

Young Voices Convening

A Day of Reflection, Tough Thinking, and Imagining
June 24, 2014, New York City

Brought to you by Feminist.com in collaboration with:

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Marianne Schnall, Feminist.com

*Affiliations listed for ID purposes only.

With financial and in-kind support from:

Anonymous

The Arts Effect

Eileen Fisher Leadership Institute

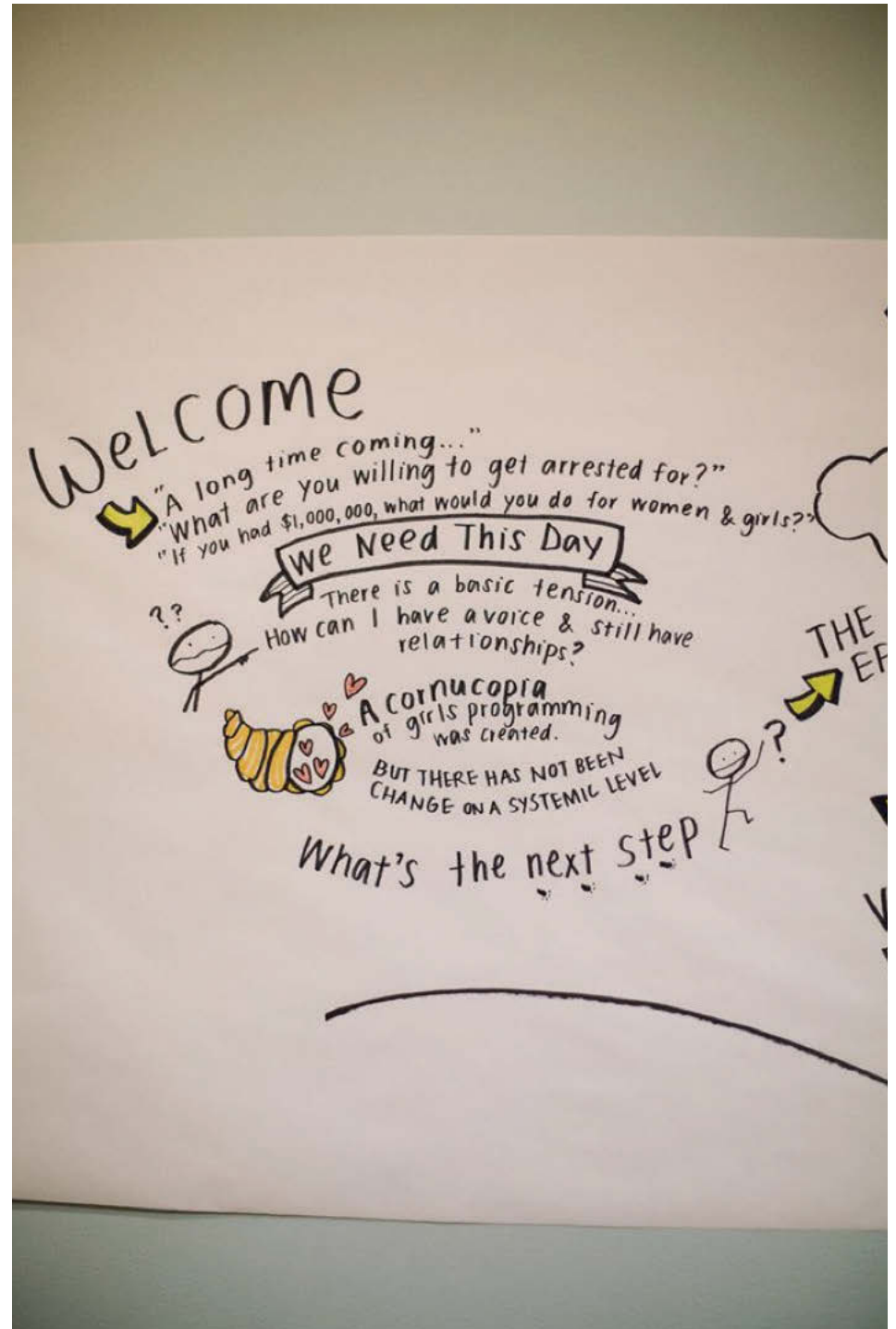
Women Moving Millions

Awesome Without Borders/The Harnisch Foundation

Report by Amy Richards, with research and editorial assistance by Laura

Fischer, Blaine Edens and Marianne Schnall

feminist.com





OVERVIEW

On June 24th, 2014, **over 60 advocates for young people's empowerment** gathered for a day long convening – **a think tank on the status of girls' and boys' lives** and how we might improve upon them. Those who gathered were **educators and media spokespeople, health care providers, journalists, leaders of non-profits and girls** whose lived experience is more valuable than any analysis of them. There was a vast range of expertise in the room, though most attendees focused their work on girls and young women's lives in the United States; 51% of attendees represented national organizations. (See Addendum A for a full list of attendees.)

Carol Gilligan started the day asking: **"What would it take to advance the well-being of girls?"**

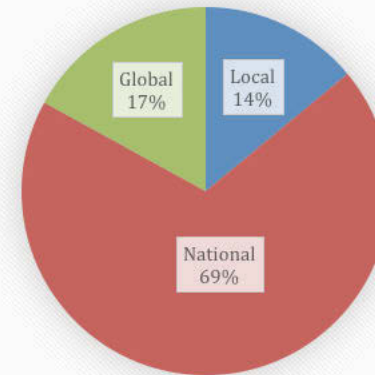
The goal of the day was to **introduce** allies, to **think** through tough issues and to **showcase** good work. Mostly it was meant to push our thinking toward a place of solutions: Why after 40 plus years of recognizing girls' strengths and acknowledging girls' vulnerability are we and they still stuck? **How can we more forcefully and permanently encourage girls' strength and move them to a place of safety?**

