



Cultivating Strong Girls: Library Programming That Builds Self- Esteem and Challenges Inequality



HELLO!

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1.

**What is the
Strong Girls
program?**



Topics Addressed:

- ▶ Beauty and body image
- ▶ Gender bias and inequality
- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Bullying and drama
- ▶ Social media



2.

**Why is this
program
necessary and
valuable?**



- According to the National Eating Disorders Association, by age 6 girls are already worrying about their weight or shape
- By age 17, 78% of girls are unhappy with their bodies (Teen Futures Media Network)
- According to the Dove Self Esteem Project, teens receive 5000 advertising messages a day and viewing magazines for only 1 hour lowered the self-esteem of more than 80% of girls
- Women suffer disproportionately from eating disorders, accounting for 90-95% of anorexia cases and 80% of bulimia cases (National Eating Disorders Association)



- One in five **ADOLESCENT** girls becomes the victim of physical and/or sexual violence in a dating relationship (feminist.com)
- 18.3% of women have survived a completed or attempted rape. Of that number, 12.3% were younger than age 12 and 29.9% were between 11 and 17 (feminist.com)

A persistent rape culture-societal practices that excuse or normalize violence against women, such as ads, jokes or song lyrics, contributes to the problem of ongoing violence against girls and women.

[25 Everyday Examples of Rape Culture](#)



- The current gender wage gap is 20% and if it continues to narrow at the same rate it's been, it will take another 44 years to close (Institute for Women's Policy Research)
- Women comprise a majority of the working poor (IWPR)
- Women have made dramatic gains in educational advancement but not in attaining leadership positions, so we now have twice as many women with associates, bachelors, master's PhD's or professional degrees stuck in low-wage female dominated jobs than we did in 1994 (IWPR)
- In 2016, the U.S. ranked 97th in the world for women's representation in government, dropping from 52nd in 1997 (Kliff and Oh, 2016)



- Worries about beauty, body image and weight contribute to lower self-image and self-esteem
- By age 6 or 7, only boys link brilliance to their own gender (Yong, 2017)
- Self-esteem building may be more difficult for girls due to societal norms and expectations
- Women feel pressured to be perfect. A study at Hewlett Packard showed that women only applied for promotions if they felt they met 100% of the qualifications, while men who met only 60% would apply (Kay and Shipman, 2014)
- According to Rachel Simmons, when girls fail, they are more likely to believe that it's due to lack of ability, whereas boys are more likely to believe it is due to more manageable factors (Time, 2015)



3.

How do you run
the program?



- Works best as a small group program, in order to facilitate discussion
- Program series of 6-8 sessions of one and a half to 2 hours each, or a club
- I have run for girls in grades 6-12 but the content can be tailored for older and younger

Sample itinerary for a 6 session program:

1. Current status of women; gender bias and inequality; beauty body image and media; introduction to self-esteem
2. Self-esteem; negative self-talk and messages; authentic self
3. Improving self-esteem continued
4. Friendships, cliques, drama
5. Healthy relationships; dating violence; rape culture; staying safe
6. Wrapping it up; social media; body language and presence

Some Resources:

- ▶ Books and workbooks
- ▶ Videos
- ▶ Worksheets
- ▶ Websites
- ▶ Discussion

[Dove Self-Esteem Project](#)

[Loveisrespect](#)

[Girls Guide to End Bullying](#)

Extension Activities:

- ▶ Crafts- Vision or "I Am" boards
- ▶ Reader's Theater using empowering scripts or have the group write their own
- ▶ Book discussions
- ▶ Movies
- ▶ Activism and charitable activities

["I AM" boards](#)

[All American Girls Professional Baseball League](#)



4.

Are you afraid?



“

The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.

Albert Einstein



THANKS!

Any questions?

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CREDITS

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

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