

Working Relationally with Girls: Complex Lives/Complex Identities (Monographic Separates from Child & Youth Services)

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Discover how girls develop a sense of self as they struggle to make sense of complex and complicated times

Working Relationally with Girls: Complex Lives, Complex Identities examines the experience of being a girl in today's society and the difficulties social work practitioners face in developing a universal theory that represents that experience. This unique book analyzes how—and why—gender is still a complicated barrier for most girls, despite living in "post-feminist" times. Working from a variety of orientations, the book offers practical suggestions on how to help girls deal with interpersonal tensions, interpersonal conflicts, relational dilemmas, and the difficulties that stem from rules and norms of what is still a male-dominated society.

Human service practitioners, regardless of their fields, face an everyday struggle to understand how adolescent girls construct identities in relation to the culture in which they live. The contributors to Working Relationally with Girls call on a range of disciplines, including child and youth care, cultural studies, feminist theory, counseling, and social psychology, to examine how girls interpret cultural expectations to develop a sense of self under complex conditions. This unique book addresses the subtle—and not-sosubtle—practices (symbols, metaphors, images, scripts, rules, norms, and narratives) that shape girls' lives, providing the tools to build a basic framework that will help you understand how girls are alike—and how they're different.

Working Relationally with Girls examines:

- how mothers and daughters perceive general differences regarding sexual experiences in adolescence
- how girls' health issues are constructed within the context of their dating relationships
- what do mothers and daughters want to know about each other's sexuality
- the difficulty girls have in articulating their needs and desires in romantic relationships
- how many girls deal with what they see as an impossible choice—compromising their sense of self to maintain a relationship or compromising the relationship to maintain their sense of self
- how the dynamics of a dating relationship can affect a girl's development and health
- the influence of media on constructing an identity
- how minorities form an identity when dealing with exclusion and belonging in a predominately white community
- using theater to examine the experience of identity formation
- and much more!

Working Relationally with Girls is an essential guide to understanding how girls make sense of the world and how their decisions affect their gender and identity development. Social workers, health care professionals, child and youth care practitioners, and counselors will find this rich combination of theory and practice invaluable as an everyday resource.

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