Collectively the day was a huge success for reinforcing and building allegiances, for learning about new or being reminded of timeless initiatives, and for contemplating more collaborations.

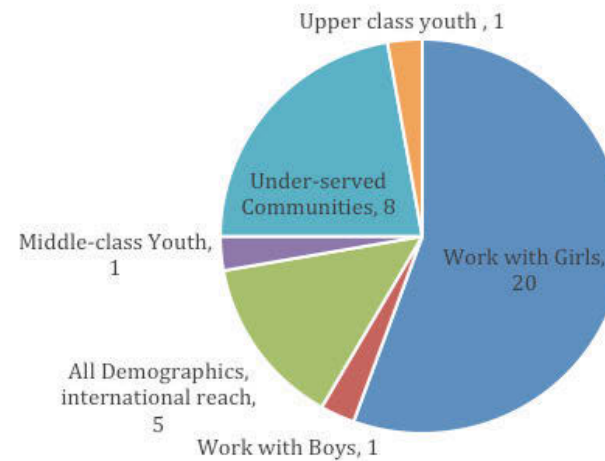
Constituents (gender/class/race) served by attendee organizations:

- 20 specifically work with girls
- 1 specifically works with boys
- 5 serve all demographics, international reach
- 1 serves middle-class youth
- 8 reach under-served communities
- 1 serves upper-class youth

Communities Served by Attendees



Constituents (gender/class/race) served by Attendee Organizations



BACKGROUND

Young Voices, a project spearheaded by Feminist.com and inspired by and in collaboration with Carol Gilligan, was conceived as an online initiative to raise awareness about the cultural assumptions around gender that affect the learning and development of both boys and girls – and offer resources for girls and boys of all ages, and the parents, educators and adults who care about them. As Young Voices set out to work in the fields of gender and youth (primarily around girls), it seemed immediately clear that a first step should be to assess the current landscape, learn from each other, and brainstorm about ways to collaborate and what actions would best serve the collective movement.

Going into the day, here is a brief overview of what we knew to be true about the lives of girls and young women :

- 19% of all college-aged women experience sexual violence during their four years on campus. That number hasn't changed since the 1970s.
- Suicide is the third leading cause of death among adolescents and teenagers. Teen girls are more likely to attempt suicide than boys.
- A girl is bullied every 7 minutes in the school yard, playground, stairwell, classroom or bathroom.
- African-American girls are more likely than any other group of girls to be suspended, expelled or held back entirely.
- Only 2% of women think they are beautiful.
- Over 80% of 10-year-old girls are afraid of being fat.

