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Empowered!

The Empower Program

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OUR MISSION:

To work with youth to end the culture of violence.

BusinessSAVVY (Businesses Standing Against Violence and Victimization of Youth) - Our Corporate Partners

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- Bechtel Foundation
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Friends (\$500+):

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Mission Managers

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- Rosalind Wiseman
President
- Shanterra McBride
Director of Education and Programs
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Program Assistant

GIRLS WILL BE GIRLS? GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF RELATIONAL AGGRESSION

Imagine you're playing the \$25,000 Pyramid and you're in the winner's circle. Your celebrity partner gives you the following clues: Friendship bracelets. Secrets. Sleepovers. Sharing clothes. Shopping. *Best friends forever and a day.* Your answer? Items for girls friendships.

Friendships can be the best thing in the world. They can also be more complicated and complex than what we give them credit for. But what about those times when girls don't get along? The truth is, girls' battling is done in the same way today - quietly, through looks and sneers and words exchanged in whispers. However, social theorists and researchers have just now coined the behavior "relational aggression".

Relational aggression includes behaviors that harm others by damaging one's relationships with one's peers. It also includes behaviors that harm others by manipulating one's relationships with her peers, or by injuring one's feelings of social acceptance. In laymen's terms, relational aggression is when a girl decides who's going to loathe whom. Other examples include:

- Purposefully ignoring someone when angry (giving the "silent treatment")
- Spreading rumors about a disliked classmate
- Telling others not to play with a certain classmate as a means of retaliation.



The staff of Empower and Saturday Night Live's Tina Fey at the first annual WomenSpeak Symposium

I've worked with thousands of girls and they are no different than how I was as a teen; the only thing that has changed is that girls today are stronger, smarter and bolder (Girls, Inc.), which on the large scale, is a good thing. However, I also believe that with creating stronger, smarter, bolder girls, we've failed in creating girls with compassion, girls with sincere niceness and girls who aren't out to be number one by any means necessary.

As parents and teachers, there are ways in which we can work together to end this culture of violence. I encourage parents to involve girls in activities outside of school so they are exposed to different groups of people. Talk to your daughters about both sides of the issue. And if your daughter is the "girl

Summer School Violence Prevention Institute August 13-15

The Empower Program is celebrating a decade of violence prevention work and our summer School Violence Prevention Institute (SVPI) highlights a proven approach and method to reducing violence in schools and communities. Participants will be given the tools to:

- Implement Owning Up within their schools and organizations
- Gain awareness about the social science that links gender socialization and violence
- Address the foundations of violence and explore the subtle expressions of vio-

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BENEFIT CONCERTS IN SEPTEMBER AND DECEMBER FOR EMPOWER!

We are pleased to announce two concerts in upcoming months to benefit Empower's groundbreaking work with youth to end the culture of violence! This September, we will hold a **Back to School Concert at the 9:30 Club with friends of Empower and prominent MTV and Island Records artist**—we won't let you have all the details just yet, but keep your eyes peeled for an event to raise funds for Empower! We're extremely lucky and proud to be chosen by this special rock band as a beneficiary.

We will have a very different

but equally compelling **Holiday Benefit Concert December 14**, when the Thomas Circle Singers, a philanthropically minded choral group, hosts their annual holiday concert to benefit Empower. Part of their series honoring youth leadership development programs in DC, the concert will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 4900 Connecticut Ave. NW (right down the street from our new offices).

Empower will host a reception after the concert, and we hope you will join us! The event will feature a full orchestra and the London

School Little Singers, a local youth choir that will be accompanying Thomas Circle Singers. Music will include excerpts from Vivaldi's Gloria. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students.

You can get more information about the Thomas Circle Singers, purchase event tickets or learn about the full season passes at www.thomascirclesingers.org. For more info on the Back to School Concert, keep checking our site and www.930.com!

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EMPOWER HOST A RECORD-BREAKING THREE NATIONAL CONFERENCES IN SPRING 2003!

We are very excited to have completed three successful conferences this year – **the 4th Annual GAB Conference, the 1st RYM Conference, and the 1st Women Speak Symposium**. Participants of each event were exposed to opportunities to share experiences, learn from others and meet new friends. The overall feedback showed that attendees walked away with new tools and remarkable insights.

