Girl Power:
A Soroptimist Girl Conference
Model Program Kit
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I. Introduction
Why girls? Why do their needs and concerns deserve special and focused attention? While all children are vulnerable and deserve basic human rights, girls start at birth with a unique disadvantage – gender inequality. The global consequences of this inequality are at the root of many obstacles for girls, including poverty, disease, violence and lack of access to education, among others. Girls are kept out of school, hit, ignored, forced to marry and have sex, sold as slaves and asked to sit silently while societies and governments make decisions for and about them. Girls experience these violations to their human rights throughout their childhood and into adulthood, if they survive at all.

Education
While exclusion from education for girls is not the only form of gender inequality, it is closely linked to all others. As a result, education is both a catalyst for and an indicator of gender equality. For every 100 boys worldwide out of school, there are 122 girls. In developing nations, factors related to water, sanitation and hygiene, safety going to and from school, early marriage, pregnancy and unpaid household work, family responsibilities and care giving, all affect girls’ access to education. Though primary education (and often secondary) are universal for both boys and girls in North American and Western European countries, gender differences in education persist such as differences in math and science scores and high school dropout rates.

Health
There is a great need to address the quality of and accessibility to healthcare for all communities worldwide, but girls require special attention because of their vulnerable positions. Especially in poorer nations, girls must overcome myriad barriers to healthcare, from restrictions on movement, son preference, taboos about discussing sexuality to a lack of autonomy in decision-making. In Western countries, girls face their own unique set of health issues, including use of tobacco, drugs and alcohol, teen pregnancy, body image and eating disorders. And in all countries throughout the world, girls face challenges around reproductive health, mental health and health education about HIV/AIDS.

Violence
Unconscionable violence against girls is perpetrated in all parts of the world today. Girls are at risk of violence on the streets, at home, in schools, where they work and in institutions. In many cases, girls are betrayed by the very individuals responsible for their protection and well-being—their guardians, teachers, employers and the police. Girls worldwide face numerous forms of violence including violence at school, bullying, sexual assault, teen dating violence, sex trafficking and prostitution, female genital mutilation and child marriage. Girls everywhere speak about their experience of fear and constraints on their activities and mobility as a consequence of violence and the threat of violence.

Investing in these three basic areas in which girls face systemic gender inequalities has positive social and economic results that benefit several generations within a family and nations as a whole. However, access to education, health and protection from violence are girls’ basic human rights regardless of the outcomes for families, communities and the country. The purpose of this model program kit is to provide guidance on implementing a girl conference aimed at empowering adolescent girls. Girls need supportive environments where they can express themselves freely, develop their voice and values and experiment with their leadership identities. Research has repeatedly shown that all-girl learning environments are the most effective way to support girls’ growth and empowerment.
For more information on girls’ issues and rights worldwide please read the Soroptimist white paper, *Putting Girls First*, available on the SIA website.

### II. Preliminary Planning
The focus of this model program kit is to first provide Soroptimist members with information about planning and implementing a girl conference. Before delving into girl conference ideas a few preliminary planning steps need to be addressed. Taking the time to complete these steps will help ensure the success of the girl conference.

#### Establish Working Groups
Once the club has made a commitment to conduct a girl conference, a working group should be formed of members interested in playing a more active role in making sure the girl conference is a success. The working group will be charged with making sure all components of the conference are identified, planned-out and implemented. In addition, the group will be responsible for addressing any problems that should arise. They will be responsible for evaluating the results of the girl conference and reporting them to Soroptimist headquarters.

Depending upon the size and scope of the girl conference, this working group should be made up of three to five members. Invite former Violet Richardson Award recipients to join the working group. Not only will this enrich the group by having a girl’s point of view, but it will also be an excellent leadership development opportunity for the recipient.

In addition, the club may also wish to form a couple of other working groups, such as a group to coordinate fundraising efforts and a group to coordinate public relations efforts. To support the efforts of these working groups, Soroptimist headquarters has created a number of fundraising resources and public relations resources, which can be found in the members’ area of the website.

Once formed, these groups can work together to ensure the girl conference’s success. The working groups will enable the club to rest assured that the most important components of the conference are being managed by specific persons who have agreed to take on these added responsibilities. Additionally, by including former Violet Richardson Award recipients in the working groups, the club can be sure all decisions were made with a girl’s approval.

#### Conduct a Community Needs Assessment
Once the working groups have been formed, the club will need to conduct a community needs assessment. The goals of the community needs assessment are to:
- Determine what services are currently available.
- Determine what services are most needed.
- Compile a list of potential partners for the conference.

Conducting a community needs assessment will help determine the type of workshops to incorporate into your conference that will best serve the needs of girls in your community. It will also help determine the conference’s target audience, such as all girls or at-risk girls; teenage girls aged 13 to 19 or a more specific age range; and girls-only or girls and their parents and/or teachers. This assessment will take time and research but is a necessary component to creating a successful girl conference. It would not be advantageous if the club conducted a conference that is the same, or even similar, to one already being offered. Although the working group will oversee the community needs assessment, the process of gathering information should include as many club members as possible. The more information gathered the better. This is also a time to
make initial contacts with people who work for or are associated with girl-focused programs, groups or organizations in the school community and community at-large. Always try to make personal contacts because this will help when building partnerships. Be sure to include former Violet Richardson Award recipients in the needs assessment process as they know firsthand which issues most affect girls in the community, what services are available to girls in the community and which audience would most benefit from a girls conference.

**Community Needs Assessment Questions: Girl Conference**
The following questions should be considered when conducting a community needs assessment.

**General Level of Awareness**
1. What is the general level of awareness, both in the school community and the community at-large, with regard to the need for girl-specific programming and/or support?

2. Are there currently any girls’ spaces, programs or conferences offered in the school community or community at-large? If yes, who conducts them and when? What do they entail?

3. Has there ever been a “Why Girls?”-type awareness campaign in the school community and/or community at-large? If yes, who conducted the campaign and when? What did it entail?

4. Are there any girl-recognition or leadership programs, or girl-specific awards or grants offered in the community? If yes, by whom and what do they entail?

**Awareness of Specific Girl-Issues**
1. Have there been publicized instances of girl bullying, sex trafficking and/or teen dating violence in the school community or community at-large? If yes, how were they handled and how did the community react?

2. Is there a high rate of teen pregnancy and/or HIV/AIDS among girls in the community? Is teen pregnancy more prevalent among a specific demographic in the community? Are there relevant services and resources for girls available whether provided by the government, health centers, organizations or schools? If yes, how are they publicized and are they easily accessible?

3. Do a significant number of adolescent girls in the community struggle with addictions to drugs, alcohol or tobacco? Are there relevant services and resources for girls available whether provided by the government, health centers, organizations or schools? If yes, how are they publicized and are they easily accessible?

4. Are media literacy programs offered in the school district or community at-large? If yes, are they single-sex or coeducational? Do they address issues such as such as distorted body image, eating disorders and low self-esteem? Are there relevant services and resources for girls available whether provided by the government, health centers, organizations or schools? If yes, how are they publicized and are they easily accessible?

5. Are health, fitness and nutrition programs or services offered in the school community or community at-large? If yes, are they single-sex or coeducational? Are there relevant services and resources for girls available whether provided by the government, health
centers, organizations or schools? If yes, how are they publicized and are they easily accessible?

6. What is the high school retention and graduation rate among females in the community? What percentage of female high school students graduate and go on to college? Is tutoring provided or available in the school district?

Community Resources

1. Are there currently any girl-focused organizations or support groups in the school community or community at-large? If yes, what do they do? Do they work directly with the school community? Do they provide educational resources? Do they provide counseling or victims’ services? Are there services they would like to provide but can’t due to lack of staffing and/or funds?

2. Are there any women’s centers at local hospitals, clinics or health centers – or at colleges or universities? If yes, do they have any girl-specific programming? If so, what do they do? Do they provide educational resources for adolescent girls? Do they provide sex education and family planning services? Do they provide counseling or victims’ services?

3. Are any businesses in the community supporting issues pertinent to women, girls and/or teens? Are any businesses catering specifically to a female or adolescent demographic? Are any businesses community-minded in general?

4. Would it be feasible and beneficial to create a partnership with a community organization or business? If yes, which organization or business, and what would be the nature of the partnership?

5. Do any Soroptimist club members have established personal and/or professional relationships with a community organization or business that does—or could—support a girl conference?

School Administration, Policies and Curriculum

1. Has the school community implemented specific policies addressing the need for girl-specific programs? If yes, what are they?

2. Does the school community include issues such as teen dating violence or media literacy in its curriculum? If yes, how and by whom is the curriculum being taught?

3. Does the school community have a policy to teach sex education? If yes, who teaches it? Is the instruction comprehensive, i.e. is it based on the experiences of a diversity of girls, is it age-appropriate and does it provide options? Is it single-sex education or coeducational? If no, do any schools teach sex education of their own accord? If so, what schools, who teaches it, is it comprehensive and is it single-sex or coeducational?

4. Are the counselors and nurses in the school district trained to address girl-focused issues related to health, education and violence? If yes, how?

5. Are there any student groups in the school district who address girl-focused topics? If yes, what subjects do they address and how? If no, are any groups amenable to doing so?
6. Are there any Soroptimist club members who have established personal and/or professional relationships with the school district’s administration, faculty and/or staff?

**Forming a Partnership**
After conducting the community needs assessment, the club will need to decide whether to partner with another community organization. If other organizations in the community are addressing girl-focused issues through a girl conference, it may make more sense to support the existing conference. However, if the club is going to partner, it is important to evaluate not only how it will help girls but how it will raise the presence of Soroptimist in the community. When designing a girl conference with a partner organization, a good guiding question to ask is: How will the community and media identify the conference as a Soroptimist conference?

On the other hand, if no other organizations in the community are addressing girl-focused issues through girl conferences, the club will have the rewarding challenge of creating a brand new resource for the girls in its community. When doing so, clubs may wish to identify other organizations or businesses that have the potential to support the efforts and possibly grow into a partnership or coalition. In this case, the club will need to identify community organizations and businesses that do not currently address or support girl-focused issues through girl conferences but have the potential to do so.

To help your club form productive and successful partnerships, please refer to the resource, *Effective Partnerships for Clubs*, available in the program section of the members’ area of the SIA website.

