

Addressing the Rise and Impact of Misogyny Among Students in Grades 6-12



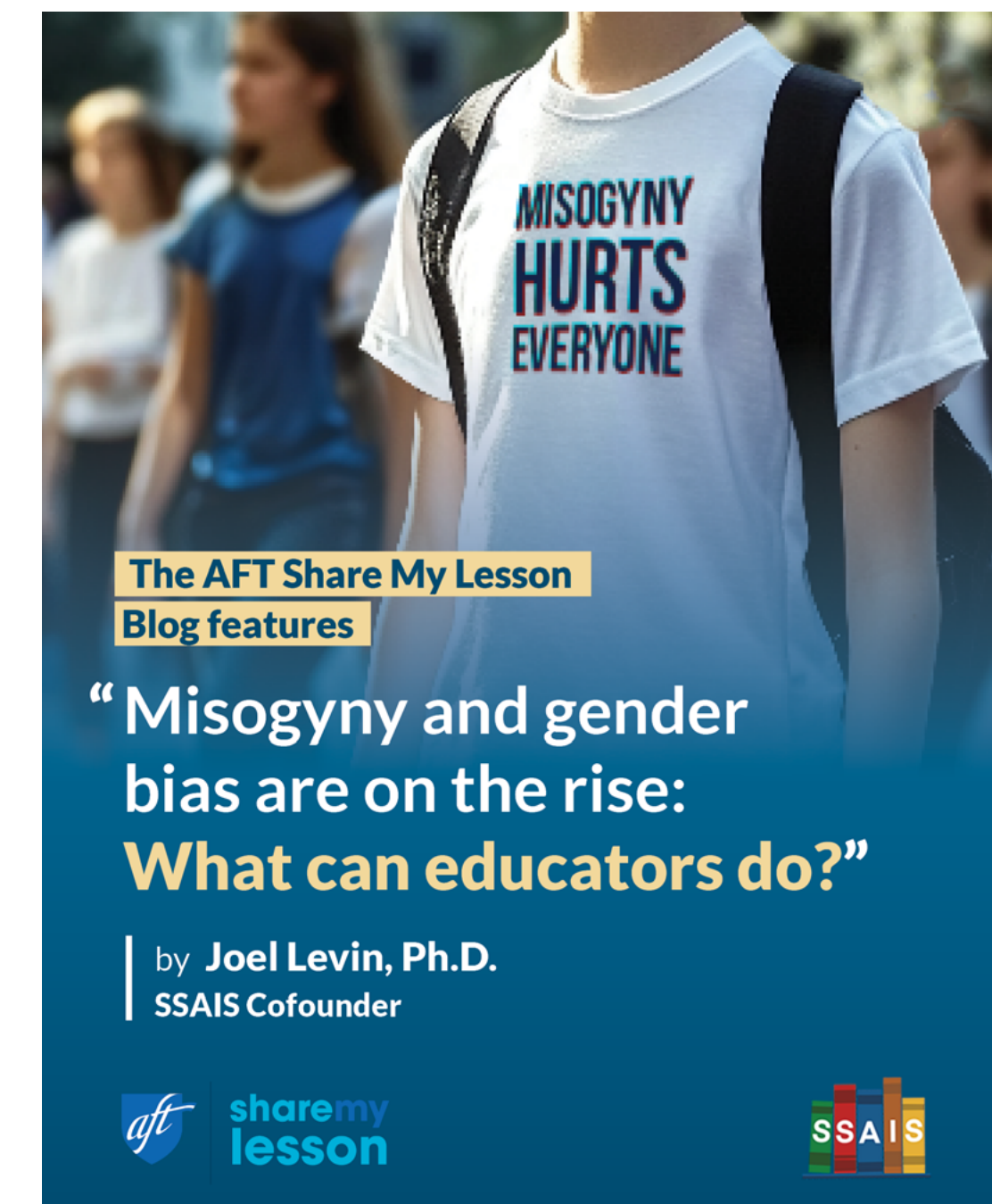
This slide deck accompanies the webinar “Addressing the Rise and Impact of Misogyny Among Students in Grades 6-12” for the American Federation of Teachers 2025 Virtual Share My Lesson Conference. The webinar explores the origins of gender bias and misogyny in schools, provides effective strategies for teachers, counselors, coaches, and school administrators, and presents peer education as an effective strategy. The slide deck offers new resources for creating a whole-school approach to a more inclusive and equitable school environment.

View the webinar any time by registering [here](#).

Read “**Misogyny and Gender Bias Are on the Rise: What Can Educators Do?**” published by the American Federation of Teachers, describing the causes and consequences of gender bias on students and spotlighting resources that allow students to thrive and express their full humanity.

“Intervention is crucial because these attitudes can evolve into lifelong patterns affecting relationships, careers, and mental health.”

