## *Informed and Empowered* Program Overview

***Summary***

Informed and Empowered is a program designed for students in 6th grade. During this program, students review puberty and gender-specific reproductive systems. Male and female students will participate in a gender-specific program targeting the questions and decisions that are especially relevant as students are beginning or will soon begin to experience the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Students are introduced to the components of healthy relationships with a focus on good communication. Students will explore online safety and their digital footprint, and will practice positive goal-setting and decision-making. It is an opportunity to begin the discussion on individual growth, values, and goals and lay the groundwork for continued communication among parents and children for all students.

Students will be split into a girl group, facilitated by a female instructor, and a boy group, facilitated by a male instructor. Parents/guardians are welcome to contact Girls Inc to review instructional materials or address any questions or concerns. Your questions, concerns, and comments are always welcome as we work together to provide the best and most appropriate learning opportunities for your student. School staff will distribute permission slips for all Informed programs one month prior to scheduled programming. Follow-up will occur after 21 calendar days without a response, followed by the 10-day response. Students who have opted out of our program will receive alternative academic instruction from school staff during our programming.

## *Informed and Empowered* Sessions & Objectives

**Session 1: Introduction/Puberty Review**

*Purpose:* to review material learned in previous programs; to provide accurate, age appropriate information on why and how a person changes during puberty; to inform students of the names and functions of the body parts of the reproductive system

*Objectives:*

By the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Define puberty and explain when puberty happens
- Describe changes that happen during puberty
- Identify parts of the external and internal reproductive system and explain how those parts function

*Key Messages:*

- Everyone experiences puberty differently and at different times
- It is important to discuss the changes happening within your body with a trusted adult.
- Everyone has a reproductive system and it's important to understand how your reproductive system works

**Session 2: Healthy Relationships**

*Purpose:* To review healthy and unhealthy relationship characteristics, reemphasize between assertive, aggressive, and passive styles of communication, and practice assertive communication.

*Objectives:*

- By the end of the session, students will be able to:
- Identify and explain at least two qualities that support healthy relationship development.
- Identify and explain at least two qualities that are barriers to relationship development.
- Name and explain the corresponding qualities found within the H.E.R.R.C acronym for healthy relationships.

*Key Messages:*

- Relationships may have healthy and unhealthy qualities. Healthy relationship qualities help make a relationship run smoothly.
- Communication is a key component of any healthy relationship.
- Honesty, Equality, Respect, Responsibility, and Communication are five core qualities of a healthy relationship. It is important that any relationship you choose to have has these healthy qualities.
- Knowing what is healthy and unhealthy can help you make choices for your health and safety in relationships and in the future.

**Session 3: Understanding My Digital Footprint**

*Purpose:* to inform students about their digital footprint and to think critically about information that is shared actively and passively online.

*Objectives:*

By the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Define digital footprint and understand the difference between active and passive digital footprints
- Identify examples of both active and passive digital footprints in our online activities
- Think critically about what we add to our digital footprint to make informed choices in the future.

*Key Messages:*

- Everytime we go online, we leave traces of our activity behind. This is called our digital footprint.
- It is important to understand the two sides of our digital footprint and learn to make thoughtful choices about our online presence.
- Active digital footprints include information that you choose to share online and passive digital footprints include information that gets collected automatically when you use apps, websites, and devices.

**Session 4: Setting Reachable Goals**

*Purpose:* to learn how to set and reach personal goals and to learn to recognize and manage potential obstacles that can get in the way of reaching a goal

*Objectives:*

By the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Define “goal”
- Identify and apply the goal naming criteria

- Identify and apply steps to setting and reaching a personal goal
- Name someone to support him or her in working toward a goal

*Key Messages:*

- The ability to name and set reachable goals builds self-efficacy and a stronger sense of hope for the future
- Students who can, and do, set reachable goals have a stronger sense of self and make better decisions.

**Session 5: Making Responsible Decisions**

*Purpose:* for students to learn to plan their actions, evaluate choices, and to problem solve using the steps for responsible decision making.

*Objectives:*

By the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Define consequence
- Distinguish decisions with minor consequences from those with major consequences
- List the steps of the decision-making model
- Explain the benefits of stopping to think about possible consequences before making major decisions
- Evaluate possible consequences of major decisions

*Key Messages:*

- The ability to stop and consider the positive and negative consequences of decisions reduces the likelihood of acting impulsively.
- Decisions are influenced by many factors: goals, peers, family, media, etc.

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Girls Inc. has been selected to partner with your child's school to deliver a program reviewing puberty education and introduction to healthy relationships, digital footprints, and positive goal-setting/decision-making. All curriculum meets the Indiana Academic Standards for Health and Wellness, and is designed to provide accurate, age appropriate information on why and how a person changes during this stage, with an emphasis on the fact that the changes are normal and okay, even if they come at a time that is different than their peers.

Male and female students will participate in a gender specific program targeting the questions and decisions that are especially relevant as students are beginning or will soon begin to experience the physical and emotional changes of puberty. In Informed and Empowered, gender-specific reproductive systems are reviewed, and students are introduced to the components of healthy relationships, healthy digital footprints, and positive goal-setting and decision-making. It is an opportunity to begin the discussion on individual growth, values, and goals and lay the groundwork for continued communication among parents and children for all students. Students will participate in gender-specific classrooms and programs will be facilitated by Girls Inc. staff.

You are welcome to contact Girls Inc to address any questions or concerns. Your questions, concerns, and comments are always welcome as we work together to provide the best and most appropriate learning opportunities for your student.

Thank you,
Candace Studebaker
Director of School Partnerships
Girls Inc of Shelbyville/Shelby County
cstudebaker@girlsincshelbycounty.org
317-392-1190

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Your student's class is scheduled for the Informed and Empowered program to be presented this school year. Please indicate below whether or not you give permission for your child to attend the program at school.

If the form is not returned to school by _____, then your child will be automatically opted-in for the program. Please sign and return this portion to your child's teacher.

My child _____

_____ will be permitted to participate in the Informed Together program.

_____ will NOT be permitted to participate in the Informed Together program.

Parent/Guardian Signature_____