

BFF! (*Except When We're Not*)

Presented by Susan Fee, Professional Clinical Counselor

www.susanfee.com

Now Entering Girl World

- Communication
- Relationships
- Brain Development
- Emotional Awareness

What is relational aggression?

-Crick & Grotpeter, 1995

“Behavior that is intended to harm someone by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others.”

Girls at Play

- Games of inclusion
- Conversation used for connection
- Subtle social cues learned
- Exclusion/ignoring used to show anger

Defining Mean Girl Behavior

- Exclusion
- Spreading gossip and rumors
- Relentless teasing
- Eye rolling, mean looks, notes, graffiti
- Bait and switch (just kidding!)
- Online bullying
- Threatening physical safety

ACTIVITY: Friendship Chain (excerpted from Circle of F.R.I.E.N.D.S., Susan Fee)

Cliques and Their Players

-Wiseman, 2002

- Queen bee

- Sidekick

- Banker

- Floater

- Torn Bystander

- Pleaser/Wannabe/ Messenger

- Target

ACTIVITY: Silent Circle (excerpted from Circle of F.R.I.E.N.D.S., Susan Fee)

Step forward if:

- You have ever had a bad hair day.
- You have ever argued with your parents.
- You have ever screamed, "It's not fair!"
- You have felt stressed over a friendship.
- You have ever felt left out of a group.
- You have had your feelings hurt by a friend.
- You have ever thought people were talking about you behind your back.
- You have ever been teased about your appearance.
- You have ever teased others about their appearance.
- You have ever felt jealous because someone was getting more attention than you.
- You have ever purposely ignored a friend or stopped talking to her.
- You have ever said something online that you wouldn't say to the person's face.
- You have ever called someone a name.
- You have ever gossiped.
- You have ever stood by while someone else was bullied or put down.
- You have ever felt bad about the way you treated someone else.

Drama Queens & Female Brain Development

- Growth/Pruning
- Estrogen & progesterone surges
- Conflict triggers stress, talking reduces
- Intimacy/bonding/releases oxytocin

Coach, Don't Solve: Conflict resolution is a *skill*

Empowering Questions to Ask

- What do you want to do about it?
- What part of this do you feel you can control?
- What's one thing you can do for yourself that might improve the situation?

ACTIVITY: Four Ways to Respond (excerpted from Circle of F.R.I.E.N.D.S., Susan Fee)

1. Ignore it
2. Be mean back
3. Tell an adult
4. Talk face-to-face

Bottom Line Question:

After spending time with her, how do I feel about *myself*?

Susan Fee is a professional clinical counselor and author of Circle of F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Facilitator's Guide that teaches girls ages 8-14 how to develop a positive self-image, maintain healthy friendships, solve conflicts through effective communication, build emotional strength, and manage stress. The guide includes 65 small group activities, icebreakers, and parent support letters, plus reproducible handouts on CD ROM and a 1-hour audio CD. Learn more by visiting www.susanfee.com.