- Joel Levin, Ph.D., SSAIS Cofounder and Program Director



Addressing the Rise and Impact of Misogyny Among Students in Grades 6-12



Otis McGresham, Ed.D.

Prevention Specialist, Vanderbilt
University, Project Safe



Pasha Dashtgard, Ph.D.

Director of Research, PERIL





About the Presenters: Otis McGresham, Ed.D.



Assistant Director for Prevention Education,
Vanderbilt University Project Safe

- Served at institutions of higher education since 2003
- Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership and Change Management
- Master of Education, Student Affairs Administration



About the Presenters: Pasha Dashtgard, Ph.D.



Director of Research for the Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL)

- Ph.D. in Social Psychology, University of California, Irvine
- Ed.M in Education, MA in Mental Health Counseling, Columbia University, Teacher's College
- Pasha's research interests include masculinities, online radicalization, PTSD, and large-scale mental health policy/service delivery



Our Time Today

- Some important definitions to understand the problem
- Strategies for teachers, counselors, and coaches
- Strategies for school administrators
- Strategies for peer education
- Resources



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Understanding the Problem





Definitions



-  Patriarchy
-  Masculinity
-  Misogyny
-  Manosphere



Patriarchy



In sociology, patriarchy is described as a form of social organization where cultural and institutional beliefs and values are dominated by men.



Masculinity



A social construct that refers to the behaviors, characteristics, and expectations associated with men.



🔍 **Misogyny**



Hatred of, aversion to, or prejudice against women or girls.



Manosphere



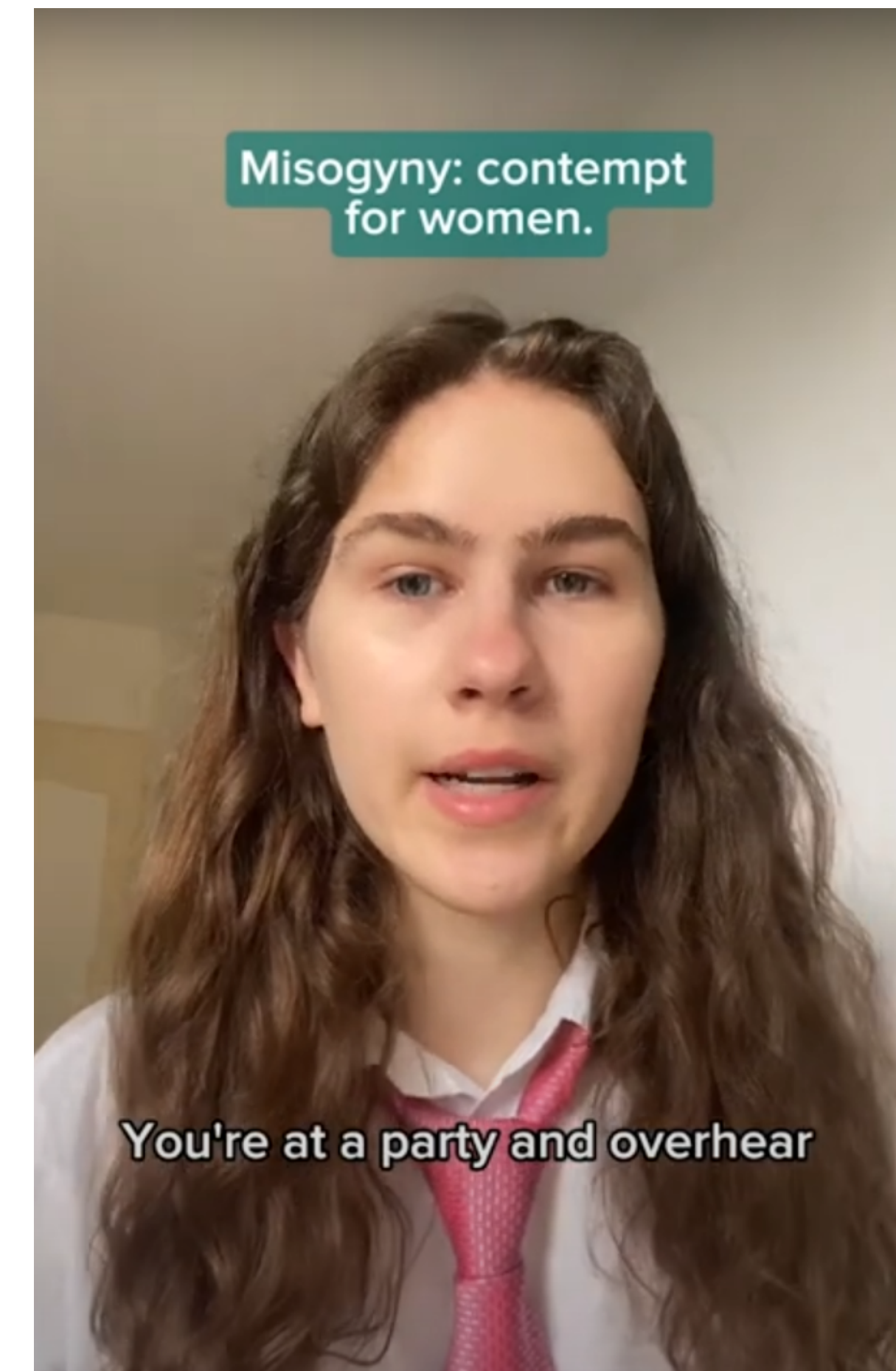
A varied collection of websites, blogs, and online forums promoting masculinity, misogyny, and opposition to feminism.