- By middle school, 40-70% of girls are dissatisfied with two or more parts of their body, and body satisfaction hits rock bottom between the ages of 12 and 15.
- Approximately 300,000 children are at risk of being prostituted in the United States.



In preparation for the day, attendees were asked to reflect on their role in the larger movement for youth empowerment and to identify both their strengths and their weaknesses in that movement.

What we do well: Educate, Empower, Storytelling

- Listen and provide a safe outlet and opportunities for girls/women
- Teach and develop girls' skills (leadership, advocating, authentic voice, relationships, rebounding from setbacks)
- Educate youth, parents, schools/teachers
- Inspire girls and women
- Work in vulnerable populations
- Integrate youth voices in the conversation and movement
- Innovate ways to spread messages

What we could do better: Collaborate, Integrate across issues, Create a pipeline of sustainable leadership

- Bridge gap between mothers and daughters
- Create a pipeline with multiple programs for further leadership development
- Bring together wide-range of disciplines
- Facilitate gender-focused dialogue
- Foster online network of feminists
- Gathering support from the community
- Partnerships to bridge issues and groups
- Produced community events



**What we need help with: Professional development, Programming,
Developing alternative financial/revenue models**

- Capacity building
- Leverage national networks
- Organization (internal, administrative)
- Raise money
- Social media
- Staying true to the mission



What we need to continue this work and to create more: Longer-term organizational planning to sustain our work (including staff and organizational development), Strategy/planning meetings, Outreach (social media, marketing)

- De-polarize gender discussion
- Better identify future trends
- Inspire and empower more girls and women
- Getting to the core of issues vs. just patching things
- Serve a more diverse range of girls
- Self-Discipline
- Work-Family integration and balance
- Understanding girls' shame and how that affects overall wellbeing
- Building stronger Boards
- Celebrate small and large victories
- Competitive salaries for employees
- Finding successful financial model
- Funding
- Include men and boys
- Increasing diversity among mentor pool
- Find time to write



AGENDA

The day had three elements:

Girls Voices

Through curated pieces by The Arts Effect, attendees were able to hear directly from girls about their lives. Girls “performed” three pieces — all written by girls themselves. The topics covered: body image/obsessions, sexual assault and sex-trafficking — plus all of the complicated relationships intertwined in these issues. The value of using performance as a tool to expose and discuss girls’ lives was summed up best by one member of The Arts Effect: “When you give girls a platform to talk about [their lives], girls in the audience will go ‘oh, me too, that happened to me’ and then that opens up a conversation.”

- One character struggled with her sexuality: “I’m gay... no, I’m not.”
- One character talked about sex: “I know what he wants to do, ya know? He’s been pushing it for a while. Like really, a lot. Every time we’re together, he’s like, ‘yo, it’s time. So come on cause you know you can’t keep me waiting.’ And I’m just like, ‘I know.’”
- One character talked about sexual abuse: “Dion moved in when I was ten years old. But then my mom put him in charge of picking me up from school and that’s when he started doing stuff to me. After about a year, it was close to my twelfth birthday I told my mom and she macked me across myself. She said, ‘how dare you say something like that about your daddy?’

Attendees were asked to consider:

What are these girls saying?

Who is listening?

How would you respond to them?

How does this relate to your life?

Voices from the Field

leana Jimenez, Feminist Teacher:

“I can’t be the only adult feminist that my students know. They have to know that this is an actual movement that’s intergenerational, they need to know that it’s embodied by a whole range of fields and they need to know that it’s men doing this work too.”

Niobe Way, Professor of Developmental Psychology at NYU, Co-founder of the Project for the Advancement of Our Common Humanity (PACH):

“They [boys had to go home and do a selfless love act for the person in their family who they don’t show enough love to and almost all the 12-year-olds picked mothers, sisters, grandmothers, aunts.”

Joanne Smith, Founder/Executive Director, Girls for Gender Equity:

“The leadership development, the advocacy, the education and the partnership, once you create those conditions for these young people to really show their voice and show their power and what they can do, you actually get better policy and strategies than if you’re doing it alone.”