On Saturday, April 7th, **GAB** hosted "Girls' Voices: A Mix with Harmony," acknowledging how the lives of teenage girls can range from confusing to exciting in the course of a day. Attendees were provided workshops that included college, depression, self-defense, body image and healthy relationships. There were over 75 girls at the conference, who submit-

ted evaluations exclaiming that they were ecstatic to be able to spend a day addressing issues affecting their lives.

On Saturday, May 31st, **RYM** hosted over 70 young men attended and embraced the opportunity to explore and learn from each other. Their discussions opened their minds to dating relationships, masculinity in the media and the influence of pop culture on young people. The first of its kind, participants were thankful for the invitation to attend. RYM is done in partnership with MCSR.

Our **WomenSpeak Symposium**, held on Friday, June 6th, focused on "Connecting Women from All Walks of Life." A diversity of women from all ages, races, and professional back-

grounds came together to experience community. Speakers shared their insights on relationships, career and spirituality, while engaging the audience to do the same.

Attendees expressed the day as an awesome gathering, featuring **Saturday Night Live's Tina Fey**. Be on the lookout for WomenSpeak 2004!



*Spirituality Panel at WomenSpeak—
Yolanda Young, Rabbi Joui Hessel, Manal Omar, and Maryada Preston*

EMPOWER MARKS MILESTONE PROGRAM WITH THE TEEN LEARNING CENTER!

The Empower Program and The Good Shepherd Teen Learning Center (TLC) began our first partnership this year! Located in the basement of a low-income housing apartment building, complete with exposed pipes across the 10-foot ceiling in the Adams Morgan community, the TLC youth face many challenges in their day-to-day lives.

In the past, the TLC community has been plagued with gun violence, drug infestation, and poverty. Many of the TLC youth have lost close friends and relatives to neighborhood violence. Despite these challenges, most of the youth made admirable commitments to The Empower Program's "life skills sessions" once-a-week for the 8 month ordeal (The Empower Program's longest program in one program year).

Working with the TLC over the last eight months proved to be different from other partnerships. Most of the TLC youth were from different parts of the world including Liberia, El Salvador, and Sierre Leone.

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A typical life skills session would begin in an opening circle where the TLC staff and youth made announcements and joined hands in prayer. The TLC youth would then be divided by gender into our life skills session in which Empower staff had to be prepared to discuss whatever issues were on their minds that particular day. To conclude our sessions, everyone would gather in the closing circle for acknowledgements, prayer and the much



Real Young Men's First Annual Boys' Conference

prepared meal for life skills attendees. Overall, The Empower Program's partnership w/TLC was one full of fun, learning, and genuine relationships with the TLC staff and youth. We look forward to partnering with them again in the future.

EMPOWER NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT FOR OUR CRITICAL YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION WORK!

This year marks a decade of Empower's innovative and ground-breaking youth violence prevention programming. As headlines in the news and discussions in classrooms prove, our programs are needed now more than ever before. With a growing and vibrant staff and events and classes offered across the United States, Empower needs the support of you, our friends and donors, now more than ever!

All of the information in this newsletter points to the vital work Empower staff is doing every day to build safer communities for

young people by stopping violence at its root. We cannot do this work without your help! There are several ways to help Empower sustain our work. Please consider making a tax deductible gift today of \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1000 or more!

Also, consider making a credit card donation online through our website www.empowerprogram.org. This funding year we have a new CFC number, #7444, which serves as another vehicle for donating to our work. By clicking on our amazon.com link for your purchases, you can

give Empower 5% of the amount spent as well. You can make a difference in the lives of youth—give today!

