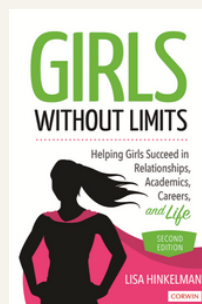# GIRLS WITHOUT LIMITS

Book Study Curriculum

A guide for schools to help girls succeed in relationships, academics, careers and life

Complete 13-session curriculum includes ready-to-copy materials and facilitator discussion guide

A WELCOME FROM THE AUTHOR: DR. LISA HINKELMAN

Hello there!

I am thrilled that you have picked up my book and are preparing to undertake a book study with your staff and colleagues. I am so proud of this second edition Girls Without Limits because it is a product of years of work and research with girls. The fact that it is a best-seller with Corwin Press and is serving as a guide to thousands of parents, caregivers, mentors, counselors, teachers and educational leaders across the country is truly a dream come true.

I have poured my heart and soul into working with, researching, counseling, educating and empowering girls for more than fifteen years - both as a professor of Counselor Education at The Ohio State University and as the Founder/CEO of Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX). ROX is a non-profit organization devoted to the health, safety, education and empowerment of girls (www.rulingourexperiences.org) and has impacted more than 30,000 girls across the country and leads the nation in producing original research centered on girls' lived-experiences.
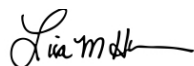
As career educators, we know that the world is harder now than it has ever been for teachers, counselors, administrators – and for girls. Schools are tasked with addressing the academic, social and emotional needs of students with few resources and increased scrutiny. All the while, students are experiencing the highest levels of interpersonal and mental health challenges in recent history.

At ROX, our focus is on developing a deep understanding of the issues facing girls and then using our research to effectively equip girls, and the adults who educate and support them, with the tools they need to reach their full potential. You are so instrumental in a girls' life. Your interactions with her can restrict or expand her ideas, options and opinions of herself. You can help her feel more or less capable and confident and your encouragement and reinforcement can help her see beyond her circumstances or situation.

My hope is that by reading this book and spending time with your colleagues discussing the concepts, ideas and case studies, you will be challenged to approach your work with girls with a new, empowering lens and develop hands-on, concrete strategies to implement immediately in your day-to-day interactions with girls.

Please reach out to our team if we can be an additional support for your conversations in any way. The ROX staff is available for programming, consultation, guest speaking and professional development and we can be reached at 614-488-8080 or at info@rulingourexperiences.com.

With sincere gratitude and appreciation,

Lisa Hinkelman, Ph.D.
Author, Girls Without Limits
Founder, Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX)

TIPS ON LEADING THE BOOK STUDY

As the book club facilitator think of yourself as the conversation starter not the person who has to be the expert on the book. You have the opportunity to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to respectfully share their opinions of the book with the group and to help encourage discussion of the concepts and ideas presented. You aren't required to know all of the answers, but you are the person who can help keep the conversation flowing and the ideas generating!

THE ROLE OF THE LEADER: TO FACILITATE THE CONVERSATION

1. Be prepared and ready for each group discussion. Ensure you've read the chapter(s) being discussed and reviewed the suggested talking points. You may want to add questions that aren't included in this guide or go in an entirely different direction. Go for it – these are just suggestions to get you started!

2. Create a comfortable space for sharing thoughts and ideas. You may want to set expectations at the first meeting of your club. Things you might think about or address at your first gathering might be:

   - Length of meeting time and meeting schedule. How many times do you want to gather and for how long each time?

   - Clarity around your role. You are here to help start the discussion and keep it moving, not to be the teacher or the expert.

   - How will the group agree to keep the participants' sensitive stories, opinions and contributions private/confidential? Sometimes providing a suggestion such as, *"What is said here stays here, but what is learned here leaves here"* can help everyone know that the conversation is not "secret", but that sharing details of personal stories or struggles outside of the group conversation is not cool.

   - Occasionally remind participants that all ideas, opinions and experiences shared during the meetings hold equal value and will be respected.

3. Keep the meeting on track as you are able and end the sessions on time. Setting up an expectation at the start shows all members that you respect their time and it will also ensure that participants regularly attend the meetings. If sessions regularly go over the scheduled time, attendance will likely drop off.

