Reflection

- Take a couple of seconds to reflect...
- How do you define your physical characteristics?

In the next 90 minutes you will:

- Gain a historical understanding of the malaise that surrounds African-American girls.
- Contextualize the aggressive behavior of girls.
- Acquire some of the tools necessary to restore a positive sense of self.
- Discuss recommendations for reducing aggressiveness in this population.
- Learn to recognize and combat some of the detrimental images in popular culture.
- Learn the unspoken do’s and don’ts related to this highly sensitive topic.
- Leave with a better understanding of the secret world of black girls.
Sankofa

- African philosophy of looking backward to go forward.
- Until recently, it has been practiced within the African-American community.

Historical Depictions

LOOKING BACKWARD

Mammy Caricature

- One of the most recognizable images of the African-American woman in the south.
- She is typically characterized as a large black woman, with a wide grin, wide eyes and hearty laugh.
- The mammy is almost always depicted with dark brown skin and a head covering of some kind.
- This image was represented in popular culture as late as 1987 on the hit sitcom “Gimme a Break.”
Sapphire Caricature
- Portrays black women as rude, loud, malicious, stubborn and overbearing.
- She is tart-tongued and emasculating. She is often portrayed with her hands on her hips with her eyes and neck rolling.
- Serial complainer, never quite satisfied.
- More recently, this image was depicted in child form with the character “Dee” on the 1980’s sitcom, “What’s Happening!”
- Contemporarily, the description of “angry black woman,” was attributed to our First Lady, Michelle Obama.

Jezebel Caricature
- Portrays African-American women as lascivious, seductive and alluring.
- This stereotype is often juxtaposed against the pure, respectable wholesome image of the white woman.
- This stereotype has had many incarnations including the most recent addition of the “video hoe.”

The Tragic Mulatto
- Often depicted as a seductress whose beauty drives white men to rape her.
- Depicted as, “straddling the fence,” being confused and accepted in neither black nor white America.
+ The Redbone

- This is a term once thought lost in African-American culture.
- Term used to describe black people that are obviously a mixture of more than just “black and white.”
- Skin, hair, and occasionally eyes sometimes have a red hue.
- Unlike the mulatto, the redbone is the product of two “African Americans.”
- The term is currently being misused in popular culture.

+ Recent Contexts

GOING FORWARD

+ Fact...

Haile Berry in 2007

Beyonce in 2012

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Historically, African-American women have been vilified and demonized in popular culture.

This vilification has revealed itself in a maelstrom of self-loathing, self-hatred and an intra-racial melee akin to civil war.

This civil war plays out in our classrooms and school yards daily; in the form of intra-racial bullying.

Black girls' confusion and internal issues surrounding self-esteem and self-image often are the catalyst for their animosity and contempt for themselves and each other.

A feeling that can sometimes be validated in the girl's own home.
According to the IL School Code, bullying is defined as:
“...any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to place the student in fear of their person or property, cause a substantial detrimental effect to their physical or mental health, or substantially interfere with their academic performance or ability to participate in school activities. (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b).)
### Expectations

- You cannot hold someone accountable for information that you have not given them.
- Be proactive in providing students and staff with your behavior expectations.
- Use different modalities to convey your expectations.
  - Schoolwide assemblies (for students)
  - Newsletters (for parents and communities)
  - Student registration and/or orientation.

### Accountability

- Once the expectations are stated, a system of accountability should be put in place.
- This system should be in alignment with your school district’s policies and procedures.
- Accountability does not stop with the kids.

### Education/Re-education

- Professional development with regard to these issues is very important. Bullying training must move beyond simple compliance and try to make real change.
- Professional development should educate the staff that have never had the experience of dealing with this issue and re-educate the staff that may have past experience with this issue.
- The girls must be re-educated and helped to understand that they are beautiful, no matter what popular culture tells them.
If possible, be proactive with regard to mediation. Use professional judgment and decide whether or not a situation is beyond mediation.

If the mediation route is chosen, one of the recommended mediation models is the QUEEN method.

**QUEEN Model of Conflict Resolution**

- **Q** - Question: Question your motives before you speak. Ask yourself, "Why am I saying this? What is it that I wish to gain at the end of this conversation?"
- **U** - Understand that words are permanent. While you will be able to apologize for what you say, you can never take it back. Choose your words carefully.
- **E** - Enlighten the other parties involved of your feelings about the topic in question. Remember to only use "I" statements (you cannot speak for anyone else), and don’t forget your motivation for speaking.
- **E** - Engage in active listening. Just as you expect to be heard as you speak, the other parties involved have the same expectation of engagement from you.
- **N** - Negotiate and compromise. Realize that you may not walk away with everything that you wanted, but you should leave reasonably satisfied with the solution.

