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HELP YOURSELF

What girls really need

Kelly Haramis

Published August 28, 2005

Although girls have gained more equality since the days of their great-grandmothers, there's one thing they continue to fight for: respect.

In "Respect: A Girl's Guide to Getting Respect & Dealing When Your Line Is Crossed," Courtney Macavinta and Andrea Vander Pluym educate teenage girls on achieving the esteem they deserve.

The authors have written an informative and interactive book about body image, friends, sex, dating violence and harassment--wisely including a section on the always relevant "Stop the Rumor Mill." Their approach offers exercises to help girls get started immediately through journaling, using prompts as inspirational starters such as "I feel best about myself when: - - - - ."

Scattered throughout the text are motivational quotations and stories from teenage girls reflecting a diverse range of personal experiences.

Once young women achieve respect, Macavinta and Vander Pluym encourage spreading the word--by writing local congressmen, speaking at school and creating artwork that reflects how girls are treated.

On relationships: "You need to get in touch with what's in your heart before you let someone else stake a claim to it."

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