**Develop Outcomes-Based Project Evaluation**
The best time to create an evaluation plan is during the initial planning stage. For a project to be successful, the project’s goals, objectives and outcome targets should be clearly stated, as well as methods for measuring and evaluating the project’s outcomes and impact.

- What role does your club want the girl conference to play in its attendees’ lives?
- What are the intended outcomes or impact on conference attendees? To what degree will participants be affected, experience benefits or changes in their lives?
- What outcome target(s) is the conference striving to attain? How many girls will it reach? What percentage of attendees will be affected, etc.?
- How will you measure the conference’s responsiveness and relevance to issues girls face in the community? How will you measure the impact the conference has on the target audience?

Clubs that conduct outcomes-based evaluation are able to speak more specifically about the impact of their work in the community to improve the lives of women and girls. Outcomes-based evaluations do not need to be complex or lengthy. The scope of the evaluation should match the complexity of the project.

For more information about how to successfully write project goals and objectives, identify outcome targets and design an outcomes-based evaluation, please refer to the club resource *Outcomes-Based Project Evaluation for Soroptimist Clubs*.

**Choose Target Population and Conference Theme**
Some clubs may gear their girl conference to a group of girls they are working with or have worked with in the past. In this case, the target population has already been determined. Otherwise, the results of the community assessment, aided by former Violet Richardson Award recipient, should help determine the girl conference’s target population and theme. Will the
conference be open to all girls within the community or targeted at a specific demographic? Will the conference offer activities for just girls or for both girls and their parents? Will the conference focus on one subject or a range of subjects?

Keep in mind that your club’s interpretation of girls’ needs in the community may not match the needs as articulated by the girls you are aiming to serve. Therefore, after you have determined your target population consider asking those girls what issues they are interested in addressing or learning more about. This approach will help your club decide the theme and ensure the conference is balanced, non-hierarchical and receptive to the needs and wants of its target audience.

For example, say your club identified a particular school with instances of bullying among middle school girls. The club could coordinate with the school administrators to offer a girls conference on campus that would address bullying specifically to its middle school girl population. With the approval of the school and help of school counselors, the club could administer a pre-conference survey as part of registration, asking these middle school girls about their understanding of, experiences with and questions about bullying. The answers to these types of questions could guide the club when determining what type of sessions and workshops to offer on the subject of bullying and its related issues.

If you are dealing with a diverse group of girls or would like to keep the conference theme general, a great overarching and all-encompassing theme is “Live Your Dream.” As well as integral to Soroptimist’s mission, Live Your Dream is pertinent to all women and girls. It will also inspire the girls participating in the conference to make the most out of what they learn and experience throughout the conference to help them live their dream.

Create a Budget and Secure Funds
It is important the club outlines a conference budget in order to determine what is and is not feasible. The budget outline should include the expected expenses, their cost, which expenses the club can fund and which expenses will rely on partners, volunteers and monetary or in-kind donations. The budget should be sent to sponsors, funders and financially supportive partners so that everyone knows exactly what they are paying for. For more information and to see a sample conference budget, please refer to the sample program budget of the Girls Action Foundation’s Amplify Toolkit: [http://www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/en/amplify-toolkit-/section-1-appendices/vii-sample-program-budget](http://www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/en/amplify-toolkit-/section-1-appendices/vii-sample-program-budget).

During the preliminary planning stage of the girl conference, your club should have established any desired partnerships and formed a fundraising committee. For more information on fundraising and sponsorship, see page 7.

When creating a budget, itemize with as much detail as possible. For example, rather than simply writing down “$500 for supplies,” actually list the name of each supply item and its cost, and use real costs, not estimates. Once an initial budget has been created and approved, compare it to club resources. Chances are the budget is greater than the available resources. The club must then decide how to raise funds to make up the difference. As fundraising requires considerable time and energy, request three to five volunteers to form a fundraising committee.

There are four main ways to raise funds for a club project:
- Hold a community fundraiser
- Solicit sponsorship from local businesses
- Apply for grants, including a Soroptimist Club Grant for Women and Girls
• Request donations from club members

Community fundraisers are an excellent way to raise funds and to raise the community profile of Soroptimist. For examples of successful fundraising events, please refer to the club resource, *Event Ideas: Successful Soroptimist Fundraisers*.

Sponsoring a Soroptimist project provides businesses a chance to show they are committed to giving back to the community. Solicit sponsorships by making a request for cash and/or donations or discounts of materials and/or services. Provide a brief description of the project and offer reasons why the business should sponsor the project. What will they get in return? How will the club acknowledge and publicize their sponsorship. Let them know what percentage of the budget the club is contributing and if there are other sponsors. Businesses may be more inclined to help if others have already agreed to do so.

Each year, Soroptimist awards $175,000 in Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls. Grants range from $500 to $10,000. Applications are due each year in March.

Requesting donations from members should be a last resort option as members are already giving generously with their time and energy. However, if the club is committed to the project and other funding sources aren’t enough, members may be inclined to make a personal donation.

**Venue**

Once the target population, theme and budget have been established, the club will be ready to choose the conference venue. When choosing a venue, three major considerations should be made: location and accessibility, amenities and cost.

**Location and Accessibility:**
The club will need to consider the venue’s accessibility to participants. Think about the following questions:

- Is the venue in a central and safe location?
- Is the atmosphere of the venue warm and inviting? Will it be attractive to the girls you are trying to reach?
- Is the venue close to public transportation?
  - If no, is there parking available?
  - Are the participants of driving age and if so, do they have access to cars?
  - If they are not of driving age, do they have a parent or guardian able to drive them to and from the conference?
  - Will you need to provide travel subsidies for girls to take public transportation in order to get to and from the conference? Or will you need to offer van or bus transportation?
- Will the venue be able to meet any special needs of the girls you are reaching out to? For example, is the venue wheelchair accessible?

**Amenities:**
The venue will need to comfortably accommodate the expected size of the conference. Additionally, the club will need to consider the specific amenities available at the venue. Think about the following questions:

- Is there a large enough banquet space for the opening session, lunch and closing remarks?
- Are there smaller rooms available for workshops and do they have dry-erase or chalkboards? Do they have electrical outlets?
- Does the venue have sufficient restrooms for the target size of the conference?
• Is there auditorium seating or are tables and chairs provided? If not, will the club need to rent them on their own accord?
• Is food and beverage provided as part of the rent of the facility, in addition to rent, or not offered? If the club will need to bring in food and beverage of its own accord, is it allowed?
• Is there a suitable sound system in the larger banquet space or will the club need to rent its own sound equipment?
• Are TVs, VCRs, projectors or the internet available in the venue?
• Will your conference be the sole event at the venue that day, or will the facility be shared?

Cost:
A major consideration for the venue is its affordability. This model program kit recommends a one-day girl conference, but some clubs may wish to hold a half-day or two-day event – factors that will affect the cost of the venue. Typically, an all-inclusive venue package (i.e. one with food, tables and chairs, sound and video equipment etc. included with the cost of rent) is the most cost effective. However, community centers are often available for free and other venues may be willing to waive the cost.

Keep in mind that in addition to the venue and necessary amenities, clubs will need to cover the costs for things such as promotional materials, workshop supplies and speaker and facilitators’ compensation, if applicable. For more information on fundraising and sponsorship, refer to page 7.

Outreach and Recruitment
It is important to gear the conference outreach to both the target girls in your community and their parents or guardians. This is true even if the conference does not offer activities to parents and guardians. Though girls may be excited about the conference, their parents or guardians may want more information about what the conference is all about, whose running it, and its location and cost. As a club (and with any partners), brainstorm the best ways to reach both the target girls and their parents or guardians. Ask former Violet Richardson Award recipients for their input on how best to market the conference to other girls. Remember to be sensitive to the target population’s accessibility to information, language and socioeconomic status.

Some clubs may be gearing their girl conference to a group of girls they are working with or have worked with in the past. In this case, there will not be a need for participant recruitment. On the other hand, if the club hopes to reach an audience they have never worked with before they may consider the following outreach and recruitment methods:

• Write emails or letters to the schools, parent-teacher associations, community centers, youth and women’s centers, neighborhood listservs or associations and any women and girl-focused organizations or businesses that work directly with girls in the targeted neighborhood or community. For a sample email or letter, please refer to the Girls Action Foundation’s Amplify Toolkit: http://www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/en/amplify-toolkit-section-1-appendices/ii-sample-outreach-letter-for-girls.
• Create posters to distribute at the above mentioned places and to post on community message boards, bus stops and at local businesses.
• Set up a booth at local girl hangouts such as a mall, park or movie theater.
• Work with local media outlets for possible radio, newspaper or TV recruitment promotion depending on the club’s budget and the desired size of the conference.
• Create a website, blog, Facebook and/or Twitter account for the conference.
Make sure all outreach and recruitment materials include information about the theme, workshops and structure of the conference. Also be sure to:

- Mention the cost of the conference, if applicable.
- Use images and language that represent a diversity of girls, even if your target population seems homogenous. You do not want to exclude or intimidate anyone in your target population.
- Think about the age of the girls you are targeting. What is cool or not cool to them? Be age-appropriate.
- Include a contact person and contact information.
- Include a link to your conference’s website, blog, Facebook and/or Twitter account
- Translate all materials if applicable to your target population.

Publicity
Publicity is an especially crucial step, not just for the success of the girl conference, but also to raise the profile of Soroptimist and recruit new club members. Ideally, the club already has a public relations committee or formed one during the preliminary planning stage of the conference.

The public relations committee should be responsible for all media outreach, such as writing news releases, public service announcements, media advisories and/or letters to the editors and developing print advertisement. Appointing these duties to the public relations committee will help ensure that the message stays on point and is consistent.

Soroptimist headquarters has developed the following resources, located in the Public Awareness section of the members’ only area of the Soroptimist website:
http://www.soroptimist.org/members/publicawareness/publicawarenesshome.html:
- Media Consent Form.
- News Release Template.
- Media Advisory Template.
- Fact Sheet Template.
- Public Service Announcement Template.
- Soroptimist Logos and Stationery.