Collective Thinking

Breakout groups were asked to consider three questions:

1. If we had unlimited resources we would...

- Develop messaging, design a central agenda, create a toolkit
- Change the CORE curriculum to bring gender to the center of the conversation much earlier in a child's development.
- Fund fellowships, which would allow for thinking in small groups
- Create our own representations of women, including lots of social media, tumblr, etc...
- Change the constitution and amendments
- Create forums for discussing greater change

2. How do we affect Systemic Change?

- Access the system and change/challenge it from within
- Understand that change and disruption is a slow progression
- Need space to 1. Process history of women 2. Envision what's next
- Create a roadmap: We have the resources, how do we mobilize?
- Re-envision corporate models

3. What do we hope to see moving out of the event?

- Intentional goal-setting
- Matching funding to goals
- K-12 education
- Give children resources to use
- Specific projects with price tags

NEXT STEPS

Priorities moving forward::

COLLABORATION

- Finding ways to partner with other groups
- More meetings like Young Voices
- Possible intergenerational event incorporating girls/boys voices
- Organizing symposium on girls' sexual development
- Partnership cultivation

STAFF/ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Board and Staff training and sustainability
- Lack of unity among staff, articulating relevance in the larger movement/ world, clarity of purpose, lack of systems

COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA OUTREACH

- Creation of coordinated media campaigns (making sure to have youth involvement/feedback to make it "cool")
- Development of a Young Voices online hub to spotlight events, partners, and participants, as well as timely, interactive content by professionals/ experts/writers and youth themselves
- Webinars, viral video campaigns, perhaps livestreaming of future events
- Curriculum
- Toolkit





FUNDING

Funding and financial support are the overarching need for most organizations doing this work. (61% of attendees listed it as their top priority.)

YOUNG VOICES NEXT STEPS

In order to continue the dialogue and build upon the momentum and community that was birthed at the Young Voices convening, the Young Voices team is currently seeking additional funding to allow for short-term and long-term strategic planning, as well as the organizing of additional events (including small group think tanks like the June event), as well as the development of an online hub/resource center.

Addendum A: Full list of attendees.

Chitra Ayar
Sadie Nash Leadership
Project

Wesley Alexander
Girtank

Michelle Araque
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Sarah Armoogam
The Arts Effect

Aimee Aubin
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Dorian Baroni
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Jennifer Baumgardner
The Feminist Press

Alysha Bologno
Dosomething.org

Lola Blackman
The Arts Effect

Reisa Brafman
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Jimmie Briggs
Man Up Campaign

Katie Cappiello
The Arts Effect

Tiuna Clark
Scenarios USA

Victoria Coloma

Leslie Cotter
Young Women Empowered

Elizabeth Debold
Artemis Forum

Monica DiScala
Feminist Intensive

Dana Edell
SPARK Movement

Carol Gilligan
Feminist.com

Carla Goldstein
Omega Institute

Holly Gordon
Girl Rising

Nancy Gruver
New Moon Girl Media

Courtney Harvey
Women Moving Millions

Odley Jean
The Arts Effect

Ileana Jiménez
Feminist Teacher

Jazmin Kay
Feminist.com

Carson King
Feminist Intensive

Antoinette Klatzky
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Olivia Larsen
The Arts Effect

Khary Lazaare-White

Jessica Lee
The Representation Project

Simone Marean
Girls Leadership Institute

Mira Maxwell
The Arts Effect

Emma Mayerson
Alliance for Girls

Shermain McCallister

Joyce McFadden
Psychoanalyst/author

Meg McInerney
The Arts Effect

Maura Minsky
Scenarios USA

Praise Mkandawire
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Kamla Modi
Girl Scouts of the USA