4. Manage the conversation and member participation. Ensure that each person is able to share their thoughts and opinions and that no member is dominating the conversation or remaining silent during the meetings. Tangents and personal story-telling/sharing anecdotes will happen, and while these conversations can add richness and dimension, sometimes, re-focusing the conversation can ensure everyone is part of the discussion.

5. Ask members to briefly give their opinion on the chapter/topic at the beginning of the meeting. If a member has been quiet throughout the previous sessions, consider starting a session by offering them a chance to share their thoughts or insights.

6. Model respectful communication for your group and intervene if a topic becomes heated or disrespectful. Civil discourse, our ability to discuss and disagree respectfully, is important for learning and it is our different opinions and our shared experiences that create the best learning environments.

GENERAL STRATEGIES AND TIPS: PROMOTE GREAT DISCUSSIONS

1. You do not have to feel pressured to agree, disagree or comment on every statement made by a reader.
   - Turn questions or topics back to the group by asking, "What do others think about Courtney's comment?"

2. Ask open ended questions.
   - Avoid yes/no, true/false or multiple choice questions. Say, "Share some of your thoughts on this week's reading" rather than "Did you like the reading this week?".

3. Ask follow up questions to deepen the breadth or depth of the conversation.
   - "Tell us more about …" or "Could you share an example …"

4. Make connections between members' comments and ideas.
   - Link group members' comments to each other and the questions. "Max, I noticed you were shaking your head in agreement when Kylie was speaking. Do you have a similar thought?"

5. Facilitate discussion rather than teach or lecture. By allowing other members in the group answer questions first, you will promote conversation and help everyone feel like their opinions matter.

6. As you promote a dialogue, you'll want to ensure that the participants are looking around at one another, not directing their comments to you as the "leader". You may have to model this for the group when you and/or others are talking.

7. Try to be comfortable with some amount of silence. Don't feel like you have to jump in if no one answers a question or a prompt immediately. Sometimes, people may need to think and process before they respond. As awkward as it may feel, part of being a good facilitator is being comfortable with silence.
   - If the silence feels like it is going on too long, the members may need you to clarify, expand upon or rephrase the question.

8. At the end of each meeting, determine when the next book study session will be held as well as which chapter(s) should be read in preparation.

STRATEGIES FOR STAYING ON TRACK: MANAGING ENGAGEMENT

Sometimes group members may talk too much or not enough. As the facilitator, you can help encourage conversation by helping guide the discussion, and at times, intervene if necessary.

The over-talker

- Cut in on a long-winded group member with, "That's an interesting point you just made. Did anyone else get the same impression or a different one?", "You've made some interesting points, Amy. Let's hear from another reader. Holly? What did you think?", or even, "Amy, I need to interrupt you for a second because I saw Holly trying to jump in."

The non-talker

- Engage silent readers by posing open-ended questions directly. But don't badger the members who really don't want to overtly participate. Some individuals learn by observing and taking in what others are saying rather than speaking themselves. Try asking, "What did you agree or disagree with in the chapter, David?"

- Some people speak a lot and others do not. It is not our job to force anyone to speak, they may be getting the benefit they desire by attending and listening. If somebody is fully engaged in the process but only chooses to speak occasionally, there's really no need to 'do' anything about it.

The tangent starter

- You may find that a member of the group easily gets off on tangents and can take the conversation into an entirely different direction than what was intended. There are times when this diversion can be helpful or productive, but there are times where the discussion can be negatively impacted by the tangent. If you notice this happening, you might say, "Let's get back to the end of chapter 4. What did you think at this point?" or "I have a question about the situation on page 125. What's really happening here?", or "Before we get too far down that path, let's try to wrap up this part first."

The insensitive person

- It's difficult to imagine a good discussion without some differing opinions or some level of disagreement. However, there are ways to express a difference of opinion in a constructive way that builds trust and openness within the group.

- If you feel that someone in your group is too vocal or insensitive in their disagreement with another member, consider taking the person aside and gently pointing out what you observed and/or how it impacted another member. You might say, "I noticed that when you were disagreeing with Tom's comments, he seemed to shut down and didn't speak up again for the entire session. Did you happen to notice that?"