The overarching consideration of the public relations strategy should be: How can the club best attract the media’s attention? One way is to identify news, radio and/or television reporters sympathetic to issues relating to women and/or girls and cultivate a professional relationship with them. Begin by sending them a media kit—a folder of information that will help the media to create an engaging and accurate story. When putting together the media kit, please review the document: Media Kit 101 also available in the Public Awareness section of the members’ only area of the Soroptimist website:

Soroptimists who have questions about their publicity efforts can contact Public Relations Manager Kamali Brooks at <kamali@soroptimist.org> for advice and suggestions on news releases, letters to the editor, public service announcements, media kits and other time-sensitive media materials.

Also, when conducting media outreach, remember to use the Live Your Dream campaign and materials. For more information, visit http://www.soroptimist.org/LiveYourDream/.
Reach Out to Potential New Club Members

When planning the publicity strategy, remember to reach out to potential members. Inviting potential members to help with a hands-on community project is much more engaging than inviting them to a social event. Women decide to become Soroptimists because of their interest in the mission. Inviting potential members to help with the girl conference is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the value in a Soroptimist membership. Soroptimist headquarters offers many recruitment materials in the membership section of the members’ area of the website: http://www.soroptimist.org/members/membership/membershiphome.html.

Registration and Waivers

Your club’s registration method will depend on its community assessment and conference’s target population and size. For example, if the club is holding a conference for a group of girls it is already working with, registration will be simpler. However, if the club is targeting a larger group of girls new to them, registration may take more effort and organization.

Registration may be completed by the girls, but should be signed by the parents or guardian. Make sure to determine a cap on registration; how many people can your budget, venue, and volunteers/staff accommodate? Do not overstretch your limit – you want to make this a fun, stress-free conference for both the club and the girls. We would suggest registration be completed prior to the conference so your club knows how many participants to expect. Also, based on your budget and target population, decide whether your club will be charging participants a registration fee. Will your club need to collect the fee before the conference, or at the conference check-in?

Registration is also a good time to conduct a pre-conference survey in order to learn the interests of the participants. These surveys can help the club hone not only the conference theme, but the workshops offered. In order to get more honest results, clubs could ensure the confidentiality of surveys by asking girls to return them separately from their registration forms and waiver. Using the information received, the club could determine which workshops to offer and have girls sign up at the conference check-in. On the other hand, the club may prefer to use the survey data to assign girls to specific workshops before the conference. In this case, the survey would be returned with the registration materials.

Finally, if your clubs knows the workshops they will offer before registration, you may ask girls during the registration process to rank their top choices. Gathering this information would be another way to determine which girls would participate in each workshop.

Below are two examples of recommended registration methods for your girl conference. Regardless of the method used, make sure to clearly indicate the registration deadline, return address and any fees on the registration form.

Online Registration

Online registration can be efficient and accessible for both your club and the parents or guardians of conference participants. It is especially useful if the girl conference’s target population size is large. If your club has a website or social networking page for its girl conference it could:

- Provide electronic, writeable PDF registration forms for download. If there is a registration fee, it would still need to be collected by mail or in-person. To learn more about writeable PDFs, visit Adobe’s LiveCycle website.
- Embed a registration form onto your website or social networking page. Eventbrite provides a low-cost service for online conference registration that includes features such as branding, secure and simple credit card processing, professional ticketing types and tracking and social media integration.
Paper Registration
Some target populations may not have easy access to computers and may prefer to turn in or mail hard-copy registration forms. Your club may also prefer to work offline. Or, for example, if your target population is a smaller group that you have worked with in the past, paper registrations may be more practical than developing a website and an online registration method.

- Include hard-copy registration forms with the outreach and recruitment materials you distribute.
- Choose a few easily accessible places to keep a stack of registration forms available, noting these locations on the outreach and recruitment materials.

Waivers
There is always the possibility for accidents when hosting an event such as a girl conference. In order to minimize the risk your club faces in the event of an accident, ask the parents and/or guardian of all conference participants to sign a written release and waiver of liability against any injury the participant may suffer at the conference. The waiver should be included with the registration materials.

For more information on waivers and to see an example, please refer to the Releases, Waivers and Indemnification section of the Girls Action Foundation’s Amplify Toolkit.

III. Designing the Girl Conference
Once the preliminary planning has been completed, the club will be ready to design a girl conference. This section of the girls conference model program kit provides helpful tips for conference staff and workshop facilitators; a suggested conference schedule; opening, lunch and closing session suggestions.

This is simply a guide for clubs. Clubs are encouraged to customize their conference to best meet the needs of teenage girls in their community and the interests and strengths of club members and partners.

The goals of a one-day girl conference should include, but not be limited to:

- Empowering girls to live their dreams;
- Providing girls with positive role-models;
- Educating girls in a safe environment;
- Building girls’ knowledge and self-esteem; and
- Having fun.

Helpful Tips for Conference Staff and Workshop Facilitators
When conducting a girl conference, it is essential that club members and partners create a safe space in which girls feel comfortable speaking candidly. Recognize the generational differences and appreciate the exchange of ideas and information that will take place. You will have the chance to connect girls with positive role models and mentors. Understand that girls are often patronized by adults, boys/men and the media. Strive to develop a space where girls feel their voices are valued and their dreams attainable.

Depending on their comfort level and expertise, club members and partners can conduct sessions and workshops themselves, or they can recruit outside help identified in the community assessment. Volunteers may consist of teachers, counselors or nurses identified during the community assessment. Set up an interview with potential facilitators and speakers who you may have identified during the community assessment. It is important that the club develops a
relationship with conference facilitators and speakers to ensure their vision complements the vision of the conference. If the potential candidate is not a good fit for a particular role, maybe she is better suited for handling another task at the conference. If she is a good fit, offer her any support or training the club is able to provide.

When conducting a workshop, it is critical that facilitators create a safe sharing environment. Because the workshops may deal with sensitive issues, establish a few basic guidelines for participants to follow, such as:

- Everyone is allowed to express her own opinion without interruption.
- Respect each point of view.
- No question or questioner is stupid or wrong; no put-downs are allowed.

Workshops are an exchange between facilitators and participants. Therefore, facilitators should consider following these important guidelines themselves:

- Understand that girls are experts in their own lives.
- Don’t make judgments or assumptions about what girls like or say.
- Facilitators are guides – they do not tell girls the answers, they help them understand what they already know.
- Recognize critical thinkers, acknowledge girls with new ideas and encourage those who are trying to speak out.
- Girls don’t need to be saved – emphasize their strengths and capabilities.
- Don’t let one or a few girls monopolize a discussion or activity; be aware of the group dynamic that unfolds and allow all voices to be heard.
- Encourage all girls to speak candidly; if girls are negative or the conversation becomes tense, stay calm, acknowledge the tension and ask the girls what could be done to diffuse the situation.
- If no one says anything, ask the girls if they understand the question and try rephrasing it.

Provide opportunities for girls to facilitate workshops. In the community assessment, girl leaders may have been identified. Or, past Violet Richardson Award recipients may be good workshop leaders. Work with girls on workshop designs and facilitation skills.

When conducting workshops, the facilitator will need to identify, in advance, an adult within the participants’ community whose name can be given as a contact person for all questions concerning the workshop’s topic. For example, that person might be the facilitator, a school counselor or a representative from a local organization, center or business.

**Conference Schedule**

In Section III, the broad goals of the conference were identified. The conference schedule will be a significant determinant for attaining these goals. You want the conference to hold the teenage girls’ attention, keep them energized and engaged. You want them to feel safe and at ease, and to have a good time. Therefore, you want to be mindful of the length and number of activities offered. You don’t want the conference to start too early, for example, because you want the participants to come awake and ready to learn. You also don’t want to offer too many activities that will overwhelm and exhaust participants.
The following is a sample girl conference schedule. It can be implemented as-is or tweaked to suit your club’s needs. This model program kit offers opening, break, lunch and closing session suggestions, as well as workshop ideas that can be worked into the below schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30-9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Check-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15-9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15-11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>First Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45-12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-1:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15-1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 -3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Second Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00-3:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:15 -3:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Closing remarks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check-in - 8:30-9:15 a.m.
Check-in will be the participants’ first taste of the conference’s atmosphere and vibe. Therefore, it is important the club assign outgoing and friendly staff to manage the conference check-in booth. This is a time to welcome girls (and their parents and/or guardians, if applicable) to the conference and to have them complete any unfinished paperwork such as waivers or registration fees. Enlist girls as volunteers at registration. Also at this time, clubs may wish to offer a conference program and venue map, name tags, notepads, pens or pencils and/or a light breakfast.

Opening Remarks - 9:15-9:30 a.m.
This is a good time to have a member of the Soroptimist club welcome all participants to the conference. She may briefly explain the conference schedule, the venue map and any other necessary logistical information. At this time, the Soroptimist club member should also introduce the conference’s keynote speaker.

Keynote Speaker - 9:30-10:00 a.m.
The keynote speaker sets the tone for the conference. It is important to choose a speaker who embraces the concept of intergenerational space, not hierarchical teaching. Girls don’t like to be talked down to and they want their voices to be heard. You want a keynote speaker who engages the audience, has a sense of humor and who is knowledgeable of girl issues. The keynote speaker should leave girls feeling inspired and excited for the first workshop. The keynote speaker has the opportunity to address the conference theme, and/or more generally, an explanation of why girls deserve special attention. Consider asking a former Violet Richardson Award recipient to be the keynote speaker. The conference attendees would be able to relate to her and it would be a great leadership development opportunity for the recipient. Make sure the recipient is comfortable with the idea of speaking in front of peers. Provide her with guidance and help her practice her speech if she agrees to be the keynote speaker.

First Workshop – 10:15-11:45 a.m.
See suggestions on page 17.

Break - 11:45-12:00 p.m.
This break is a good time for participants to use the restroom, navigate their second workshop location and mingle with some of the other participants. For small groups, this could also be the time for a small group exercise such as an icebreaker or energizer. This will help girls interact with one another and become more at ease. Below is an example of an energizer. For more ideas, please visit: [http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rae/Fireitup/D02-icebreakers.pdf](http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rae/Fireitup/D02-icebreakers.pdf).
Celebrity
Have each girl write on small pieces of paper the name of two well-known female celebrities. They could be politicians, activists, musicians, actors or any other global figure. Mix the papers up and tape one paper to each girl’s back. Instruct everyone to walk around asking “yes” or “no” questions to try and guess which celebrity is taped on their back. Continue the game until everyone has guessed their identity or until time has run out.

