

All the RAGE: Relational Aggression Girls Empowered

The staff at Phelps Center for Gifted Education in Springfield, MO desired to involve parents and the wider community in our educational process. Hosting a parent book group was a recent attempt to engage and encourage parents to participate and become more informed about a selected topic of interest. We have experienced some incidents of relational aggression (bullying) in our Middle and Intermediate classes, prompting Catherine Gilpin, a Middle School resource teacher to order **“All the RAGE: Relational Aggression Girls Empowered”** a powerful study guide designed to educate parents about relational aggression, the challenges faced by kids in today's culture, and resources available to reduce relational aggression.

Co-facilitated by Mrs. Gilpin and Lori Brock, Counselor at Phelps, a group of eight to thirteen parents and community members participated in five sessions titled:

- The Language of Peer Aggression
- Identifying the Roles in Relational Aggression
- Danger Signs for Parents
- Media and Today's Youth
- Collaborating to Create Safe Social Climates.

Our parent organization (PAGE) purchased 10 sets of the suggested four books to be used during the book discussion with a plan to allow people to check them out and/or purchase the books when the study was completed. During the final session a +/- assessment and reflection of the group study was completed. Responses included the words “sharing”, “supporting”, and “confidentiality” to describe the group. Other positive remarks involved the format of the study and the fact that we did not have “homework”, but were able to just read the excerpts during the session – though one could read all of the books, if one cared to. The participants were particularly interested in the topic and thought good information and strategies were presented; and the open format was generally appreciated, as was having different leaders.

This was a wonderful experience for both of the co-facilitators. We learned a great deal and appreciated hearing all of the different points of view from the parents. We recommend the format used in this study guide, whether on this topic or another. More information is available on bullying on the following website:

http://www.opheliaproject.org/main/programs_and_services.htm

Thanks and recognition must also go to our PAGE president, Pam Slempp, who did all of the publicity and reminders for the book group, as well as providing snacks; and Jeannie McLaughlin, who ordered all of the books online at very good prices, and organized their easy check-out and sale!