Jado Morris
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Institute

Jody Myrum
NoVo Foundation

Jasmine Niang
The Arts Effect

Jeannie Norris
Retired Head of Miss Hall's
School

Karen Peterson
National Girls Collaborative
Project

Mikki Pugh
Strong Women, Strong Girls

Katie Rapp
Eileen Fisher Leadership
Project

Virginia Reath
Girls Project

Sil Reynolds
Mothering & Daughtering

Eliza Reynolds
Mothering & Daughtering

Marianne Schnall
Feminist.com

Darci Siegel
The Arts Effect

Rachel Simmons
Girls Leadership Institute

Joanne Smith
Girls for Gender Equity

Georgia Stamm
The Arts Effect

Catherine Steiner-Adair
Harvard Medical School
Institute

Faith Taylor

Lindsey Taylor-Wood
The Harnisch Foundation

Salamishah Tillet
A Long Walk Home

Niobe Way
Project for the Advancement
of Our Common Humanity

Stephanie Weber
Hewitt School

Jamia Wilson
YTH

Julie Zeilinger
The FBomb



Addendum B: Resources

Organizations

A Long Walk Home

www.alongwalkhome.org/

A Long Walk Home is a non-profit that uses art therapy and the visual and performing arts to end violence against girls and women.

The Arts Effect

www.TheArtsEffectNYC.com

Through a combination of theater arts, creative writing, mentorship, debate and discussion, and public service, The Arts Effect inspires middle and high school girls to become change agents – challenging their peers and sparking conversation through storytelling and activism. The productions of their plays are accompanied by talkbacks and empowerment workshops, where young people engage in conversation, reflective writing, story sharing and activism planning (using the themes of the plays as jumping off points).

Eileen Fisher Leadership Institute

www.efli-life.org

EFLI promotes leadership in young women through self-empowerment, connection with others and activism in their communities.

Feminist.com

www.feminist.com

Feminist.com is a leading women's website and nonprofit organization. For nearly twenty years, Feminist.com has been fostering awareness, education, and activism for people all across the world. As a hub of feminist thought leaders and organizations, and a convener both online and off, we strive to spotlight timely issues and inform, motivate and empower all people to take action toward positive social change.

The Feminist Press

www.feministpress.org

The Feminist Press is a non-profit organization that promotes voices on the margins of dominant culture and publishes feminist works from around the world, inspiring personal transformation and social justice.

Girls for Gender Equity

www.ggenyc.org

Girls for Gender Equity is committed to the physical, psychological, social and economic development of girls and women. Through education, organizing and physical fitness, Girls for Gender Equity encourages communities to remove barriers and create opportunities for girls and women to live self-determined lives.

Addendum B: Resources

Organizations Cont.

Girls Leadership Institute

www.girlsleadership.org

GLI gives girls the skills to know who they are, what they believe and how to express it, empowering them to create change in their world. We work with girls, parents & caregivers, and educators to ensure lasting impact.

Girl Rising

www.girlsrising.com

The Girl Rising Ambassador program attracts predominantly youth leaders from around the world who are interested in using the tools and visibility of Girl Rising to drive change in their communities.

GirlTank

www.girltank.org

GirlTank is a community hub and storytelling platform designed to help women and girl social entrepreneurs and innovators grow and scale their bold and daring social enterprises.

Man Up Campaign

www.manupcampaign.org

Announced at the Clinton Global Initiative in September 2009 in collaboration with Vital Voices Global Partnership, Man Up is a global campaign to activate youth to stop violence against women and girls. Our call to action challenges each of us to “man up” and declare that violence against women and girls must end.

Mothering & Daughtering

www.motheringanddaughtering.com

Mothering & Daughtering runs workshops for mothers and their pre-teen and teenage daughters in workshop centers around the US.

The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP)

www.ngcproject.org

The NGCP uses the leverage of a network and the collaboration of individual girl-serving STEM programs to create the tipping point for gender equity in STEM. NGCP distributes and provides training around exemplary practices for engaging girls in STEM as well as collaboration best practices. Currently, there are 31 collaborations, serving 39 states and ultimately reaching 12,800 organizations who serve 8.3 million girls and 4.7 million boys.

Omega Institute

www.eomega.org

Omega is a place to explore the extraordinary potential that exists in all of us as individuals and together as a human family. Whether it's a creativity workshop at our 200-acre Rhinebeck, New York campus, a yoga retreat in Costa Rica, or a conference in New York City, our lifelong learning programs provide tools for the art of living, and motivation to cultivate greater health, joy, and peace at home and in the world.

Addendum B: Resources

Organizations Cont.

