

# KIND

M A G A Z I N E

## THE FACTS:

THE TRUTH BEHIND GIRL  
AGAINST GIRL CRIME

## ASHELY HARRIS

CRAVE HEALTH

THESE  
ARE  
YOUR  
STORIES

KIND MAGAZINE vol.2



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**KIND MAGAZINE** is an online publication dedicated to the telling of YOUR stories. Our hope is that by sharing a variety of females' experiences as the "victims" and the "aggressors", we may gain a better understanding of why females have decided to target each other, rather than support each other. Hopefully by submitting your own story and by reading the experiences of others, you will realize that this is a universal issue and that we ALL go through these experiences at some point. Kind Magazine is not designed to point fingers or make accusations that will fuel the cycle we are trying to break, rather, Kind Magazine is an opportunity to recall your experiences and how they have affected you personally. We sincerely hope that this magazine brings awareness, clarity, and hope to millions of females across the nation. Enjoy!



# THE FACTS:

*"And they have this book, this "Burn Book" where they write mean things about girls in our grade."*

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Just like the cast of "Mean Girls," girls today focus much more on who's the most popular, the prettiest and the head of her clique.

Bullying comes in all shapes and forms. For males it's about pushing, shoving and hitting. But in the girl world, it's much more dangerous than that. It's gossiping, spreading rumors, social exclusion along with the hair pulling, pushing and shoving.

For most teenage girls competing with other girls is more important than winning the attention of a love interest. In the past 5 years the increase of girl bullying has become so alarming that it's caught the attention of teachers, administrators, news channels as well as girls near and far.

According to the National Youth Violence Prevention Center, almost 30 percent of youth in the United States, that's over 5.7 million, estimated to be involved in the act of bullying. Bullying amongst girls reveals very startling statistics; 43%

of girls fear harassment in the bathroom and yet statistics reveal that only 15% actually tell someone they are being bullied.

Harvey S. Firestone said, "Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life, but define yourself."

With the rise of a YouTube Generation, bullying 'how-to's' are becoming more accessible. Now, instead of hiding the fact that one is a bully, putting it on YouTube makes one a more credible bully, bringing this issue more and more into the light. By putting the fight online, it's as if they're trying to make themselves famous.

In March 2008 one of the most brutal girl-against-girl attacks was video taped and YouTube'd for the entire world to see. After being lured into a friend's home in Lakeland, Fl., 16-year old Victoria Lindsay was brutally attacked by six of her girl peers, while two boys stood guard, taping the entire event.

Catching the attention of the ABC, Fox News and even Dr. Phil, this event helped coin a new term 'cyber-bullying.' The term is used to describe anything from menacing emails to showcasing physical torment on a video site. Cyber-bullying affects 48% of teens between the ages of 11 and 18 years old. The rise of the Internet has led way for appalling acts of violence and social cruelty especially among young girls.

Even college campuses were directly affected by "cyber-bullying" last year with the increased popularity of JuicyCampus.com. JuicyCampus.com was a website where students posted mean words about others, anonymously. Topics such as "Top Ten Ugliest Girls at School" or "What Girls Need Liposuction?" were the standard topics of discussion, and boy were they discussed. The site became a hub for hateful words and thousands of students participated. Because of the brutal nature of the site and the immense hurt the site created, it was thankfully taken off the Internet and banned from college campuses.

"Bullying has become more aggressive," said Kind Campaign President, Lauren Parsekian. "Girls making videos, moms getting involved and female celebrity feuds (you never hear about male celebrity feuds)... it all has to stop."

The difference between bullying that occurs between boys and bullying between girls is quite extreme. While boys are looking to appear 'macho' girls are looking to get ahead in the race for Queen Bee. With that comes the idea of social exclusion. Best described as the situation where certain groups or friends exclude others based on their popularity ranking and differenc-

es. This practice has led psychologists wondering why and what they can do to fix it.

"It's a problem that we see quite often, and it typically leads to other mental problems down the line," said Pepperdine Marriage and Family Therapist Robert Scholz.

In July 2008, Jesse Logan sent a picture text message to her boyfriend. When they broke up, he sent the pictures to hundreds of his closest peers. Three days later she hung herself because the social exclusion she was feeling became too much.

This is where the Kind Campaign comes in. "This is about females being kind to each other, yes. However, it becomes so much more than that when you look at the big picture," said Lauren



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Parsekian. "I think a lot of the world's problems are due to a lack of human connection and respect for your neighbor. In order to make the world a better place we must change ourselves as individuals and it starts with being kind."

At the end of the day, it comes down to learning how to be kind. It's about understanding that words are sometimes more painful than actual fighting and that there is more to life than the

race for popularity. Until our generation understands that fact, our culture will continue this 'Mean Girl' trend.

"Calling somebody fat won't make you any skinnier. Calling someone stupid doesn't make you any smarter. And ruining lives definitely didn't make me any happier. All you can do in life is try to solve the problem in front of you." – Cady Heron, *Mean Girls*.

