

Female politicians spur female politicians

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U.S. researchers say they've determined the presence of female politicians inspires political interest and activism among young women.

David Campbell, an assistant professor of political science, and Christina Wolbrecht, an associate professor of political science, both at the University of Notre Dame say the more women politicians become visible in the media, the more likely young women will develop an interest in becoming politically active.

Campbell and Wolbrecht also report adolescents' interest is heightened by viable female candidates campaigning for high-profile offices. It is not a matter of the number of women holding or running for office, but their visibility.

"A highly visible woman politician in the future -- perhaps even as the top of a major party presidential ticket -- has the potential to generate significant interest in political activity," the authors state.

"Visible female candidates trigger conversations about politics between parents and their adolescent daughters, familiarizing girls with the political world and leading them to envision themselves as participants in politics," say Campbell and Wolbrecht.

The study is detailed in the May issue of *The Journal of Politics*.

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