<u>The interrupter</u>

- There is often an interrupter in a group discussion. This is a person who doesn't let others complete their thoughts or ideas before sharing their own. In being respectful to all group members, it is important to control interruptions by saying, "Hold that thought, Sheryl. We'll want to hear it again once Angie has finished."

<u>The expert</u>

- You may find that your group has an "expert" – a person who believes that they have all of the right answers and approaches to each topic or situation and states their position firmly and as though they come from a place of authority. Sometimes this person can intimidate or annoy the others in the group so you'll want to ensure that you reiterate that different experiences and different approaches work for various relationships and families and that we are all coming to these conversations to explore and learn.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK STUDY CURRICULUM

PREPARING FOR EACH CHAPTER: SELF-REFLECTIONS HANDOUTS

The self-reflection handouts are designed for the reader to complete alongside each chapter that is read. The leader should provide group members with copies of the Chapter Reflections for each chapter the group reads. Prior to reading the chapter, the reader should briefly consider each "*reflection statement*" and record their current views by marking an "*X*" somewhere along the Agree/Disagree continuum in the "*Before*" column. The reader should also briefly explain why they feel the way they do about the statement.

Once the reader finishes the chapter, they should then repeat this same self-reflection process in the "*After*" column, indicating where along the continuum their thinking is currently. This simple activity is designed encourage readers to purposely reflect on main concepts from each chapter and to concretely determine if and how reading the chapter may have impacted their views. These self-reflections may also be used to facilitate group discussion.

The later part of the self-reflection handout asks the readers to reflect on the same three question for each chapter. The group leader is also encouraged to use these questions each meeting to engage group members in discussion.

CHAPTER SELF-REFLECTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

SHARE COPIES OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS WITH PARTICIPANTS PRIOR TO READING THE ASSIGNED CHAPTER(S).

THERE IS ONE SELF-REFLECTION FOR EACH OF THE THIRTEEN CHAPTERS IN THE BOOK.

CHAPTER 1 SELF-REFLECTION

What's Really Going on for Girls, and How Can We Help Them?

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 1	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 1
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	What girls need most to be successful is confidence.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Girls make problems in their lives much worse than they need to be. Their challenges are issues that arise by their own negative choices.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Listening to girls' experiences is more important than providing advice and guidance.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
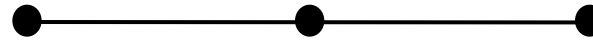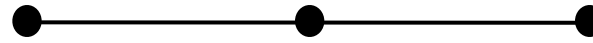
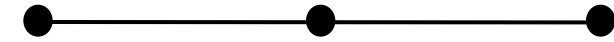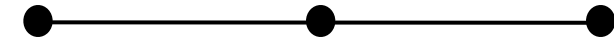| My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 2 SELF-REFLECTION

Streaks, Likes, Followers, and Friends: The Impact of Social Media in Girls' Lives

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 1	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 1
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Social media is not real life.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Girls care too much about what happens on social media.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Setting strong limits and restricting access to social media is necessary to protect girls from the digital challenges and dangers they may face.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 3 SELF-REFLECTION

Being a Girl Today Is Hard: Gender Roles, Body Image, and Confidence

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 2	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 2
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	I think both boys and girls receive similar messages about their abilities, value, aspirations and accomplishments.	Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	When in the presence of girls that are important in my life, I am aware of my comments and behaviors around food, eating body size and shape.	Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	The way that a girl feels about her *appearance* is a strong predictor of how she feels about *herself.*	Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 4 SELF-REFLECTION

Mean Girls: Dealing With Drama and Relationships

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 3	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 3
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	Girl drama is just girls being girls.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	As girls mature, they will eventually grow out of girl bullying behavior.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	I feel confident that I know strategies I can use to help girls more effectively communicate with one another.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 5 SELF-REFLECTION

Relationships, Dating, and Coercion: Developing Healthy Relationships in an Age of Sexting, Swiping, and Snapping

