare your views with those of your classmates and the 272,400 students in grades 6-12 who responded to USA WEEKEND's Annual Teen Survey, "Teens & Self-Image."

1. In general, how do you feel about yourself?

- Really good
- Kind of good
- Not very good
- Bad

2. Which things do you MOST admire in others your age, and which do you think describe you?

	I admire	I am
Smart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good at sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attractive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good sense of humor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Popular	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rich	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not influenced by others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kind	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honest	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Do you consider yourself healthy?

- Yes No

4. How satisfied are you with your looks?

- Very
- Somewhat
- Not at all

5. Which of the following would make you feel better about yourself?

(Check all that apply)

- Losing weight
- Bulking or toning up
- Wearing cooler clothes
- Getting better grades
- Doing better in sports
- Quitting drugs or alcohol
- Quitting smoking
- Fitting in with a certain crowd
- Having a better relationship with my parents
- Nothing. I like myself the way I am

6. Who understands you the most?

(Pick one)

- Parent
 - Friend
 - Teacher
 - Sibling
 - Boyfriend/girlfriend
 - Coach
 - Religious leader
 - No one
 - Other (state relationship):
-
-

7. How pressured do you feel to do the following things?

	A lot	Some	Not at all
Drink alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smoke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Take illegal drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Look a certain way	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have a boyfriend/girlfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. How much influence do each of the following have on your life?

	A lot	Some	None
Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Girlfriend/boyfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advertising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TV shows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other kids	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Celebrities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. How important are looks when it comes to:

	Very	Somewhat	Not at all
Making friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Succeeding in life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being respected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Do you have an adult you can confide in, in or outside your family?

- Yes No No, but I wish I did

11. Do you think adults generally value your opinion?

- Yes No

12. When was the last time an adult, such as a parent or teacher, said something encouraging or supportive to you?

- Today
- In the past week
- More than a week ago
- Can't remember

13. About how often do you have a conversation with one of your parents that lasts longer than 15 minutes?

- Every day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Almost never

14. How does your race or ethnicity affect the way you feel about yourself?

- Positively
- Negatively
- It doesn't make a difference

15. Two million teens suffer from severe depression, according to one estimate.

Do you ever feel really depressed?

- Yes, often
- Occasionally
- No, never

16. Have you ever visited a mental health counselor?

- Yes, voluntarily
- Yes, but didn't want to
- No, I haven't needed to
- No, but I'd like to

17. Have any of your friends ever tried to commit suicide or discussed it?

- Yes No Unsure

18. Have you ever taken prescribed anti-depressant drugs?

- Yes No

19. Which of the following after-school activities are you involved in? (Check all that apply)

- A youth group, such as Scouts or a community group
- Volunteer work
- Extracurricular class, like art or music
- Sports
- Work at a part-time job
- I have no after-school activity

OPTIONAL: Have you ever wanted to change something about yourself and then done it?

On a separate piece of paper in 200 words or less, explain what it was, why you wanted to change it and how you made that change.

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF:

I am: Male Female

I live with:

- Both parents
- Mother
- Father
- Parent and stepparent
- Other

My grade in school is:

- 6 ... 7 ... 8 ... 9 ...
- 10 ... 11 ... 12 ...

I consider myself:

- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Native American
- Multiracial
- Other

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SNEAK PREVIEW

Inside the May 1-3 Issue: USA WEEKEND's 11th Annual Teen Report "Teens & Self-Image"

Look for articles on:

- **Religion and Teens.** Respondents to USA WEEKEND's Annual Teen Survey who say religion has a major impact on their lives are more likely than others to feel good about themselves. The May 1-3 USA WEEKEND examines the central role religion plays in many teenagers' lives today.
- **Depression in Teens.** Two in five respondents say they have friends who have either attempted suicide or talked about doing so. The May 1-3 USA WEEKEND presents teens' disturbing comments on depression and suicide and the reactions and advice of experts.
- **Tools to Improve a Teenager's Self-Image.** An indispensable guide for parents and teens on key books, columns, chat rooms, activities and positive interactions — the "must-do's" of self-image boosting.
- **Teen Panel on Self-Image.** Tipper Gore, mental health policy advisor to the Clinton Administration, chaired a discussion with students on "Teens & Self-Image." The May 1-3 USA WEEKEND presents the highlights of this lively exchange.

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