Lunch and Panel - 12:00-1:15 p.m.
During this block of time, it is important to provide a healthy lunch for the participants and staff. Ask on the registration form whether the participant has any dietary restrictions so meals can be planned accordingly. The lunch period is also a good time to have a panel discussion or speaker. Below is one example for a lunchtime session.

Panel Discussion
Organize a panel of three or four women from the club or community at-large to talk about their career choices and how they got to where they are now. Choosing a diverse panel of women (diversity of careers, age and race, for example) would be the most beneficial to conference participants as these women would be serving as role models and would enable girls to recognize the multitude of possible career paths for a diversity of women. Panelists could also speak to the importance of goal setting. In order to enhance the girls’ experience, make the panel interactive. For instance, depending on the size of the conference, there could be microphones set up in the audience where girls could answer panelists’ questions, such as:

- What are your top three goals?
- What do you know you don’t want?
- If you could achieve one goal this year, what would it be?
- What are three steps you could take to achieve that goal?

During such an activity, make sure there is time set aside for girls to ask the panelists their own questions.

Break - 1:15-1:30 p.m.
See suggestions on page 15.

Second Workshop - 1:30 -3:00 p.m.
See suggestions on page 17.

Break - 3:00-3:15 p.m.
See suggestions on page 15.

Closing Remarks - 3:15 -3:45 p.m.
Make sure to end the conference on a high note. This is a good time to conduct a raffle drawing. At check-in, you could ask each participant to put her name in a box for the chance to win an assortment of prizes, including one grand prize. This will add an element of excitement to the end of the conference.

Additionally, this timeslot would be a good opportunity to have each participant complete a survey. It is better to ask for feedback at the conference rather than after, as the experience will be fresh in the participants’ minds. When formulating your questions, use Outcomes-Based Project Evaluation discussed in Section II as a guide. Make sure you are asking questions that will determine whether your conference’s outcome targets are met. Be sure to also ask for feedback specific to the workshops offered.
At this final stage in the conference, your club could also arrange for a speaker to give a brief but uplifting message – a message that would leave the girls with some food for thought. Finally, make sure to thank the girls for attending the conference. It is important they know their participation is recognized and appreciated.

**Workshop Ideas**

This section includes six girl conference workshop ideas. Each workshop is intended to last one hour. It is up to the club to decide whether to offer workshop options for each of the three workshop timeslots or one per timeslot. For more workshop ideas not included in this model program kit, refer to the Resources section on page 32.

Handouts for all workshops can be found in the Appendix on page 33. Handouts are writeable PDF documents that clubs can personalize by adding their club name to the bottom of the page.

**Media Literacy: From Oppression to Liberation**

**Objectives:**

- Girls will be able to deconstruct media images with critical thinking skills.
- Girls will be able to deconstruct notions of beauty and body image in the media.
- Girls will understand that the majority of images of women and girls in the media are not representative of reality.
- Girls will recognize the motives behind their oppression in the media.
- Girls will be inspired to use the media for their empowerment.
- Girls will be aware of creative media tools.

**Tools:**

- Pens
- Pieces of paper
- Magazine advertisements (or other form of media) that negatively depicts girls and/or women
- “Deconstructing the Media’s Portrayal of Women and Girls” handout
- “Using the Media as a Tool for Empowerment” handout

This is an intense, but important workshop and it is expected that the girls may feel a range of emotions including frustration, discouragement or embarrassment. It is important that they understand that these emotions can be expressed through positive, creative media vehicles that can lead to their confidence and empowerment.

**Part One: Deconstructing the Media’s Portrayal of Women and Girls**

The goal of part one is to encourage girls to start asking questions about media messages that will help them understand the connection between the media, popular culture and oppression and privilege. This part of the workshop can be conducted in a number of ways. This is one suggested model.

1). The workshop facilitator(s) should introduce the concepts of the media and popular culture to the group, emphasizing its depiction of women and girls. In preparation, the facilitator(s) should read about media literacy and the media’s depiction of women and girls.

Every day, girls are bombarded by the media’s destructive depiction of women and girls. The media’s messages offer limited views of girls’ identities, strengths and potential. The media is a vast and powerful network including, but not limited to, television, magazines, radio, music, the news, the internet and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These media
vehicles spread ideas and information around our communities and world, shaping our understandings of popular culture. As its prime subjects and targets, girls are in a unique position to process and criticize the media, transforming it from a tool of oppression to one of liberation. Rather than trying to block girls’ access to the media, this workshop empowers girls with the knowledge, tools and information they need in order to think critically about the media and use it to their advantage.

For more information on girls and the media, please visit the following websites and refer to the resource section provided at the end of this model program kit:

- About-Face: Equipping women and girls with the tools to understand and resist harmful media messages that affect self-esteem and body image. [http://www.about-face.org/](http://www.about-face.org/)
- Miss Representation: Asking girls to think about the effects of the images they see, particularly the ways media affects women and girls’ ability to see themselves as leaders and be seen as leaders by others in society. [http://missrepresentation.org/](http://missrepresentation.org/)

2). Hand out pens and pieces of paper to the girls and divide them into small groups. Give each group a different magazine advertisement (or other form of media) that has a negative depiction of young women and/or girls. Give each group a copy of the “Girls and Media Literacy” handout.

3). Ask each group to spend some time observing and discussing the advertisement. Have each group ask themselves some or all of the following questions on the “Deconstructing the Media’s Portrayal of Women and Girls” handout:

- Who created this image? Where does our idea of the “ideal” body come from?
- What message is being portrayed?
- Who is the message for?
- Who does the message benefit and why was it sent?
- What techniques are used to attract your attention?
- Who gets to speak in this image – meaning, who is in a position of power? Whose voices are left out – who is powerless?
- What lifestyles, values and points of view are presented in or omitted from the message?
- How might other people interpret this message?
- Do you see yourself in this image?
- How does this image make you feel?

Be confident that girls are well-versed on the media and have the ability to decipher and critique the messages in the advertisement. However, recognize that some of these questions are abstract and may be difficult for some girls. If you sense this is the case, guide the girls through one of the questions together, using an example image not being discussed in the small groups.

4). After the groups have tackled some of the questions on their own, bring all girls together. Girls have a lot to share and it is important to listen. Ask each group to share some of their observations about their magazine advertisement, in relation to the questions. Encourage the girls to be candid, ask questions and voice any concerns or disagreement.

Part Two: Using the Media as a Tool of Empowerment
The goal of part two is to encourage girls to express themselves using the media. It is a chance for girls to respond to the negative advertisements they just processed, by brainstorming the creative
ways they can express who they are and how they would prefer to be portrayed and understood by the media.

1). Ask the girls as a group how the media can be used as a tool for their empowerment, not oppression. Encourage them to share ways they or someone they know has already used the media as a tool of empowerment. You want the group to leave with ideas for voicing their dreams and opinions through the media. Have the following ideas on-hand in case they are not mentioned by the girls during the discussion:

- Create a newsletter or ‘zine (alternative magazine), hard-copy or online.
- Create a blog or website.
- Write letters/emails to the editor. To see an example, refer to page 60 of Youth Action Network’s Fire it Up! Toolkit: http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/FireitUp/FireItUp.pdf.
- Make a video and post on social networking sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook and Twitter.
- Start a petition at your school and/or in your community. To learn more, refer to page 62 of Youth Action Network’s Fire it Up! Toolkit: http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/FireitUp/FireItUp.pdf.
- Create a Media Walk of Shame at your school or community center. To learn how, refer to page 61 of Youth Action Network’s Fire it Up! Toolkit: http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/rac/FireitUp/FireItUp.pdf.

Part Three: Reflection
Encourage girls to pursue the creative media outlets discussed in section 2, and distribute the “Using the Media as a Tool for Empowerment” handout. Point out that there is a link to the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty online quiz, “Are You Media Smart?” Encourage participants to take the quiz when they get home and to explore the other interactive features for teen girls provided on the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty website: http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.com/.

Be prepared with the name of an adult in the community who has agreed to be a point person should any participants wish to take action, or have any follow-up questions or concerns about media literacy and the media’s portrayal of women and girls. Write the name of the contact person on the board.

Adapted from:

Relational Aggression Amongst Girls
Objectives:
- Girls will be able to identify forms of bullying.
- Girls will communicate with confidence; speaking up for themselves and speaking and acting on behalf of others.
• Girls will be able to use critical thinking to solve interpersonal problems.
• Girls knowledge of strategies to address bullying will give them greater confidence to protect themselves.
• Girls will recognize they are part of a social network that can support them in building leadership skills.

Tools:
• Black markers
• Three different colors of sticky notes (green, yellow and blue, for example)
• “Relational Aggression Amongst Girls: What Is It?” handout
• “A Bully v. A Leader” handout

This is a challenging, but impactful workshop to facilitate. It is important to understand that some of the girls in the workshop may be bullies, victims or bystanders who may feel spotlighted, threatened and uncomfortable by these exercises. Be prepared to handle tense situations with patience, empathy and understanding. Ask that no names or identifying details of real life situations be used during discussions or skits. If no club member or partner feels comfortable facilitating, seek outside experts in the field.

Part One: What Girls Say About Bullying
The first part of this workshop is meant to encourage girls to express to one another what they already know about bullying: who does it, who is affected by it and what forms it takes.

1). In preparation for this workshop, the facilitator(s) should become knowledgeable of the causes and effects of relational aggression between girls.

Adolescence is often an insecure time for girls as they experience many physical and emotional changes. During this time, girls begin to favor relationships with one another over their parents. They value social connection and acceptance. This often comes at a cost, however. Relational aggression is a type of psychological bullying primarily inflicted by pre-adolescent and adolescent girls on other girls. Perpetrators of relational aggression are often driven by jealousy, the need for attention and control, security, anger and competition. Girl bullies are frequently popular and charismatic. They are usually successful at using their social and manipulation skills to appear innocent on the surface – while victims suffer alone and unsupported.