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 4	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 4
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	Adolescent dating relationships aren't particularly serious or important.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	I have an understanding of the dating pressures girls are experiencing.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?	Girls are more likely to engage in healthy dating relationships if parents/ guardians set an age restriction for dating.	Strongly Disagree — Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 6 SELF-REFLECTION

"Lighten Up," "I Was Just Joking," "Boys Will Be Boys," and Other Stuff Girls Hear:
Addressing Disrespect and Sexual Harassment

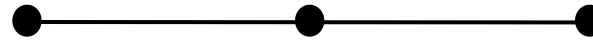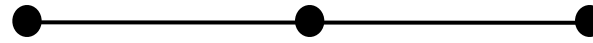| Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 1	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 1
Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?	I agree with the statement "boys will be boys."	Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?	Because of movements like #MeToo, there is a clear understanding of sexual harassment among this generation of girls.	Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?	Conversations about sexual harassment should begin in high school.	Strongly Disagree ———●———●———●——— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 7 SELF-REFLECTION

Looking Out for the Girls: Identifying and Preventing Sexual Violence

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 5	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 5
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	Sexual violence is not likely to happen in my family, school or community.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	I would know what to say or how to react if a girl disclosed to me that she has been the victim of a sexual violence.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	Girls who wear sexy or revealing clothes are asking for trouble.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 8 SELF-REFLECTION

The Pressure to Be Perfect: Stress and Coping in an Age of Perfectionism and Helicopter Parents

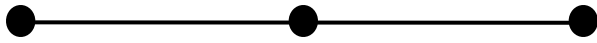| Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 1	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 1
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Perfectionism is a precursor for success.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Failure inhibits girls' confidence.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?	Girls with 4.0 and higher GPA's are generally more confident than girls with lover GPA's.	Strongly Disagree ———— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 9 SELF-REFLECTION

Academic or Instagram Influencer? Why Girls Feel They Have to Choose

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 6	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 6
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	It's difficult for me to understand why girls might be embarrassed to be smart.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	Society places more value on girls' appearance than girls' intelligence.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	There are natural, unchangeable differences between boys' and girls' abilities to learn certain things.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 10 SELF-REFLECTION

What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up? How Stereotypes Are Holding Girls Back

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 7	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 7
Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?	Girls don't choose careers in science and math because they generally aren't interested in these subjects.	Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?	Most girls receive ample career investigation and planning education and support.	Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?	Self-esteem has little to no actual impact on a girl's college and career choices.	Strongly Disagree ●————————●————————● Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 11 SELF-REFLECTION

CEO's, Politicians, and Superintendents: But Where Are All the Female Leaders?

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 8	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 8
●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	The most effective female leaders are those who demonstrate more masculine traits and characteristics.	●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?
●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	Fostering leadership in girls requires a different approach than it does for boys.	●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?
●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?	Most girls can easily identify the leadership traits that they possess.	●————————●————————● Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree Why?
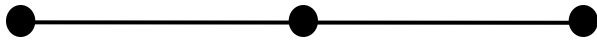
My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was:	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:
	page #: _____	

CHAPTER 12 SELF-REFLECTION

What Girls Want

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 9	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 9
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	Girls base their relationships with adults on the effectiveness/openness of the communication.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	It is helpful to compare our experiences to the issues currently facing girls as this can help create a sense of understanding.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?	Saying "I know how you feel" is a good way to respond when a girl shares something that is really troubling her.	Strongly Disagree ———————— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/adjustments in my work/behavior:

CHAPTER 13 SELF-REFLECTION

What Girls Need

Complete BEFORE you read Chapter 10	Reflection Statement	Complete AFTER you read Chapter 10
Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?	Adults who have "been there before" have the most expertise on girls' lives and should help girls by giving them advice.	Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?	By telling girls they are smart, brave, strong, and beautiful, we are boosting their self-esteem and self-confidence.	Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?
Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?	When talking with girls, I am aware of the power differentiation between us and how it impacts our communication.	Strongly Disagree ————●———— Strongly Agree Why?

My top takeaways from this chapter:	The most compelling statement/point in this chapter was: page #: _____	I am considering making the following changes/ adjustments in my work/behavior:

LEADER GUIDE BY CHAPTER

THIS SECTION OF THE CURRICULUM WILL HELP THE GROUP LEADER REINFORCE THE MAIN IDEAS FOR EACH CHAPTER.

