

Growing up as intense mother's daughter: girls in the "best" schools of the big cities

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Abstract

Currently the "best" schools of Russian big cities are characterized by the situation of high competition among various agents – schools as such, parents, and children become involved as well, as a result, often already since the 1st year of study (being 7 years old). Those who do not study well enough are pushed to quit the "good" school, but, since more and more schools are becoming participants in this competition, they increasingly have nowhere to go, and simply continue to live in the atmosphere of pressure and rejection since the childhood. It becomes vitally important to be successful at least in something (sports or arts etc.) since it gives the school grades in competition. Children with good abilities participate in additional academic competitions every week. Mothers, especially in the initial period of schooling, are intensely involved in the process. Meanwhile, the image of the future is very uncertain and both mothers and daughters do not know what way is the best to choose from the point of view of achieving success. Obedience and conformism are expected from daughters, boys have more space for freedom. It is unclear what is the best to opt for daughters in the future: career or successful marriage, so both are worked upon. It is very difficult to resist to this pressure since oppression mechanisms are flexible and interiorized. Thus protest of youth in some form is inevitable, and definitely has specifically "girls'" part or agenda.