Written By: **Kristen Englert, age 22**

## Crave Health



When I was asked to write for Kind Campaign, I was thrilled, because I have seen girl-against-girl crime from several different angles, and each one is devastating. I'm a 24 year old woman that has experienced gossip behind my back, rumors and even being targeted in sports games – seriously, I have a broken finger to this day. I have been shut out of "groups", made fun of for being too smart, too dumb, for not wearing the right label or going to the right party. This kind of hatred that is thrown around amongst us girls happens all across the country, in California, Washington, Tennessee and every other state I've spent time in. I see it happen in generations below me with my 18 year old sister, and many teary phone calls about girls' words and actions toward her that break her down constantly. I also have the unique view to see it in generations above me because of my profession as a registered dietitian, I specialize in the field of addiction and eating disorders. I have seen women in their 60's in my office, still struggling with an eating disorder, telling me in tears about the day in 7th grade when another girl called her fat. I have experienced this mean

behavior as the victim, and now witness the horrible consequences of those actions by women of all ages. Having been in both positions, personal and professional, I can say with expert opinion, that girl-against-girl crime is a silent epidemic in our country.

Remember the saying, "sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me"? Yeah, that was a lie. Let me tell you the story of one of my clients, we'll call her Lindsey, and how words not only hurt her, but caused her to begin hurting herself. The first time I saw Lindsey she was a 16 year old freshman in high school, good student, cheerleader, and drastically underweight. She had come to see me after her doctor learned that she hadn't started her period and had been dropping weight recently. Her parents had noticed her eating habits change and were beginning to be concerned there was something bigger going on. Sure enough, Lindsey had been restricting her food intake and over exercising, stating that she was "fat" and very unhappy with her body. Lindsey was suffering from Anorexia Nervosa and Body Dysmorphic Disorder, a type of delusional mirror effect that causes the person to see something completely different in the mirror than what you or I would see. She had lost bone density and was on the verge of osteoporosis, began losing her hair, had terrible stomach pain and digestion, and each time she came into my office her face looked more pale and hollow. Over the next 6 months I worked with her and her family to bring her weight up and reset her body functions to avoid permanent damage. Lindsey was hospitalized, relapsed several times, and still struggles in recovery to this day. We won't know how her repro-



ductive system was affected until she attempts to have children, but the chances are slim. In that first appointment, I asked Lindsey what caused her to first see her body in this way, and to start sabotaging her health through harmful behaviors. She told me that at cheer camp, she and the girls were ordering uniforms, and when she had ordered a Medium, several girls decided to point out how horrible it must be not to be able to fit into a Small or Extra Small. So, embarrassed and now made to feel disgusted with her body, she ordered an extra small, with the intention to make herself fit into it. She fit into it alright, and almost lost her life because of it. All it takes is one comment. One harsh, rude comment from a girl that is most likely struggling with her own self-confidence, which starts a dangerous fire inside of another girl, and in some cases can lead to serious life-threatening situations like Lindsey's. I have seen similar stories happen with young girls turning to drugs or alcohol, and other harmful behaviors.

As Kind Campaign says, girls have come to "accept" this type of behavior almost as a "right of passage" into adulthood, something that is supposed to make us stronger women. That is absurd, and not all women are lucky enough, or

strong enough to make it through this right of passage with just a few bumps and bruises. As a dietitian I am on the front lines to pick up the mess other girls are responsible for by slinging harsh words or actions towards each other, and it is my responsibility to be a positive role model for women of all ages, whether I'm sitting in my office as an RD, or going out to dinner with my girlfriends as a normal 24 year old woman. The words you say, faces you make and the reactions you have, represent you and your character. Choose to be a role model, no matter what your age, for all the women around you. Choose to BE KIND.

Ashley Harris is a nationally registered and state certified dietitian in Seattle, Washington. She is a Nutritional Science graduate from Pepperdine University and completed her supervised practice residency at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee. She has a private practice, Crave Health, in Kirkland, WA and specializes in adolescent and teen health. Prior to her private practice she was the head dietitian at a private treatment center for addiction and eating disorders in Washington.

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## HOW TO: SEND US YOUR STORY

Please submit your story to [kindmag@kindcampaign.com](mailto:kindmag@kindcampaign.com). You can write about a specific experience you've had, how you feel about the issues...anything! There are only a couple requirements:

**(1) Tell the truth.**

**(2) It is imperative that you leave out the actual names of the people within your story. Again, this is not about pointing fingers or calling people out.**

**(3) Do not talk badly about the people in your story. Honestly recall your experience and how it made you feel but do not defame the people within your story. (ex. 'I hate her, and she is such a horrible person for doing that.')**

**(4) You may leave yourself "anonymous" or include your name and age at the end of your story.**

Kind Campaign understands that there are many sides to every story. Whether you have been the "victim" or the "aggressor", sharing your experience will offer healing, understanding and awareness to females across the nation. The truth is, we have ALL been mean and we have ALL been picked on, so Kind Campaign and Kind Magazine are encouragements for us ALL to be more kind.



We would like to thank you in advance for sharing your experience. We know that it is emotionally difficult to recall these experiences. It takes courage. Know that Kind Campaign, along with millions of females appreciate it very much.

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# POETIC *PERSPECTIVE*

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I wonder if they'll listen  
I wonder if they'll care  
And when I really need them  
Will they be there?

When I fall down again  
And embarrass myself  
Will they even be there  
Really just to help?

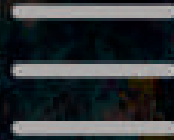
What are friends anymore?  
A status symbol?  
For personal gain galore?

Or will they really love you  
To the very end  
And will they really be there  
When you need a friend.

**-Elizabeth Birmingham  
Age 14**

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