THIS GUIDE ALSO PROVIDES THE GROUP LEADER WITH ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS THEY MAY CHOOSE TO

SECOND
EDITION

LISA HINKELMAN

CORWIN

LEADER GUIDE BY CHAPTER

CHAPTER 1: WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON FOR GIRLS, AND HOW CAN WE HELP THEM?

MAIN IDEAS:

- Support, information, and mutual respect for girls

- The future for girls is bright, hopeful and full of promise

- Focus on what we can do to connect with, care for, motivate and support girls

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Dr. Hinkelman noted that a constant theme in the research is that girls feel that adults don't understand what they are going through which creates a barrier to communication and connection. Do you agree or disagree? What challenges do you observe in adult-girl communication interactions? What are your personal challenges in communicating with and connecting with girls?

Based on the suggestions given in the chapter, what is something you are actively going to do to offer support to girls? What is something that can happen school-wide to more effectively encourage and support girls?

CHAPTER 2: STREAKS, LIKES, FOLLOWERS, AND FRIENDS: THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN GIRLS' LIVES

MAIN IDEAS:

- How girls are engaging with technology and social media

- How technology and social media impacts girls' experiences

- Adults' perceptions of social media and social media/tech biases

- The ways in which adults talk about tech/social media can positively or negatively impact our relationships with girls

- Effective strategies for keeping girls safe online

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

In what ways do you see your female students being challenged by social media and technology? Based on the suggestions provided in this chapter, what skills do your female students need to help them better navigate these challenges? How can you, in your professional role, support girls through these challenges?

What are the strategies being used in your school or district to educate students about technology and social media? What are the rules and policies surrounding technology usage in your building and or district? How

might you be thinking differently about these educational strategies, rules and policies after reading this chapter? Is there room for improvement in these areas and if so, in what ways can you advocate for girls?

CHAPTER 3: BEING A GIRL TODAY IS HARD: GENDER ROLES, BODY IMAGE, AND CONFIDENCE

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- The impact of valuing internal qualities and characteristics over external qualities and characteristics

- Media influence on girls identity formation and confidence

- How confidence and body image are connected

- How body insecurity impacts girls' self-esteem

- The early and defining influence of gender roles and expectations

- We are ALL role models

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

The text states, "Early in life, we begin to place value on certain traits or specific characteristics that we associate with boys and girls, and we may unconsciously impose rules or limits based on what is generally considered acceptable for either gender. How do these early impressions or expectations translate into our ongoing thoughts about what is right for girls and boys? " Think about your responses to the "Who Does What?" activity. How do you see this influencing the lives of girls? How can schools reinforce or refute these concepts?

On the idea of emphasizing and complementing internal rather than external traits, the book explains that, "It is much easier to comment on these factors; however, in doing so we reinforce the value placed on external factors and/or looks." What do you think of this statement? Do you see examples of this happen at school? Reflect on how you give compliments to others. Is there a different between how you compliment males vs. females?

CHAPTER 4: MEAN GIRLS: DEALING WITH DRAMA AND RELATIONSHIPS

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- Understanding girl "drama" and why girls are mean to one another

- Defining relational aggression and understanding its impact

- How adults can contribute to the problem or reinforce the behavior

- Understanding and teaching different communication styles: passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, assertive

- Teaching healthy communication and using "I" Statements

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

Relational aggression is girl bullying. It is defined as the way in which girls use their relationships with one another to be mean, manipulative, exclusionary and hostile. What examples of relational aggression have you seen and how does it impact the learning of your students?

Girls are watching us to see how we manage conflict and difficulties in life. How do you communicate in your own life, especially when things get tough? How can we help girls establish healthy patterns of communication? What can we as adults do to help girls deal with these issues?

