What is Relational Aggression?

We are all familiar with bullying in the school system. Well, there is a more covert form of bullying taking place at school and it is usually between females. Relational Aggression is a more subtle form of aggression where individuals will use relationships to damage and manipulate others.

Girls are more likely to engage in rumors, gossip, and social exclusion in order to inflict harm and manipulate peers.

**Have You Heard?**

For example, a girl who is relational aggressive will begin getting her friends to ignore and exclude a particular student. This same relational aggressive girl will also insist on her friends humiliating the other child, ridiculing by name-calling, and spreading rumors.

- Youth and Center Resource Center, Inc.

Middle school is usually the peak period to see relational aggression. Now is the time for us all to be in the know about what is going on with our children at school. Being aware of such issues is important because it opens up the line of communication between parent and child at home.

**Tips for Parents**

- Involve girls in activities outside of the school for exposure to different types of people.

- Encourage relationships between adults and child that focus on being appreciative of who they are as a person.

- Listen to your child and do not downplay the situation.

- Teach and model kindness.

- Talk about both sides of the story. Many times you will hear about your child being a victim, but never talk about being the aggressor.

- If your child is caught in the middle, discuss how she can take the high road and not take part in the aggression.

**Helpful Websites:**

- www.hopehouseonline.org
- www.relationalaggression.com
- www.namesdohurt.com
- www.tolerance.org/parents

**Please Contact:**

Kristen Meek
School Counselor
Oakridge Middle School
803-631-8048