PACH (Project for the Advancement of Our Common Humanity)

www.pach.org

The long term goal of PACH is draw from what we have learned in the human sciences and in practice to create a more just and humane world. In its first year, PACH has been successful at bringing together people from a wide range of disciplines and professions to discuss the roots of our societal problems and how to solve them collectively.

Powerful Voices

www.powerfulvoices.org

Powerful Voices fosters adolescent girls' development by providing programs and promoting social justice so girls can realize their dreams, engage their communities and shape a better world.

The Representation Project

www.therepresentationproject.org

The Representation Project is a movement that uses film and media content to expose injustices created by gender stereotypes and to shift people's consciousness towards change. Interactive campaigns, strategic partnerships and education initiatives inspire individuals and communities to challenge the status quo and ultimately transform culture so everyone, regardless of gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation or circumstance can fulfill their potential.

Sadie Nash Leadership Project

www.sadienash.org/apply_nashu.htm

Sadie Nash Leadership Project promotes leadership and activism among young women. The program is designed to strengthen, empower, and equip young women as agents for change in their lives and in the world. By increasing the participation of women in social, political, and economic decision-making, SNLP seeks to question and redefine the nature of leadership and to promote perspectives and practices that are cooperative, accountable, ethical, and effective.

Scenarios USA

www.scenariosusa.org

Scenarios USA connects teenagers with effective and relevant ways to address and to take action on issues shaping their lives locally, regionally and nationally.

Soapbox

Soapbox hosts Feminist Camps; produces books, films, and curricula tools; and helps you find the right speaker for your campus or community events. Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards founded Soapbox in 2002. Since then, they have produced nearly 1000 events for more than 500 clients, working with a wide range of world-views and budgets.

Addendum B: Resources

Organizations Cont.

SPARK

www.SPARKmovement.org

SPARK trains and supports an online and on-the-ground coalition of young feminists from across the United States and 8 countries. SPARK launched and runs action campaigns aimed at ending the sexualization of girls and provides resources for girls to take action both online and in their local communities. They publish hundreds of blog posts written by girls and produce an original theater production written and performed by girls every year.

Strong Women, Strong Girls

www.swsg.org

Strong Women, Strong Girls (SWSG) is a nationally recognized multi-generational mentoring program. Their program spans the east coast serving women and girls in Boston, Massachusetts; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Miami, Florida.

Young Women Empowered

www.youngwomenempowered.org

YWE prepares girls and women from diverse backgrounds to step into leadership in their schools, communities and the world through intergenerational mentorship, intercultural collaboration and creative and educational programming that equips participants with the self-confidence, inner leadership skills, resiliency and future planning skills that they need to achieve their personal goals while improving their communities.

Youth Tech

www.yth.org/

Youth Tech believes that young people deserve honest information, deserve for their voice to be heard, and deserve to live healthy lives without shame or fear. YTH is committed to pursuing emerging, startling, and sometimes, simple technologies that can reach young people where they are. The organization also builds the capacity of the community to advance youth health by providing research, training, idea generation, and expert advice.

Women Moving Millions

www.womenmovingmillions.org

WOMEN MOVING MILLIONS created a global contagion of committed, purposeful women making unprecedented gifts of \$1 million or more for the advancement of women and girls. Raising funds as well as their voices, this concept inspired other donors to join with them toward amplifying the voices of women worldwide.

Addendum B: Resources

Additional Books/ Movies/ Social Media:

The FBomb www.thebomb.org

The FBomb is a blog and community for young feminists. The FBomb is based on both the open submissions of young feminists from all over the world and, more recently, the work of an informal editorial board of writers. The FBomb's content encompasses feminist takes on pop culture and current events as well as personal stories and manifestos of its young writers.