CHAPTER 5: RELATIONSHIPS, DATING, AND COERCION: DEVELOPING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS IN AN AGE OF SEXTING, SWIPING, AND SNAPPING

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- The significance of dating relationships for adolescent girls
- Identifying and educating girls on healthy vs. unhealthy relationships
- Understanding the pressures girls are experiencing in their dating relationships
- Teaching girls skills to effectively manage their relationships
- How to talk to girls about their relationships experiences

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

We know that it can be hard for adults to understand the importance that girls place on dating and relationships and we may look at these early relationships as silly or juvenile. While it can be difficult for us to relate to what girls are going through from an adult perspective, we are encouraged to avoid giving advice and instead relate to girls around the feelings of being hurt betrayed, embarrassed or sad. How can we more effectively understand and validate the perceptions and true emotions of the girls we work with?

What role do educators have in fostering healthy, safe and respectful relationships among students?

CHAPTER 6: "LIGHTEN UP," "I WAS JUST JOKING," "BOYS WILL BE BOYS," AND OTHER STUFF GIRLS HEAR: ADDRESSING DISRESPECT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- How to identify and address gender-based disrespect
- Defining sexual-harassment and understanding girls' experiences with sexual-harassment

- Breaking down the idea that "girls are asking for it"

- How to help girls identify and address sexual-harassment

- Educators' legal and ethical responsibilities for addressing sexual-harassment

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

This chapter explored the Continuum of Disrespect, Aggression, and Violence Toward Girls. The author states, *"One can see how some of the more subtle gender-based disrespect can lead to attitudes that are more accepting of language and behavior that are both sexual and unwanted (see Figure 6.1). Sexual harassment is more egregious and more harmful than the disrespectful comments that were previously discussed and left unchecked, it can have lasting impacts on the victim. Girls who experience frequent sexual harassment at school are less likely to want to attend school, less likely to feel safe at school, and more likely to develop social, emotional, and mental health issues (American Association of University Women Educational Foundation [AAUW], 2011)."* Discuss your reactions to the Continuum and this passage of the book. How are you noticing or thinking about gender-based disrespect differently? What role can you play in identifying and calling out instances of gender-based disrespect?

What are your legal and ethical responsibilities for ensure a safe and supportive learning environment free of gender-based disrespect and sexual harassment?

CHAPTER 7: LOOKING OUT FOR GIRLS: IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- Defining sexual-violence and how it impacts girls

- Understanding the impact of victim blame

- How to talk with girls who have experienced sexual violence

- What works in preventing sexual violence

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

Chapter 7 broaches the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable topic or conversation of sexual violence. Because many of us may be uncomfortable with this topic it may be easier for us to believe that these things don't happen in our communities or schools, that it only happens to "those girls," or perhaps we avoid the conversation all together. How has reading this chapter challenged your perceptions of what sexual violence is and who experiences it?

When you consider the concept of victim blame, can you think of examples of victim blame that you have observed in your community, in the media or in your own life?

How can schools create cultures where girls feel safe to share their experiences? What resources/referrals are available in your school or community to support girls who have experienced sexual violence?

CHAPTER 8: THE PRESSURE TO BE PERFECT: STRESS AND COPING IN AN AGE OF PERFECTIONISM AND HELICOPTER PARENTS

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- Understanding and identifying perfectionism

- How adults can contribute to student perfectionism

- The difference between stress, anxiety and anxiety disorders

- How to encourage resiliency and coping skills

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

This chapter states, *"Compared with girls with lower GPAs, high-achieving girls are less likely to think ghat they are smart enough for there dream job and less likely to speak their mind or disagree with others because they want to be liked."* Share your reactions to this statement. What do you notice or observe with regard to your higher achieving female students? How might you be thinking about them differently?

CHAPTER 9: ACADEMIC OR INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER? WHY GIRLS FEEL THEY HAVE TO CHOOSE

<u>MAIN IDEAS:</u>

- Why girls shy away from being viewed as smart

- Gendered expectations by school subject

- Nature vs. nurture and brain plasticity

- Promoting girls' academic achievement

<u>OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:</u>

This chapter explores the role of nurture, over nature, in helping shape how girls think and live. How have girls experienced the influences of nature and nurture in their own lives? Which has had a greater impact on their subject interests and careers?

What takeaway has this chapter given you about the plasticity of the brain and the importance of nurture in a girl's development? How can schools work to enhance girls' exposures and experiences?