*Please update your records!
Empower has moved!*

We are now located at:
The Empower Program
4420 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite #250
Washington, DC 20008

www.empowerprogram.org
ph 202-232-8200 fax 202-686-1951

The Empower Program's mission is made possible in partnership with the following foundations:

Frances and Benjamin Benenson Foundation
 Brother Help Thyself
 CFNCR Youth Philanthropy
 Children's Fund of Metropolitan Washington
 DC Investment Trust Corp.
 Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation
 ExxonMobil Foundation
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 Joseph E. and Marjorie B. Jones Foundation
 The George Preston Marshall Foundation
 National Cooperative Bank
 Prince Charitable Trusts
 Spring Creek Foundation
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 Washington Area Women's Foundation
 William Donner Foundation
 Washington AIDS Partnership

(relational aggression cont'd)

in the middle," firmly but lovingly encourage her to not be content with being a bystander and support the target. This approach is hard for girls to take because they may be the next target if they don't go along, but that doesn't change what is the "right" thing to do.

Teachers have to "name it" in class. Make sure your students know what relational aggression is, how it hurts, and that it is not acceptable in your class. We can no longer ignore how children are hurting each other.

Girls know the power of relationships, which is why when we're angry we express our aggression through our relationships, not our physical prowess. As adults, we must provide avenues for girls to learn the importance of being direct, honest and assertive. And that important avenue begins as we lead by example.

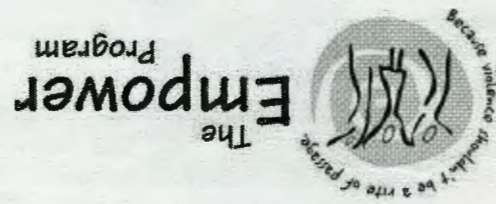
(SVPI cont'd) lence and explore the subtle expressions of violence

- Develop strategies to make schools and communities safer
- Identify areas of concern in your own school or community and receive options for intervention
- Understand the world that youth live in.

The Summer SVPI is a 20 hour intensive training program taught by certified Master Educators, Rosalind Wiseman (author of *Queen Bees and Wannabes* and President of The Empower Program) and noted lecturer and Director of Education and Programs at Empower Shanterra McBride. Both Ms. Wiseman and Ms. McBride are considered experts in violence prevention and relational aggression and are actively involved in the emerging educational interventions to reduce violence within schools, organizations and society.

The price for Summer SVPI is \$850 and includes lodging, meals, recreational facilities, materials and professional training. For additional information and registration information please contact Dop Troutman dtroutman@empowered.org, 202-232-8200, or visit us on the web at www.empowerprogram.org.

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THE IMPACT:

- Between 1979 and 1998, gunfire killed nearly 84,000 children and teens in America—36,000 more than the total number of American soldiers killed in Vietnam.
- A 12 year old today has an 83% chance of being a victim of violent crime during his or her lifetime. 50% of all victims will be victimized more than once.
- 33% of young people ages 16 to 24 report being involved in at least one abusive dating situation.
- 4% of students report feeling too unsafe to attend school at least once during the previous 30 days.

The Empower Program envisions a world where young people are empowered to stop violence. Empower recognizes that young people live within a violent culture where gender roles restrict their choices and enforce silence when they or their peers are confronted with behavior ranging from cliques, social isolation, and bullying to sexual violence, harassment and abusive relationships. Empower's visionary, effective and comprehensive approach teaches youth to transform silence into action.

Violence does not start when a child brings a gun to school; it can start when a child opens his or her mouth. Despite this fact, horrific school shootings have focused our attention on the most extreme acts of violence. The reality is that such events are not common. Yet extreme acts of violence grow in the landscape of bullying, sexual harassment, gossip, abusive relationships, and the attitudes and social conditioning that create a silent wall around such behaviors.

At The Empower Program we provide a unique approach to violence prevention. Through our award winning programs, we help youth recognize the impact of their behavior and personal choices on not only themselves, but also their peers and their community. We also help youth understand how their choices can result in the perpetration of violence in relationships, in the schoolyard, and on the streets.



The
Empower
Program

1312 8th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001
Telephone: 202-232-8200 Fax: 202-234-1901
www.empowerprogram.org

All contributions to The Empower Program are tax deductible:
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The Empower Program is a 501(c)(3) Charitable Contribution/Charity: #8914

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

+ BULLYING

+ PEER PRESSURE

+ VIOLENCE

+ CLIQUES

= A TYPICAL YOUNG
PERSON'S DAY

The Empower Program

Because violence shouldn't be a rite of passage.

