

# ODD GIRL OUT

## The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls

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### What is social aggression in girls?

#### 1. Relational aggression

- Harming others through damage of relationship(s)

ex. Ignoring, facial expressions, threatening to end friendship

#### 2. Indirect aggression

- Covert behaviour that makes it seem as though the aggressor has no intent to hurt at all

ex. using others, spreading rumours

#### 3. Social aggression

- Intended to damage self-esteem or social status within a group

ex. Rumors, group exclusion

#### What not to say vs. What to say:

- **What could you be doing to cause this?**
- **Do you want to brainstorm about how we got here?**
- **It happens to everyone**
- **Why do you think she is doing this/it is happening?**

**"Instead of believing conflict terminates relationships, girls could learn that *no relationship can survive without conflict.*"**

**(Simmons, p.360, 2002)**

### Foster a positive classroom environment

- Connect with each other through class building activities such as community building circles
- Include students in establishing classroom rules and consequences
  - Should explicitly mention non-verbal aggression
- Pro-social classroom: snaps



### How can we respond to aggression?

- Identify students who need support
- Call out aggression - even though it's uncomfortable
- Use WITS / THINK / GIRL protocol



## GIRL Protocol

**GIRL protocol:** (p. 284)

- **G** - Gather your choices (list all the choices you might make in response to the situation)
- **I** - I choose (make a choice. Pick one of the strategies you listed above)
- **R** - Reasons are (justify your choice. List the reasons you will choose this strategy)
- **L** - list the outcomes (think ahead: what might happen if you make this choice?)

### Why is this important?

- Everyone loses when girls bully
- Effects last decades into adulthood
- Negatively affects ability to have healthy relationships
- Research is known to be neglected for girls in how they express anger
- We haven't provided girls with adequate language for describing how they feel, and also for calling out what they're doing (manipulating, controlling, abusing). These all feel like adult words for a "child" problem.

**"Because these girls lack the tools to deal with everyday feelings of anger, hurt, betrayal, and jealousy, their feelings stew and fester before boiling to the surface and unleashing torrents of rage" (Simmons, p.88, 2002)**