Studies have shown that girls are just as aggressive as boys; however, their methods of aggression are more subtle and covert. Girls often prefer indirect forms of harassment in order to avoid being caught and held accountable. Common forms of girl-on-girl bullying include rumor spreading, secret-divulging, alliance-building, backstabbing, ignoring, excluding, verbal or written insults and hostile body language such as eye-rolling or glaring. Girls are also engaging in cyber-bullying where they use email, instant messengers, websites, blogs and social networking sites to harass other girls. Forms of cyber-bullying include hacking email accounts to send embarrassing emails, posting unflattering pictures of a girl victim on Facebook and trash-talking a victim on a website or blog. Cyber-bullying often makes a huge impact, as a post on Facebook or instant message has the potential to spread quickly.

Relational aggression has lasting detrimental effects on girls’ self-esteem, friendships and reputations. Victims often feel they are to blame and deserve to be in isolation. Fear of social interaction sometimes causes victims to skip class or school, opt-out of extracurricular activities and disregard schoolwork.
For more information on bullying and relational aggression, please visit:

- The Ophelia Project: Serves youth and adults who are affected by relational and other non-physical forms of aggression by providing them with a unique combination of tools, strategies and solutions. http://www.opheliaproject.org/main/index.htm
- Girls Health: Maintained by the Office on Women’s Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, this website offers girls, parents and educators information, tools and resources about adolescent health, growth and development, and the challenging social issues teen girls will likely face – such as bullying. http://www.girlshealth.gov/bullying/index.cfm

2). Instead of having the facilitator(s) begin the workshop with an overview of bullying – let the girls share their own experiences and knowledge on the subject. Pass out a marker and a green, yellow and blue sticky note to each participant. On the green sticky note, ask each girl to write down one idea of what bullying looks like based on what she has experienced, witnessed or heard about. On the yellow sticky note, ask each girl to write down one idea of what bullying feels like for the person being bullied. Finally, on the blue sticky note, ask each girl to write down one idea of what bullying feels like for the person doing the bullying.

3). Ask each participant to post their sticky notes (by color category) onto the board. Invite two of the participants to come forward to organize the notes by similarity, i.e. shame and embarrassment would go together, and power and popularity would go together. After the notes are organized, have the two girls sit back down.

4). Ask participants to look over the sticky notes. Ask them the following questions:
   - What kinds of bullying seem to be the most common from these notes?
   - What kinds of bullying seem least common?
   - What kinds of bullying were not mentioned but do happen?
   - How does being bullied impact a person?
   - What were some of the thoughts about what bullies might be feeling?
   - Why do you think bullies want to feel this way?
   - Can you tell if someone is going to be a bully? How?
   - Can you tell if someone is going to be bullied? How?

After the exercise, distribute the “Relational Aggression Amongst Girls: What Is It” handout for girls to keep as a reference.

Part Two: Solutions to Bullying through Leadership and Stop Theater
The previous exercise laid the foundation of the girls’ understandings of bullying, its causes, forms and affects. Part two of this workshop will enable girls to proactively strategize approaches to address bullying they may engage in, witness or experience. Girls will decipher what a true leader could do to prevent or alter a situation of bullying.

1). Divide the girls into small groups. It is important that the facilitator(s) divides the participants randomly so as to avoid cliques, exclusion and hurt feelings. Allotting ten minutes, ask participants to brainstorm a two-minute skit about a form of bullying discussed in Part One. Encourage groups to create a skit in which the main character tries, but is unable to resolve the problem.
2). For the next 30 minutes, ask each group to present their skit. During each performance, ask girls in the audience to raise their hand when they relate to, identify with or recognize something occurring in the skit. Record the general reactions to each skit. After all skits have been performed, choose one or two skits that you feel were most impactful on the girls. Explain your choices to the group.

3). Ask the first of the two groups to present their skit again – this time, asking girls in the audience to call out “STOP” at anytime they feel the person who is being bullied or the bystander could do something different to change the outcome of the scene. One by one, have the girls who yelled “STOP” replace the person in the skit whose behavior or words they suggest changing for a better outcome. Have them act out the skit again using the new behavior or words. Thank them for the suggestion and ask the other girls how this change addressed bullying in a way that made the outcome better. Repeat the scene, using a few more girls’ suggestions. If the girls are stuck, ask them whether adding, not replacing someone to the scene could make a difference. Invite those who answered to join the skit, showing how they would change the scene.

4). If there is time, repeat step 3 for the second skit you chose.

**Part Three: Reflection**

The final part of this workshop is a chance for reflection. Distribute the “A Bully v. A Leader” handout and go over the concepts with the group. This will pinpoint the overarching ideas the girls addressed in Part Two and serve as a take-home reminder and inspiration.

Encourage girls to ask any outstanding questions or share any comments. Acknowledge that the exercises may have been difficult, and commend the girls on working together, thinking critically and being candid.

Be prepared with the name of an adult in the community who has agreed to be a point person should any participants have any follow-up questions or concerns about bullying. Write the name of the contact person on the board.

Adapted from:
Girl Scouts’ *Sister to Sister: The Darker Side of Friendship, Facilitator Guide.*


**Teen Dating Violence**

**Objectives:**

- Girls will gain a clear understanding of teen dating violence
- Girls will be able to recognize signs of teen dating violence
- Girls will be encouraged to talk openly about teen dating violence
- Girls will sympathize with the feelings of teens experiencing dating violence
- Girls will acknowledge the complexities of teen dating violence by being able to discern the difficulties involved with disclosing experiences of dating abuse
- Girls will have the tools and resources to seek help for themselves or their friends
Tools:
- “Teen Dating Violence: What is It?” handout
- “Healthy v. Unhealthy Relationships” handout
- TV/DVD player
- *Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence* (13 minutes) video (Information for obtaining the video can be found in the Resources section on page 32)
- “Causing Pain: Video Discussion Questions” handout
- “Teen Dating Violence: Just for Friends” handout
- Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence Bookmark (Information for obtaining the bookmarks can be found on page 42)

Part One: What is Teen Dating Violence?
This part of the workshop is an introduction to the topic of teen dating violence. Instead of having the facilitator(s) begin the workshop with an overview of the subject–let the girls share their own experiences and knowledge of teen dating violence.

1). In preparation, the facilitator(s) should read about teen dating violence and read through the lesson instructions and handouts.

Dating and intimate relationships are a normal part of growing up for many adolescents; and these relationships can begin as early as age 11. As many as one-third of teens experience some form of abuse in their romantic dating relationships, including verbal, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse. Teen dating violence is typically not a one-time incident, but rather an established pattern of cyclical abuse that occurs over and over again—and can be very difficult to stop once it has begun. As both pre-teens and teens form their first romantic relationships, they often are unclear about what constitutes a healthy (as contrasted with an unhealthy) relationship. And for those who find themselves in an abusive relationship, very few know how to stop the behavior or where to go for help.

The consequences of teen dating violence are dire, often leading to self-harming coping strategies such as substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behaviors and even suicide. Evidence suggests that patterns of teen dating violence and victimization that develop during early adolescence can already be difficult to reverse by late adolescence. However, studies also show that it is possible to change such attitudes and behaviors, especially if teen dating violence prevention programs are implemented in a social context, such as within a conference or school setting.

For more information on teen dating violence, please refer to:
- Soroptimist International of the Americas:
  - *Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence Awareness Campaign: Because Teens Have the Right to be in Safe and Healthy Relationships* model program kit
  - *Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence Awareness Day* model program kit
  - *Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence* white paper
  - All available here: [http://www.soroptimist.org/members/program/Program_TDV.html](http://www.soroptimist.org/members/program/Program_TDV.html)
2). Ask students what they think when they hear the phrase “Teen Dating Violence.” Write their responses on the board. Synthesize their responses into a clear definition of dating violence, such as “Teen dating violence is a pattern of physically, sexually, verbally and/or emotionally abusive or controlling behavior in a dating relationship.”

3). Ask students for examples of teen dating violence behaviors. Prompt them to consider the different ways this abuse can occur: face-to-face; through technology like cell phones, text messaging or social networking websites; or through another person to convey messages or carry out actions.

4). Distribute and review/discuss the handouts “Teen Dating Violence: What is It?” and “Healthy v. Unhealthy Relationships.” Point out that dating violence can happen to any teen regardless of race, religion, culture, sexual orientation or economic status. Emphasize that dating abuse is never the fault of the person being abused. Nothing this person says, does or wears caused the abuse or gives anyone the right to hurt them.

Explain how, over time, the abuse typically occurs more frequently and becomes more severe, often pervading every aspect of a target’s life and leaving her to believe she has no option but to stay in the relationship. Point out that some abusers have experienced abuse at home. Although this does not excuse it, it can help to explain how some abusers come to believe that violence is acceptable in intimate relationships.

5). Ask students what they think are some of the consequences for the person who is abused? If necessary, add to the responses, for example: feeling ashamed, feeling anxious, becoming depressed, having thoughts of suicide, doing poorly in school, losing interest in friends or favorite activities and/or a change of appearance. Point out that:
   - Many victims of dating abuse will continue to be abused in their adult relationships.
   - Victims of dating abuse are at a higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior and suicide.
   - Of women between the ages of 15-19 murdered each year, 30 percent are killed by their boyfriends or husbands.

**Part Two: Video Viewing and Discussion**

In preparation for this exercise, the facilitator(s) should view the 13 minute *Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence* video and review the discussion questions and answers, noting any additional comments to bring to the discussion.

1). Divide the girls into four groups and assign each group a number. The number will indicate which question the group will answer and briefly discuss with the larger group. Explain that each group may consider all questions when watching the movie, but should focus on the one assigned to them. Encourage the groups to use stories and characters from the video as examples in their discussion. Distribute the “Causing Pain: Video Discussion Questions” handout.

2). Show the video *Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence* (13 minutes).

3). Give each group five to 10 minutes to discuss their questions amongst themselves.

4). Ask each group to briefly present their responses to the larger group. Allow other participants to make comments after each presentation. As time allows, mention any answers listed below (with character/scenario examples) that were not brought up by the participants.
A). What were some examples of the four categories of teen dating violence demonstrated in the video?

- Verbal: yelling, name calling and put-downs.
  - What did the group think when Amy said her boyfriend would call her ugly and fat and tell her no one else would love her like he did?

- Emotional: gossiping or telling stories about a dating partner, making threats to hurt self or a dating partner, controlling how a dating partner dresses or acts, ignoring or giving someone the “silent treatment,” increasing demand for attention and isolating him or her from friends and family.
  - What did the group think when Donna’s boyfriend didn’t want her to dance at parties or Bobby’s girlfriend wouldn’t stop calling, emailing or texting him?