**Courageous Conversation**

- The biggest weapon that we have in the fight against bullying is our willingness to have courageous, long overdue conversations.
- These conversations are not just with students; but could possibly extend to staff as well.
- Don’t be afraid to say, “I saw that and...”
- Don’t be afraid to take your teachable moments as they occur.
Educators are the first line of defense with regard to negative behaviors amongst girls.

If you are an African-American woman, model the image of positive black female through how you carry yourself.

If not, find ways to incorporate positive images of black females within your classrooms (if possible).

If possible, provide your girls with opportunities to visit places beyond their current circumstance.

If money is an issue, there are organizations that will donate goods and services. Sometimes it is just a matter of asking.

These girls need to see that the world is bigger than their classroom, school, block or city; and that they can be a part of it...if they choose to.

Having a policy does not preclude the behavior.

Be honest with students about your position as a mandated reporter.

"Please understand that I may have to seek help from someone more qualified to deal with..."

Realize that you will not be the confidant of every child.

Don't take it personally if a child feels more comfortable talking to another adult in the building.

Hold the girls to a standard and stick to it.

"I was only kidding is never acceptable"
Currently, African-American women are the fastest growing prison population in America.

According to the NAACP Legal Defense fund, although white women are arrested more often, black women are eight times more likely to go to prison.

Incarceration rates of African-American women have grown 828% over a five year period.

Nationally, black women account for 66% of new cases of HIV. In addition, it is the leading cause of death for black women ages 25-35. (Black Women’s Health imperative www.blackwomenshealth.org)

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Please Ask Questions Via Chat!

Presented by:
Julie Burnett & Carolyn Strong
QUEEN © Conflict Resolution Model Bill of Rights

Every student that participates in this conflict resolution mediation has the right to:

- Have their voice heard and their point of view respected.
- Respectfully disagree about a course of events.
- Acknowledge how another person’s actions have made them feel.
- Decide to sever ties with another individual.
- Verbally state when the situation is becoming overwhelming.
- Take pause for thought collection.
- Refrain from deliberately hurting another person’s feelings during the mediation.
- Refrain from using personal information as a weapon.

I have read the QUEEN © conflict resolution Bill of Rights and I understand my rights as a participant and I will work to the best of my ability to refrain from infringing on someone else’s rights during the course of this mediation.

____________________________   ______________________
Student         Date
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before this mediation I felt...</th>
<th>After hearing other people speak I feel...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am going to walk away from this feeling...</td>
<td>I can try to prevent a similar situation in the future by...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## QUEEN © Method of Conflict Mediation

The QUEEN© method of conflict mediation emphasizes the belief system that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” QUEEN© is a reflective conflict management system. It teaches students that the solution lies within; it stresses the fact that if everyone is responsible for their own behavior, conflict and aggression can be kept to a minimum; and productivity and usefulness of the mediation process can be maximized.

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Resources

Bullies Stink! - www.bulliesstink.com
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Bullying (Wikipedia)- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullying
Cyberbullying Research Center- www.cyberbullying.us/
Education.com- www.education.com/answers/school-bullying-teasing/
Generation Safe- www.generationsafe.ikeepsafe.org
IL Attorney General Internet Safety:
www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/children/internet.html
National Crime Prevention Council:
  Bullying-www.ncpc.org/newsroom/current-campaigns/bully-prevention
  Cyberbullying-www.ncpc.org/newsroom/current-campaigns/cyberbullying
Stop Bullying- www.stopbullying.gov
Stop Cyberbullying- www.stopcyberbullying.org

Additional Resources

Let None Live in Fear-Free book from the author and speaker Michael Dorn

Child Safe-Provides parents the ability to track their child’s texting and social media activity for a nominal fee.
References


SEAL Steps- [www.rosalindwiseman.com/](http://www.rosalindwiseman.com/)


School Daze- 1988 Directed by Spike Lee

Jungle Fever- 1991 Directed by Spike Lee

Dark Girls- 2012 Directed by Bill Duke

America’s Supernanny- 2011 Produced for Lifetime Television