MISSON

To work with youth to end the culture of violence.

HISTORY

The Empower Program began in 1992 as a 501 (c) (3), non-profit agency seeking to teach girls self-defense as a means of safeguarding them from violence. Through the experience of working with these young women the founders of The Empower Program recognized that working exclusively with girls would not change the culture of violence that was confronting young people.

These insights resulted in the creation of our award winning Owning Up® curricula and provides the foundation to work with both boys and girls to eliminate violence. Central to the development and history of The Empower Program was an awareness that boys and girls must be a part of the strategy and approach to stop violence. We have invested more than a decade working to improve, refine and perfect our approach.

The Empower Program has now become a world leader in violence prevention and innovative approaches to dealing with violence.

OUR APPROACH

The Empower Program is a leader in the field of violence prevention because of our innovative approach to dealing with the foundations of violence.

1. We know how to talk with kids and we understand the world that kids live in.
2. We understand violence as a spectrum encompassing everything from bullying, dating violence, hate speech, homophobia and other subtle forms of aggression which can be understood through a lens of gender socialization and stereotyping.
3. We approach young people as allies to end violence and we encourage and reinforce their ability to empathize while providing leadership to end violence.
4. Our expertise in the field of violence prevention helps us offer insights, skills and techniques that have grown from 10 years of testing and implementation.
5. We practice what we preach. The Empower Program listens to young people and recognizes the expertise of teens when it comes to teens.

OUTCOMES

The effectiveness of our program has been documented by a study conducted by Rutgers University and Mt. Sinai Adolescent Hospital.

1. 66% of young people within our study demonstrated a greater knowledge and awareness of dating violence, cliques, bullying and assault.
2. 75% indicated an increased sense of self-efficacy and problem solving.
3. 83% experienced a decrease of both verbal and physical aggression.

PROGRAMS

OWNING UP®

The Empower Program's award-winning curricula, is based on the premise that violence can be deconstructed and understood by examining how our culture teaches boys to be men and girls to be women. Owning Up® classes rely on hands-on activities, role-play, writing, question and answer sessions, and discussions to get to the root of problems. Additionally, the program emphasizes the role of the bystander in violent situations and teaches young people tactics to use when they witness another person being bullied or attacked.

STEPPING UP®

A cutting-edge program created by The Empower Program that links bullying, cliques, and social hierarchies with violence and homophobia. Our classes teach gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, questioning (GLBTQ) youth to build coalitions & partnerships for safety. Stepping Up® also teaches straight students to intervene safely when gay students are targeted for violence and anti-gay bias.

TRAINING

SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION INSTITUTE (SVPI)

SVPI Training will work with teachers, youth service providers and individuals through a series of seminars and staff-led workshops that:

- Train participants to implement Owning Up®;
- Educate participants about the social science that links gender socialization and violence;
- Create a foundation for long term educational partnerships to support the development of safer schools and community based organizations.

REACHING OUT

A professional development training for teachers, school administrators, and youth service professionals to develop and implement violence prevention programs for the needs of their individual organization or school.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARDS

Recognizing that teens are the foremost experts on what is important in their lives, we created a place at Empower where young men and women could come together and advise Empower on policy and programs.

GIRLS' ADVISORY BOARD (GAB)

Empower created the Girl's Advisory Board in 1997 to give girls a public and substantive voice within the organization. GAB exists to enhance, enlighten and inspire young lives to overcome gender-based violence.

REAL YOUNG MEN (RYM)

RYM provides young men with the opportunity to come together in a safe environment to examine masculinity and the culture of men's violence, and explore non-violent alternatives to the traditional male stereotypes.

Yes, I would like to learn more about The Empower Program.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Office Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

I would like:

- More information about the Empower Program.
- To contribute to The Empower Program
- \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____
- My check or money order in the amount of \$_____ is enclosed
Make checks payable to: The Empower Program)
- Please bill my MasterCard/Visa for my contribution to The Empower Program in the amount of \$_____.

Account Number : _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____



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