- Physical: slapping, hitting and shoving.
  - What did the group think when Jennifer got hit on the arm by her boyfriend?

- Sexual: unwanted touching and forcing someone into sexual activity against his/her will.
  - Though this was not shown, could you see any of the characters’ situations escalating to this point?

B). What are some signs that could help you tell if someone might be a victim of abuse? What did the characters in the video experience?

- Feel bad about themselves or have a poor self-image.
- Feel taken advantage of.
- Constant calls and texts from a girlfriend/boyfriend.
- Isolated; Don’t hang out with friends as much as they used to.
- Look depressed; no energy or motivation.
- Drop in grades.
- Lose interest in social activities that used to be enjoyable.
- Make excuses for the behavior of the dating partner.

Distribute the handout “Teen Dating Violence: Just for Friends.” Note that sometimes it is difficult to know for sure if a friend is in an abusive relationship. That is why being able to recognize warning signs is so important.

C). If you notice that someone you know is being abused, or if you were one of the video characters’ friends, what would you do to help?

- Believe what the friends say. The risk of not believing someone is who is being abused is too high—they could get hurt, even if you don’t believe them.
- Listen closely without judging, blaming or telling them to break up. Give them options of where they can seek help.
- Let them know it’s not their fault.
- Even if they think they did something wrong, no one has the right to insult, push or hit them.
- Help them think about someone they trust who might be able to help such as a parent or friend’s parent; a trusted friend; older sibling; or a trusted group leader or teacher.

D). What does respect mean to you? How does someone get and give respect? Were there any examples of respect in the video?
People who respect each other:
  • Are open and honest about feelings and expectations.
  • Try to put themselves in others’ situations.
  • Give each other the benefit of the doubt.
  • Take time to cool off, listen and then talk things out when arguing.
  • Break down a problem into manageable pieces.
  • Look for win-win solutions.
  • Think before speaking or acting out in anger.
  • Show respect for others and expect the same in return.

Part Three: Conclusion/Resources
Conclude the workshop by emphasizing that every teen deserves, and has the right to, a safe and healthy dating relationship. Distribute the Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence Bookmarks. Emphasize the many resources available to help raise awareness, prevent teen dating violence and provide support services. Encourage students to be proactive and explore these resources.

Encourage students to take action in the fight against teen dating violence. Be prepared with the name of an adult in the community who has agreed to be a point person should any students wish to take action, or have any follow-up questions or concerns about teen dating violence. Write the name of the contact person on the board.

Adapted from:
Love is Not Abuse: A Teen Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum
www.loveisnotabuse.com
Teen Action Toolkit: Building a Youth-Led Response to Teen Victimization
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Choose Respect: Causing Pain Video and Discussion Guide, Video and Presentation: Format B
http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect/materials_and_resources/causing_pain_video_discussion.html

Value Building and Girls’ Sexual Health
Objectives:
  • Girls will be able to articulate what their sexual limits are, how they relate to personal values and how it feels when these limits are respected or invaded.
  • Girls will develop a value-based framework for making decisions about relationships and sexuality.
  • Girls will figure out how to know when they are ready to have sex or engage in sexual relations.
  • Girls will feel empowered to make their own decisions related to sex.

Tools:
  • “What I Value in Relationships” handout
  • “What I Value in Sexuality” handout
  • Pens and Markers
  • Sheets of flipchart paper

This workshop is for the benefit of teen girls – trust that girls are experts in their own lives. The facilitator(s) must be patient, open-minded and comfortable talking about relationships and sexuality. She must not judge girls’ sexuality or sexual choices, but respect them.
Part One: What Do You Value in a Relationship and Sexuality?
The purpose of this part of the workshop is to empower girls to articulate their values and use them as a framework for making decisions about relationships and sexuality, building their self-esteem and confidence.

1). To prepare, the facilitator(s) should read about value-forming and girls’ sexual health.

During adolescence, girls seek independence, new experiences and decision-making power. They have sexual desires and urges that are an important part of their mental and physical health. Yet adolescence is also a time when they are overwhelmed with emotions, social pressures and body changes that inhibit them from knowing what to choose or how to act. All too often their sexuality and sexual health is disrespected through violence, unrealistic gender and social norms, assumptions, stigmas, exploitation and the lack of access to resources and information. It is important to support girls during this time in their lives, giving them the resources and tools needed to make informed and healthy decisions.

To support the sexuality and sexual health of girls, one must begin by listening to them. Empowering girls to become aware of their personal values will prevent them from making sexual decisions in the heat of the moment – decisions that may contradict the values that hadn’t yet realized.

For more information to prepare for this workshop topic, please visit:
- Vancouver Coastal Health, *Teen Sexual Health Workshop Modules.*  
  [http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_I.htm](http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_I.htm)

2). Explain to the group that people have values about many things, including relationships and sex. Values are an indicator of what we think is important about life and what our priorities are. Therefore, values can guide us to make healthy, informed decisions that we will feel confident about. Emphasize that values are personal and there are no right or wrong values. Rarely are we asked to talk about our values and therefore we often discover them in subtle ways; for example, when they are contradicted and we feel uncomfortable or hurt.

3). Hand out the “What I Value in Relationships” worksheet to each participant. This activity aims to help each girl get a better sense of her personal values about relationships. Before having each girl complete the worksheet, emphasize that participants should be considering all types of relationships – not just romantic or sexual ones. Also, encourage the girls to be as honest and candid as possible for their own sake– assure them they will not have to share with the group unless they want to.

4). After the participants have had ample time to complete the worksheet, ask if anyone would like to share some of the qualities they value in relationships. Be prepared to share your own. Ask how someone could recognize these qualities in a relationship? What would people be doing or saying to express these qualities?

5). Hand out the “Values and Sexuality” worksheet to each participant. This activity aims to help each girl get a better sense of her personal values of sexuality as compared to the people with whom she has the closest relationships. Encourage the girls to be as honest and candid as possible for their own sake– assure them they will not have to share with the group unless they want to.
6). After the participants have had ample time to complete the worksheet, ask some or all of the following questions of the group:
   - What did you notice about the values of the different people in your life?
   - Are all values the same?
   - What did you learn about your own values?
   - What did you learn about other people’s values?
   - Did you always place the same importance on the same values as other people?
   - How can you apply what you’ve learned to your everyday life?

Part Two: Articulating Sexual Limits
Now that the girls have articulated some of their relationship and sexuality values, they can begin to address what their sexual limits are and how to know what it means to “be ready” to engage in sexual relations.

1). Explain to the group that for the purposes of the exercise, sex will have a broad definition that includes any activity that is meant to fulfill sexual desires or urges such as oral, vaginal or anal.

2). Divide the girls into four groups. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper and a marker. Assign each group one of the following themes and have them write a list:
   - When it comes to sex, some of the possible outcomes are…
   - When it comes to sex, knowledge and skills people need include…
   - Reasons for having sex include…
   - Reasons for not having sex include…

Encourage each group to think holistically about their theme, considering the related factors:
   - Physical: STIs, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy
   - Emotional: Pleasure, confidence, freedom, guilt, fear, disappointment, heartbreak
   - Spiritual/moral: Values, self-perception, pride

3). Post the flipcharts at the front of the room and read over the lists with the group. Ask which things contribute to healthy decisions about sexuality and which contribute to unhealthy decisions?

4). Explain to the group that people often talk about waiting until they are ready to have sex. Empathize that “being ready” is an ambiguous term and therefore confusing and unsettling. Ask the girls to choose what they think are the top ten qualities, abilities or skills from the four flipcharts that a girl would have to possess in order to know she was “ready” to have sex. Each girl will have ten votes and can put a check on the papers next to her votes. Once everyone has voted, circle the ten qualities that received the most votes. Ask the group to explain their choices. Be sure to mention the following indicators of “being ready” if they have not already been mentioned:
   - You want to have sex with someone for a healthy reason – meaning one that fits in with your values. It’s not because your friends have all had sex or because you think it will save your relationship.
   - You are making the decision based on what you want, not what someone else wants.
   - You are able to share your sexual limits with your partner and trust they will respect them.
   - You can talk openly with your partner about what you like and don’t like in a relationship.
   - You care about your partner’s physical and emotional health and they care about yours.
You have reasonable expectations of sex.
You are prepared to deal with the ways sex will affect your relationship.

Part Three: Reflection
Emphasize to the group that healthy decisions are informed decisions. Explain that the girls should keep in mind the qualities they determined were the most important when establishing personal sexual limits. Acknowledge that each girl will have different limits based on her own comfort level.

Be prepared with the name of an adult in the community who has agreed to be a point person should any have any follow-up questions or concerns about values, relationships and sexuality. Write the name of the contact person on the board.

Adapted from:
Vancouver Coastal Health’s Teen Sexual Health Workshop Modules: Values and Decision-Making-Module 1 and 2
http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_I.htm
http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/pdf/values_decision_making_II.pdf
Girls Action Foundation’s Why Girls? Why Sexual Health

IV. Evaluating the Outcomes of the Conference
A post-conference outcomes-based club project evaluation will determine whether goals were met and help identify what worked well and what aspects need improvement. The evaluation method doesn’t need to be complicated or time-consuming, just simply aligned with the goals of the campaign. It should also measure impact on the community, media attention received, new members gained, etc. The club then needs to discuss how results will be used.

As mentioned on page 7 of this model program kit, Soroptimist headquarters provides an outcomes-based club project evaluation template. For frequently asked questions, detailed instructions for implementing outcomes-based evaluation, and an example evaluation, please read Outcomes-Based Project Evaluation for Soroptimist Clubs available on the SIA website:
http://www.soroptimist.org/members/program/SoroptimistLocalClubProjects.html.

V. Reporting, Questions, Concerns, and Suggestions
Once the club has completed Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference, share the success with Soroptimist headquarters and other Soroptimist clubs by submitting a:

- Program Focus Report.
- Soroptimists Celebrating Success! entry.
- Best for Women magazine submission.