Think of the advantages of using specific feedback over general feedback to promote girls' academic achievement. How and to what degree might this impact the self-concepts and self-perceptions for girls? How can you use specific and prescriptive feedback in your work with girls?

CHAPTER 10: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP? HOW STEREOTYPES ARE HOLDING GIRLS BACK

MAIN IDEAS:

- Importance of career in our adult identity formation
- Gender stereotypes in careers and family roles can impact decision-making
- How self-concept affects career decisions
- Strategies for promoting career development for girls

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

At ages 6 - 8, kids are beginning to understand who does what types of work and thus gender assignment begins for specific jobs. What would happen if at this time we expose kids to a variety of genders amongst various jobs? What could the impact be on individual girls and on society?

What do girls see related to careers and gender in your school environment? How can schools consciously expose students to a both men and women within various occupations? What role can guest speakers, career days and other career exposure activities have for students?

Prestige and power as it relates to gender is something kids start to understand around ages 9 - 13. How might we challenge girls' perceptions that only boys can hold big, powerful and high-paying jobs?

 What actions can we take to foster more career development and planning in general?

CHAPTER 11: CEOS, POLITICIANS, AND SUPERINTENDENTS: BUT WHERE ARE ALL THE FEMALE LEADERS?

MAIN IDEAS:

- Expanding the definition of leadership and leadership qualities.
- Girls need the opportunity to develop the traits and characteristics associated with various types of leadership

- How to prepare girls for leadership

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Leadership looks different in different environments and most students have the potential to develop some leadership traits and abilities. What do you think holds girls back from being leaders? How do you see girls encouraged to be leaders at your school? What are the barriers to girls taking on leadership positions?

The author highlighted that *"women constitute approximately 85% of K–12 teachers across the country, but when it comes to who is actually running the school districts, only around 15% of school superintendents national are women (AAUW, 2016)."* Think about your school and district – are women represented at the highest levels of leadership? When you think about women in leadership positions within your school or district, how would others characterize her leadership abilities? What do staff, parents and community members say about her in her role? What messages might your female students internalizing about female leaders based on these reflections?

CHAPTER 12: WHAT GIRLS WANT

MAIN IDEAS:

- Our communication skills impact our ability to connect with others
- Girls want their problems to be taken seriously and their opinions to be valued
- Girls want and need supportive adults in their lives

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Have you ever had someone tell you, "I know how you feel ..." and then proceed to tell you their own story? For many of us, that can make us feel devalued and unheard. When girls come to us with challenges and frustrations what are some possible replacements to the response "I know how you feel…"?

Take into consideration some of the tips from this chapter and apply them to this scenario: *One of your students comes to you in tears. She tells you that a bunch of girls made a fake Instagram account in her name complete with embarrassing photos, photoshopped text exchanges and nasty and untrue rumors.* What could you say to her? What resources could you connect her with at school or in the community to assist in this situation?

CHAPTER 13: WHAT GIRLS NEED

MAIN IDEAS:

- How to create opportunities for open communication, meaningful experiences, and connection to people who support the growth and development of girls.
- Closing thoughts, ideas and reflections.

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

This chapter focused on what girls need from the adults in their lives. Which of these needs do you still struggle with the most? Why?

What has changed in your interactions with female students through the course of reading this book?

How will/have you instilled optimism and hope in the girls in your life?

How can your school work to create more supportive, empowering environments for your female students?

How can you share these learnings with the rest of your staff?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: GENERAL FAQ'S

Q: Do we have to spend an entire 13 weeks on the book study? We don't have that much time!

 A: We think discussion a chapter per week is ideal because it provides the opportunity to read, digest, reflect and act on the various concepts in the book. We also recognize that this amount of time might not be feasible for your group. In this case, a recommended alternative is to group the chapters resulting in a six-week book study. Below we have provided a six-week format that groups companion chapters together. We strongly recommend using the outlined format if pairing down the timing of your study. Grouping chapters will make your discussion sessions longer, so be sure to schedule an adequate amount of time to discuss the chapters. The goal is to get the group reading, talking and sharing -- use the format and setting that works best for your team!

