

## How Communities Can Help:

- Create community strategies to promote cooperation and confront bullying among girls.
  - Educate parents.
  - Provide comprehensive training for school caregivers in dealing with girls relational aggression, starting in preschool.
- Increase academic support for struggling students and parents.
- Encourage and model emotional maturity.
- Advocate for clear expectations and consequences for aggression among girls.
- Encourage older girls to mentor younger girls who fall into this self destructive behavior.

## How to Fund Programs to Prevent, Educate and Solve Girl to Girl Aggression?

Tax entertainment industries that make money off violence in music, films and on television.



### For Further Help and Information

Call HopeWorks at (860) 561-1175, ext. 0  
or e-mail us at hopeworks@snet.net.

or  
Vivian Carlson, Ph.D. at  
St Joseph College  
860-231-5341

### Contributions to HopeWorks

HopeWorks is a 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions are very gratefully accepted.

## **Harm2Harmony:** Intervening in Elementary School Girls' Relational Aggression

*"Creating opportunities for girls to move from harmful to harmonious relationships"*



90 North Main Street  
West Hartford, CT 06107  
(860) 561-1175

E-mail hopeworks@snet.net  
www.hopeworkscentral.org

*Providing hope and help to  
young people and their families  
through counseling, education  
and community outreach*

## Relational Aggression Defined

1. Spreading rumors about each other
2. Verbal aggression and threats
3. Name calling or mean teasing
4. Leaving kids out
5. Creating intentional problems in close relationships
6. Enjoying other peer's misery
7. Physical assault



## Resulting Damage

1. Beginning patterns of cruelty
2. Unhappy shunned children
3. Dislike of school may cause academic problems
4. Lost trust in friendship leads to isolation and depression
5. **Violence can cause:**
  - a. Expulsion from school
  - b. Negative identity
  - c. Broken relationships
  - d. Loss of safety in schools

Relational aggression can derail girls' future hopes.

## Why Does This Happen?

Academic difficulties may lead girls to use social manipulation and defiance to regain a sense of personal power.

Stressed parents may model coercive control in their interactions with difficult-to-control daughters.

Adults often ignore or minimize relational bullying among girls.

Girls who are rejected by others increase their efforts to control in a desperate effort to regain status.

Girls who witness or experience abusive relationships at home may withdraw, have unpredictable outbursts of rage or act in other ways that cause rejection.

"Popular girls" often use relational aggression to bring down other girls who pose a real or potential threat to their social status.

## Proven Research Methods for Intervening with Elementary School Girls:

Provide opportunities to build positive relationships among girls in a variety of social settings.

Offer physical outlets that give girls appropriate ways to release energy and stress.

Engage young girls in activities designed to help others.

Provide academic support before girls experience school failure.

Teach girls negotiation and de-escalation strategies in conflict situations.

Intervene immediately when relational aggression occurs for maximum effect.