***The Curse of the Good Girl:
Raising Authentic Girls with Courage and Confidence***
By Rachel Simmons

Odd Girl Out: The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls
By Rachel Simmons

Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection
By Niobe Way

In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development
By Carol Gilligan

Joining the Resistance
By Carol Gilligan

Grassroots: A Field Guide for Feminist Activism
By Amy Richards and Jennifer Baumgardner

Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future
By Amy Richards
and Jennifer Baumgardner

Opting In: Having a Child Without Losing Yourself
By Amy Richards

Daring to Be Ourselves: Influential Women Share Insights on Courage, Happiness and Finding Your Own Voice
By Marianne Schnall

***What Will It Take to Make a Woman President?
Conversations About Women, Leadership & Power***
By Marianne Schnall

Queen Bees and Wannabes
By Rosalind Wiseman

Masterminds and Wingmen: Helping Our Boys Cope with Schoolyard Power, Locker-Room Tests, Girlfriends, and the New Rules of Boy World
By Rosalind Wiseman

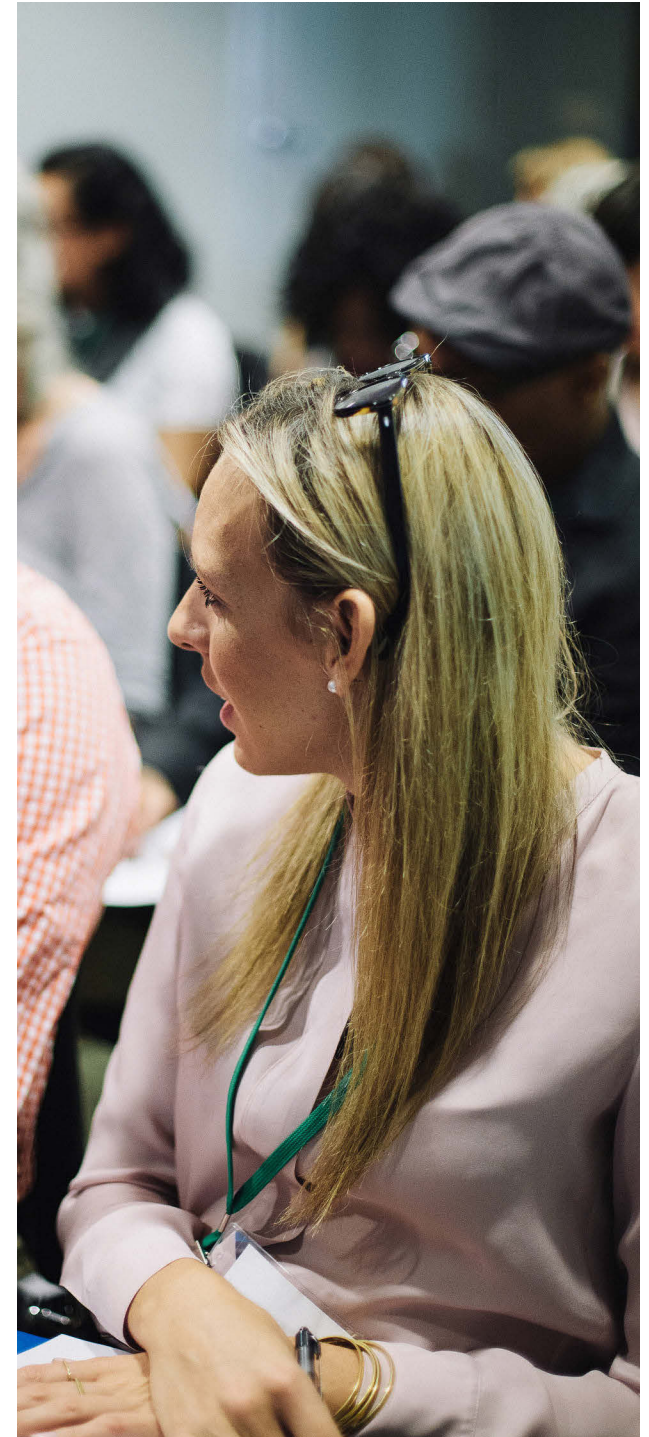
How to Talk to Our Daughters about Sexuality
By Joyce McFadden

Mothering and Daughtering: Keeping Your Bond Strong Through the Teen Years
By Sil and Eliza Reynolds

Being a Teen: Everything Teen Girls & Boys Should Know About Relationships, Sex, Love, Health, Identity & More
By Jane Fonda

Miss Representation (documentary film)
Producer/Director Jennifer Siebel Newsom

Girl Rising (documentary film)
Executive Producer Holly Gordon



Contact Information

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