> **Six-week format:**
>
> Week 1: Chapters 1-3
>
> Week 2: Chapters 4-5
>
> Week 3: Chapters 5-7
>
> Week 4: Chapters 8-9
>
> Week 5: Chapters 10-11
>
> Week 6: Chapters 12-13

Q: What programs can we provide to our girls that address the issues presented in 'Girls Without Limits'?

A: We're so glad you asked! The author of this book, Dr. Lisa Hinkelman, is also the founder of a girl-serving non-profit organization called Ruling Our eXperiences (ROX). ROX trains and licenses school counselors, social workers and educators to deliver a 20-week evidence-based program in schools, conducts research with girls and works with schools to help cultivate safe and supportive learning environments for girls. You can find more information about ROX and the programs and services offered at the end of this manual or on our website at www.rulingourexperiences.org.

Q: How can we engage parents and caregivers in this discussion and provide them opportunities to learn more about these issues?

A: Parents, caregivers and mentors are critical to the education of girls and it is desirable to have parents reinforce the messages and concepts that are being addressed at school. There is a similar companion book discussion guide for '*Girls Without Limits'* that is designed specifically for parents, caregivers and mentors. With a similar format, the discussion guide can be used by Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations (PTA/PTO), parent booster organizations, mentors, grandparents, coaches, etc. If participants have a girl in their life, they will benefit from participating in the book club. You can access this book study on the ROX website at www.rulingourexperiences.org or by emailing info@rulingourexperiences.com.

Q: Can Dr. Hinkelman come to our school to meet with our book club, school staff or parents?

A: Absolutely! Lisa travels extensively throughout the country to deliver professional development workshops, keynote addresses and parent symposiums on a variety of topics impacting girls. You can access more information on booking Lisa for your school, professional association or conference by emailing info@rulingourexperiences.com or by calling 614-488-8080.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: CONTINUING EDUCATION

This educator book study has been developed for use by school professionals* and may be used for continuing education units for license renewal based upon the standards within your state and district. Because each state and institutional requirements vary, it is important that you check with your licensing agency and local professional development committee to seek approval for using your book study participation as a part of your continuing education plan. We've included some general information and commonly asked questions to get you started in the process.

*For those professionals who are counselors or social workers licensed in Ohio, we are pleased to be able to offer 12.5 CEUs for reading *Girls Without Limits: Helping Girls Succeed in Relationships, Academics, Careers, and Life.* Email info@rulingourexperiences.com to complete the required documentation.

Q: Whom should I contact within my building or district to make this book study eligible for CEUs?

A: Depending on the protocol within your district, you may need to contact a member of the LPDC (local professional development committee), your district administration or your licensing agency. They should be able to assist you in determining how to apply for approval for your professional development activities. If you

are a part of a private school or charter school, you will need to contact your state's department of education to see how your group could receive credit.

Q: Who determines how many CEUs will be awarded?

A: This will vary from district to district and will need to be a local decision. Some local professional development committees have a chart that they follow to determine the number of CEUs possible. Some LPDCs will only give CEU credit for time spent in discussion; others will give credit for discussion and the amount of time spent reading the book. It is anticipated that reading the book and participating in the full discussion would be approximately 20 hours of engagement.

Q: What documentation should be provided in order to obtain the CEUs for book study participants?

A: You should check with your local committee to determine the specifics of what you need to submit for approval. The facilitator could be asked to turn in weekly sign-in sheets to document each participant's attendance at each discussion as well as a copy of the complete book study curriculum. Participants may be asked to log how many hours they spent reading and participating in the discussion portion. Ensure in advance the requirements of your local decision-making body so you can adequately document what they require for CEU credit.

Q: Ultimately, whose job is it to make sure that CEUs are granted through this book study?

A: It is important for the book study group leader to communicate and work with the LPDC to set up the requirements for CEU attainment. The role of the LPDC is to see if it matches their understanding of what the state will allow to have CEUs. The facilitator will need to find out from the LPDC what documentation will be required for participants to earn credit. The book study group leader will also need to clearly communicate to book study participants what they need to document in order to earn credit. If the leader needs to document anything for the LPDC as well, it is important that he or she also do this.