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Gender Equality Report

(ABC 6 NEWS) -- Do you think women and men are treated equally in Minnesota? If you say yes, the findings of a new study may surprise you.

As a workingwoman, Alisa Walz-Flannigan has seen discrimination in the workplace.

"The people who are often in the hiring are the majority of the men, who tend to have more power, not always. They may, in their head, more often picture a man in that job just because of our cultural stereotypes," says Alisa Walz-Flannigan of Rochester.

Those stereotypes have been reflected in a new study done by the Humphrey Institute and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. They met at the United Way in Rochester today to share their findings.

"The headlines in our research are that women and girls in our state are being shortchanged. They are being short changed in economics, safety, health and leadership, " says Lee Roper-Batker, the president of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota.

One of the most significant findings is that on average, Minnesota women make 11,000 dollars a year less than men.

"Eleven thousand dollars is pretty significant for families. That's the difference of being able to save for a down payment, being able to choose a better daycare facility," says Roper-Batker.

Another issue for Southeastern Minnesota women is safety. The study finds around 18 percent of women are victims of rape crimes. That's compared to just over one percent of men. The women's foundation is trying to change those numbers.

"We're out on a seven city road to equality tour. We really want to take the findings out and say, this is resonating in your communities. What do you see, and what resolutions do you have to help us move equality forward," says Roper-Batker.



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