



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Girls Incorporated of Northwest Oregon Provides Powerful Tool for Schools to Effectively Combat Girl-on-Girl Violence

PORTLAND, Ore.—September 27, 2007—Girls Inc. of Northwest Oregon®, the premier provider of school-based empowerment programs, assertiveness education, and community advocacy for girl-affirming policies and practices, today announced that its Allies in Action program has empowered more than 4,000 girls in the Portland metro area and serves girls nationwide to recognize and overcome relational aggression, otherwise known as mean girl behavior.

When Girl Power Hurts: Relational Aggression

More than 160,000 girls and young women nationwide miss school every day just to avoid the mean behavior of other girls.¹ Countless other girls go to school but are so distracted and afraid that it's impossible for them to learn. According to Annette Klinefelter, founder and Executive Director of Girls Inc. of NW Oregon and the primary author of the Allies in Action curriculum, "Female friendships can be among the most intense, meaningful, and satisfying relationships for girls and young women. But as girls explore their power, confidence, and self-esteem, they often use those relationships to inflict harm. Historically, this behavior has been ignored or rationalized as 'girls being girls.' Today, we recognize it as relational aggression and acknowledge its significant impact on girls' confidence and achievement."

Empowering Girls to Create Change

Allies in Action is a series of workshops, given through schools or other organizations, that teaches girls how to effectively navigate social situations and conflict. Allies in Action works with girls to identify relationally aggressive behaviors and their causes and demonstrates how these behaviors can be curbed through personal empowerment, effective communication, and conflict resolution.

Evaluation data shows that schools and organizations using Allies in Action realize:

- Stronger relationships between girls
- Reduced aggressive, hurtful and violent behavior
- Improved achievement and attendance
- Boosts in girls confidence and self-esteem
- 80% increase in attendance
- 75% of frequent "girl fighters" are violence free

About Girls Inc. of Northwest Oregon

Girls Incorporated of Northwest Oregon®, the premier provider of school-based empowerment programs, assertiveness education, and community advocacy for girl-affirming policies and practices, helps all girls to realize their potential and exercise their rights, and inspires them to be strong, smart, and bold. Girls Incorporated of Northwest Oregon serves all girls particularly those who face intergenerational poverty, juvenile crime, substance abuse, and school failure. 85% of our girls live in poverty. 50% of our girls are ethnic minorities. 75% have been impacted by family violence.

About Allies in Action

Allies in Action was created and is delivered by Girls Inc. of NW Oregon and is the only curriculum of its kind in the country. Created in 1998 by Girls Inc of NW Oregon, Allies in Action has been used successfully across the country. Girls Inc of NW Oregon has trained individual programs, entire school districts, Boys & Girls Clubs, and other organizations to implement the program. The Allies in Action curriculum and trainings are available for Girls Inc. affiliates, schools, and organizations serving girls across the country.

¹ National Educational Association, 2000

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Girls Inc. of NW Oregon

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