Program Focus Report
Go to the online reporting option listed on the home page of the Soroptimist International website http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/; fill out the Program Focus Report online; and submit it directly into the database. For access to the database, the username is: sia and the password is: philadelphia. Please note that both the username and password must be in lower case characters. This is a way not only to report on the use of the model program kit, but also to keep Soroptimist International aware of the important club projects undertaken in this federation.
Please note that SIA is no longer accepting mailed, e-mailed, or faxed Program Focus Reports. For your club project to be reflected in Soroptimist International’s program database or to be eligible for Soroptimist International Best Practice awards, you will need to enter the project information directly into the online database.

Submit a Soroptimists Celebrating Success! Entry
Successful projects should be sent for judging in the Soroptimist Celebrating Success! award program. Instructions for submitting an entry are in the program section of the members’ area of the website:

Submit an article to Best for Women Magazine
Inclusion in the Best for Women magazine is an excellent way to share the success of the club’s conference. Remember to include action photos. The magazine submission form is in the public awareness section of the members’ area of the website:

Questions, Concerns, and Suggestions
If the club has any questions or concerns about girl-focused issues or this model program kit, please contact the program department. We also welcome any comments or ideas for improving this resource for members.

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Phone: 215-893-9000
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Web: www.soroptimist.org

VI. Soroptimist Club Projects
The following clubs conducted outstanding girl conferences in their communities. For more information, contact the clubs.

SI/Big Bear, (Golden West Region), sibigbearvalley@soroptimist.net: SI Big Bear has raised girls’ self-esteem and personal, social and economic awareness through Camp Girl Power, a year-round series of interactive workshops for middle school girls, culminating in a camping trip at the end of the school year. Each month, club members lead discussions on topics of their expertise, such as healthy relationships, personality traits, peer conflict resolution, personal hygiene, proper dress and common courtesy, followed by a fun outing. The overnight camp, in addition to providing the girls with informational workshops, engaged girls in physical challenges that promote teamwork, such as rock climbing and zip lines. In 2008 SI Big Bear received a $6,500 Soroptimist Club Grant for Women and Girls to expand Camp Girl Power from a one-day camp to an overnight two-day camp. Grant funds were used to pay for camp cabins, transportation, activities and meals. Club members presented workshops, served as mentors and chaperones, prepared meals and served on the clean-up crew.

SI/Bigfork, SI/Kalispell, SI/Polson, SI/Whitefish (Northwestern Region), sibigfork@soroptimist.net: Since 2007, these four clubs have funded and organized a Saturday Expanding Your Horizons math and science conference for 300 middle school girls to encourage
them to consider careers in science, technology, engineering, and math, partnering with Columbia Falls Middle School and Flathead Community College. The women selected to conduct the workshops are highly skilled in fields involving the math and science disciplines. Club members recruit volunteers for the conference, provide need-based scholarships and handle conference administration, public relations and administration. In 2010, the clubs were awarded a $2,000 Soroptimist Club Grant for Women and Girls to streamline the administration of the conference through the creation of a website dedicated to their Expanding Your Horizons Conference. Funds were used for the website's custom design, registration and servicing requirements, and for the training of administrators and creation of an internal management system.

SI/Saguaro Foothills, (Golden West Region), sisaguarofoothills@soroptimist.net: In 2009, SI Saguaro Foothills, in partnership with their local school district, received a Soroptimist Club Grant for Women and Girls to educate girls on issues that affect their social, emotional and physical well-being through their Star Power Building Futures Workshop. This day-long empowerment program was attended by 79 girls and their parents. The girls and their parents separately participated in five breakout sessions on issues such as communication, body image and nutrition, self-esteem, parenting, bullying and drug abuse. The girls and their parents then participated in joint sessions on fostering respect and non-aggressive relationships. Club members coordinated program logistics, conducted fundraisers, of the program and assisted with program workshops. SI Saguaro Foothills received much useful and positive feedback from well-designed evaluation forms filled out by participates after each session.

SI/San Ramon, (Founder Region), sisanramon@soroptimist.net: SI/San Ramon hosts an annual “She’s All That!” conference for middle school-aged girls and their mothers. A keynote speech by a woman leader is followed by workshops, lunch and a “Live Your Dream” Expo. Each girl participates in three workshops, chosen from over 20 diverse offerings, including improvised comedy, self-defense, writing, personal style, “Find Your Passion”, “Mean Girls” and “Get Your Parents Off Your Back and on Your Side.” Simultaneously, parents attend three workshops selected from a list of ten, all of which are geared toward increasing their understanding of their teenage daughters’ experiences and their ability to support their daughters’ developmental and emotional needs.

SI/Whittier, (Desert Coast Region), siwhittier@soroptimist.net: Since 2007, SI Whittier has partnered with Whittier High School to hold an annual Success and Teen Girls Conference to empower approximately 60 sophomore girls identified as “at-risk” by school counselors. A keynote address by a club member and icebreakers, the girls separate into smaller groups for three 45-minute workshops. The curriculum was determined by a needs assessment of “at-risk girls” that SI Whittier conducted in partnership with the school and includes such topics as Respect & Responsibility, Coping with Setbacks, Healthy Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Internet Misuse, Goal Setting and Time Management, Self Respect, Body Image, Drug/Alcohol Abuse and Nutrition. Club members serve as mentors, speakers and discussion facilitators. The conference culminates with a luncheon with club members, after which each girl receives a gift bag.

SI/Woodland, CA (Sierra Nevada Region), siwoodland@soroptimist.net: Since 2009, SI Woodland has held an annual Live Your Dream inspirational day trip for a group of teenage girls. The majority of the trip consists of a hike. Club members take girls on a challenging five-mile hike in Muir Woods National Monument, guided by top motivational speakers from the Tiger Woods Foundation. After the hike, the group enjoys a relaxing lunch on the beach before taking part in a self-defense course. The goal of the daytrip is to empower the girls and teach them valuable skills such as the benefits of exercise and basic self-defense.
SI/Rio Negro, Brazil (Brazil Region), sirionegro@soroptimist.net: SI Rio Negro established an after-school mentoring and educational program for at-risk girls. Club members administered the program, including preparing the curriculum and leading the workshops. The goal of the program was to improve the overall attitude and quality of life of the at-risk girls who participated in the program. The objective was measured through verbal and written accounts from participants and from observed behavioral improvements. All written and verbal evaluations from participants, their mothers and teachers indicated positive behavioral changes, including increased self-esteem, better grades and stronger relationships with their families.

VII. Resources
The following resources have been used to help design the projects in this model program kit:

- About-Face: Equipping women and girls with the tools to understand and resist harmful media messages that affect self-esteem and body image. http://www.about-face.org

- The Center for Disease Control, Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence. A 43-minute video created by Choose Respect. The video is divided into two segments, one 13 minutes and geared toward teens and a 30 minute video aimed at parents and other adults. Both videos describe experiences and insights, so that teens and parents can recognize and prevent dating abuse in their own lives or in the lives of their friends. The videos are available for free download on Choose Respect’s website. In addition, a free video discussion guide and free video discussion guide PowerPoint’s are available. Price: free
  http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect/cdcinfo@cdc.gov
  1-800-232-4636

- Eventbrite provides a low-cost service for online conference registration that includes features such as branding, secure and simple credit card processing, professional ticketing types and tracking and social media integration.  http://www.eventbrite.com


- Girls Action Foundation, Why Girls? Why Media and Pop Culture?


- Girls Health: Maintained by the Office on Women’s Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, this website offers girls, parents and educators information, tools and resources about adolescent health, growth and development, and the challenging social issues teen girls will likely face – such as bullying.
  http://www.girlshealth.gov/bullying/index.cfm

- Girl Scouts’ Sister to Sister: The Darker Side of Friendship, Facilitator Guide.

- Love is Not Abuse, A Teen Dating Violence Prevention Curriculum
  www.loveisnotabuse.com/
• Miss Representation: Asking girls to think about the effects of the images they see, particularly the ways media affects women and girls’ ability to see themselves as leaders and be seen as leaders by others in society. http://missrepresentation.org/


• The Ophelia Project: Serves youth and adults who are affected by relational and other non-physical forms of aggression by providing them with a unique combination of tools, strategies and solutions. http://www.opheliaproject.org/main/index.htm

• Rachel Simmons: Author, educator and coach helping girls and young women grow into authentic, emotionally intelligent and assertive adults. http://www.rachelsimmons.com/

• Soroptimist white paper, Putting Girls First.

• Soroptimist club resource, Event Ideas: Successful Soroptimist Fundraisers.


VIII. Appendix

Handouts:
• Media Literacy: Deconstructing the Media’s Portrayal of Women and Girls
• Media Literacy: Using the Media as a Tool for Empowerment
• Relational Aggression Amongst Girls: What Is It?
• Relational Aggression Amongst Girls: A Bully v. A Leader
• Teen Dating Violence: What is It?
• Teen Dating Violence: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships
• Causing Pain: Video Discussion Questions
• Teen Dating Violence: Just for Friends
• Teen Dating Violence: Bookmark
• Value Building and Girls’ Sexual Health: What I Value in Relationships
• Value Building and Girls’ Sexual Health: What I Value in Sexuality
Media Literacy

Deconstructing the Media’s Portrayal of Women and Girls

When looking at depictions of women and girls in media vehicles such as fashion advertisements, magazines, TV, movies, music videos, etc., consider the following questions:

- Who created this image? Where does our idea of the “ideal” body come from?
- What message is being portrayed?
- Who is the message for?
- Who does the message benefit and why was it sent?
- What techniques are used to attract your attention?
- Who gets to speak in this image – meaning, who is in a position of power? Whose voices are left out – who is powerless?
- What lifestyles, values and points of view are presented in or omitted from the message?
- How might other people interpret this message?
- Do you see yourself in this image?
- How does this image make you feel?

Remember: The media offers limited views of women and girls’ identities, strengths and potential. Its depiction of women and girls is not based on reality. As its prime subjects and targets, girls are in a unique position to process and criticize the media, transforming it from a tool of oppression to one of liberation.

To learn more, visit About-Face, a website that equips women and girls with the tools to understand and resist harmful media messages that affect self-esteem and body image.: http://www.about-face.org/.

Are you media smart? Take the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty online quiz to find out. Also explore the other interactive features for teen girls provided on the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty website: http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.com/.

Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference

Sponsored by Soroptimist International of TYPE CLUB NAME HERE

For more information, visit www.soroptimist.org

Sources:
Girls Action Foundation: http://www.girlsactionfoundation.ca/
Youth Action Network: http://www.youthactionnetwork.org/
Once girls have the knowledge, tools and information to think critically about the media and its portrayal of women and girls– they can use the media to their advantage. Below are creative ways girls can use the media as a tool for their empowerment:

- Create a newsletter or ‘zine (alternative magazine), hard-copy or online.
- Create a blog or website.
- Make a video and post on social networking sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook and Twitter.

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**Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference**  
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For more information, visit [www.soroptimist.org](http://www.soroptimist.org)

Sources:
Relational Aggression Amongst Girls

What is It?

Relational aggression is a type of psychological bullying by pre-adolescent and adolescent girls on other girls. Studies have shown that girls are just as aggressive as boys; however, their methods of aggression are more subtle and covert. Girls often prefer indirect forms of harassment to avoid being caught and held accountable.

Perpetrators of relational aggression are often driven by:

- Jealousy
- Need for attention and control
- Security
- Anger
- Fear of competition

Girl bullies tend to be:

- Popular
- Charismatic
- Manipulative
- Innocent on the surface

Common forms of relational aggression are:

- Rumor spreading
- Secret-divulging
- Alliance-building
- Backstabbing
- Ignoring
- Excluding
- Verbal or written insults
- Hostile body language such as eye-rolling or glaring

Cyber-bullying, in which girls use email, instant messengers, websites, blogs and social networking sites to harass other girls, is increasing. Examples include:

- Rumor spreading
- Hacking email accounts to send embarrassing emails
- Posting unflattering pictures of a girl victim on Facebook
- Trash-talking a victim on a website or blog

Victims of relational aggression suffer lasting effects such as:

- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Fear of social interaction and isolation
- Self-blame
- Poor academic and extracurricular attendance and performance

Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference

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For more information, visit www.soroptimist.org

Sources:

- Girl Scouts’ Sister to Sister: The Darker Side of Friendship
Relational Aggression Amongst Girls

A Bully v. A Leader

A Bully:
- Uses her power in negative ways
- Threatens other people
- Wants others to obey without question
- Focuses on herself and what she needs
- Acts to exclude certain people

A Leader:
- Uses her power to bring about positive change
- Makes other people feel comfortable
- Encourages others to ask questions and find solutions
- Thinks about what people in her group need
- Works to include and support others

Sources:
- Girl Scouts’ Sister to Sister: The Darker Side of Friendship

Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference
Sponsored by Soroptimist International of TYPE CLUB NAME HERE
For more information, visit www.soroptimist.org
Teen Dating Violence

What is it?

Teen dating violence is any controlling or abusive behavior in a romantic relationship. It can happen in straight or gay relationships. It can include verbal, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse.

Controlling behavior may include:
- Not letting you hang out with your friends
- Telling you what to wear
- Frequently calling or texting to find out where you are, who you are with, and what you are doing

Verbal or emotional abuse may include:
- Calling you names
- Jealousy
- Threatening to hurt you, or someone in your family, if you don’t do what your partner wants

Physical abuse may include:
- Shoving
- Punching
- Slapping
- Kicking
- Hair pulling

Sexual abuse may include:
- Unwanted touching or kissing
- Forcing you to go further sexually than you want
- Not letting you use birth control

If You are a Target of Dating Violence, You Might….
- Feel angry, sad, lonely, depressed or confused
- Feel helpless to stop the abuse
- Feel threatened or humiliated
- Feel like you can’t talk to family or friends
- Be afraid of getting hurt more seriously
- Feel protective of your boyfriend or girlfriend
- Think that it is your fault

Getting Help

Being a target of dating violence is not your fault. Nothing you say, wear or do gives anyone the right to hurt you. If you think you may be in an abusive relationship, get help immediately. Talk to someone you trust, like a parent, teacher, school principal, counselor or nurse—or call:

Girl Power: A Soroptimist Girl Conference
Sponsored by Soroptimist International of TYPE CLUB NAME HERE
For more information, visit www.soroptimist.org

Source: www.ncvc.org
Teen Dating Violence

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

In a **healthy** relationship, the couple has mutual respect for each other. They talk honestly to each other and share power and control when making decisions. They trust each other and respect each other’s independence. In an **unhealthy** relationship, one person tries to control the other through a variety of abusive means, such as those described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthy Relationships</th>
<th>Unhealthy Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equality</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners share decisions and responsibilities. They discuss their roles to make sure they are fair and equal.</td>
<td><strong>Control</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner makes all the decisions and tells the other what to do, what to wear or who to spend time with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honesty</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners share their dreams, fears and concerns with each other. They share important information with each other.</td>
<td><strong>Dishonesty</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner lies or keeps information from the other. One partner steals from the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Safety</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners feel physically safe in the relationship and respect each other’s space.</td>
<td><strong>Physical Abuse</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner uses physical force to get their way, such as hitting, slapping, grabbing or shoving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners treat each other like they want to be treated. They listen to each other and respect each other’s opinions.</td>
<td><strong>Disrespect</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner makes fun of the other, including making fun of their opinions and interests. They may destroy something that belongs to the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comfort</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners feel safe with each other and respect each other’s differences. They can “be themselves” with each other.</td>
<td><strong>Intimidation</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner tries to control every aspect of the other partner’s life. This includes using threats of violence and threatening to end the relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Respectfulness</strong>&lt;br&gt;Partners never force sexual activity or insist on doing something that the other partner isn’t comfortable doing.</td>
<td><strong>Sexual Abuse</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner pressures or forces the other into sexual activity against her will or without her consent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Neither partner is dependent upon the other for her/his own identity. They maintain friendships outside of the relationship.</td>
<td><strong>Dependence</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner feels that they “can’t live without” the other. He/she may threaten to do something drastic if the relationship were to end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humor</strong>&lt;br&gt;The relationship is enjoyable for both partners. They laugh and have fun.</td>
<td><strong>Fear</strong>&lt;br&gt;One partner feels they have to be extra careful to avoid upsetting the other. He/she often feels fearful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence

Video Discussion Questions

"Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse Violence" is a 13 minute video geared toward teens. It describes real-life experiences and insights, so that teens can recognize and prevent dating abuse in their own lives or in the lives of their friends. The videos are available for free download on Choose Respect’s website. In addition, a free in-depth video discussion guide and PowerPoint’s are available. To access the video from home, please visit: http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect/.

Video Discussion Questions:

1). What were some examples of the four categories of teen dating violence demonstrated in the video?

2). What are some signs that could help you tell if someone might be a victim of abuse? What did the characters in the video experience?

3). If you notice that someone you know is being abused, or if you were one of the video characters’ friends, what would you do to help?

4). What does respect mean to you? How does someone get and give respect? Were there any examples of respect in the video?

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Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Choose Respect
Causing Pain Video and Discussion Guide, Video and Presentation: Format B
http://www.cdc.gov/chooserespect/materials_and_resources/causing_pain_video_discussion.html
Teen Dating Violence

Just for Friends

What would you do if you thought your friend was in an abusive relationship?

Dating violence often takes place when a couple is alone. Since it may be hard to know if your friend is in an abusive relationship, listed below are some warning signs to look for:

- Their boyfriend/girlfriend is constantly checking up on them demanding to know where they are.
- Your friend often cancels plans at the last minute for reasons that don’t seem true.
- Their boyfriend/girlfriend acts extremely jealous when your friend talks to others.
- Your friend’s weight, appearance or grades have changed dramatically since the relationship began.
- Their boyfriend/girlfriend loses their temper easily and is prone to break things when angry.
- Your friend is always worried about upsetting their boyfriend/girlfriend.
- Your friend has unexplained injuries or gives explanations that don’t make sense.

What You Can Do to Help a Friend

When you know, or even suspect, that a friend is in an abusive relationship, you can help your friend by talking with him/her about their relationship. Since it may be hard for you to know what to do or say, or how to say it, here are some suggestions:

Do:

- Stay calm and listen attentively.
- Talk in a private, safe place.
- Tell your friend why you are concerned—be specific.
- Ask your friend to share how she/he feels about the relationship.
- Suggest talking to others who may help, such as a counselor, teacher or other trusted adult.
- Let your friend know you are available to talk again.
- Offer to find support information and resources for your friend.

Helpful Things to Say:

- I am glad you feel comfortable talking with me.
- Nothing you did (or didn’t do) makes the abusive behavior your fault.
- How can I help you?
- I’ll support your decisions.

Don’t:

- Try to have all the answers.
- Be judgmental.
- Ask too many questions; give your friend a chance to talk.
- Pressure your friend to make a decision.
- Confront your friend’s boyfriend/girlfriend—this could have negative and possible dangerous effects for your friend or you.

Soroptimist Teen Dating Violence Bookmark

SIA has designed these bookmarks to help clubs raise awareness about teen dating violence and promote healthy teen relationships. The teen dating violence bookmarks are available as writeable PDF documents, which are easy for clubs to personalize and print at a local copy store or through an online printing vendor. The bookmark, along with easy instructions for customizing and printing, can be found in the program section of the Members Area of the SIA website at the following link:

http://www.soroptimist.org/members/program/Program_TDV.html

Bookmarks may also be purchased from the Soroptimist Store on the SIA website at the following link: http://www.soroptimist.org/eseries/source/Orders/index.cfm?section=unknown&ETask=1&Task=1&SEARCH_TYPE=FIND&FindIn=0&FindSpec=bookmark&x=11&y=2. The bookmarks come in packs of 50 for US$6. They are available for purchase in English and Japanese only.
### Value Building and Girls’ Sexual Health
#### What I Value in Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The name of a person you have a relationship with</th>
<th>The qualities you like about this relationship</th>
<th>The qualities you don't like about this relationship</th>
<th>What this tells you about the qualities you value in relationships</th>
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Sources:
- Vancouver Coastal Health: Teen Sexual Health Workshop Modules [http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_I.htm](http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_I.htm)
# Value Building and Girls’ Sexual Health

## What I Value in Sexuality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The right time to first have sex?</th>
<th>Who should have sex?</th>
<th>What sex means?</th>
<th>Safer sex?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Family</td>
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<td>Your Friends</td>
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**Sources:**
- Vancouver Coastal Health: Teen Sexual Health Workshop Modules [http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_1.htm](http://teensexualhealth.vch.ca/workshop_modules/values_decision_making_1.htm)