Sound Familiar?

Video: “**Misogyny: Teen males objectifying girls**”

Created by an SSAIS intern
Tanya’s complete playlist



Poll Question

Are there examples of misogyny in your classroom/school?

- I have seen examples of misogyny in my classroom/school.
- I have heard of examples of misogyny in my classroom/school.
- I have both seen and heard examples of misogyny in my classroom/school.
- I have neither seen nor heard of examples of misogyny in my classroom/school.



Elements of Online Radicalization

Ease, accessibility, and addiction

Algorithms carving a path

A distorted consensus

A soapbox community

Bridges that can't bear the weight





How is this new?

- This version of hegemonic masculinity...
 - » Uses evolutionary psychology concepts and terms
 - » Not as connected to religious traditions
 - » Not interested in marriage
 - » Does not center homophobia
 - » Shares a common language, distinct jargon
 - » Heavily influenced by online dating norms
 - » Websites, online forums, and social media are unique mediums, shaping (not just transmitting) content





Masculinities

Instead of proffering a single type of man and masculinity to emulate and aspire to, young boys and men should be free to embrace a plurality of behaviors and models for being a man.

The problem with the hegemonic masculine ideal is not only the content of that ideal, but the very notion that there is one way to be a man.



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Strategies





Introduction to Strategies

- Intervention Strategies: Teachers/Counselors/Coaches
- Intervention Strategies: Administrators
- Intervention Strategies: Peer Education





Intervention Strategies: Teachers/ Counselors/ Coaches

Three R's

- Recognize
- Respond
- Reframe





Recognize

- Acknowledge behavior/perspective
- Seek to understand motivation





Respond

- Highlight impact
- Lean on systems and practices
- Work to heal harm





Reframe

- Counternarrative
- Create space for belonging
- Align behavior with values



Poll Question

Do you feel supported responding to instances of misogyny in your classroom/school?

- I feel confident in my ability to respond and supported by my administration.
- I feel confident in my ability to respond but not supported by my administration.
- I don't feel confident in my ability to respond but supported by my administration.
- I don't feel confident in my ability to respond or supported by my administration.



Intervention Strategies: Administrators

- Mission and values-driven
- Look for it
- Set the standard
- Know your policies and laws
- Multiculturalism





Mission and Values-Driven

- More than a tagline
- Both tangible and aspirational
- Believable





Look for It

- Take clues seriously
- Understand your community
- Promote conversation and education





Set the standard

- Policy and protocol review
- Consistency is key





Strategies: Federal, state, and district level protections



Heidi Goldstein,
SSAIS Board Chair

“Misogynistic and anti-LGBTQ+ behaviors violate students’ right to an education free from sex discrimination. After a federal court vacated the 2024 Title IX regulations on 1/9/25 as unconstitutional, Title IX reverted to the 2020 regulations. Title IX is still the law of the land in the U.S. It includes many useful elements to hold schools accountable: most importantly, the requirement to make the District’s Title IX Coordinator contact information widely known. The Title IX Coordinator is the starting point for anyone needing support and protection from acts of sexual violence, misogyny, or hate that affect access to school resources.” –Heidi Goldstein



Strategies: Federal, state, and district level protections



Heidi Goldstein,
SSAIS Board Chair

“Allies and advocates will need to familiarize themselves with their state law protections against discrimination, which vary widely by state. They must increasingly rely on state laws and school district policies and practices to hold their schools accountable to ensuring safety and equity for all students.” —Heidi Goldstein



Intervention Strategies: Multiculturalism



William A. Howe, Ed.D.
CT State Title IX
Coordinator, Retired

“In the thousands of complaints I handled over 18 years, the overwhelming majority came from white, middle-class suburban households. I found that people of color, immigrants and refugees, and poor people of all backgrounds were reluctant to complain, already feeling marginalized and powerless to obtain any level of justice or support. We must reach out to help those from differing cultural backgrounds understand their rights and develop the skills and understanding to make themselves heard.”—Dr. Bill Howe, former state of Connecticut Title IX Coordinator

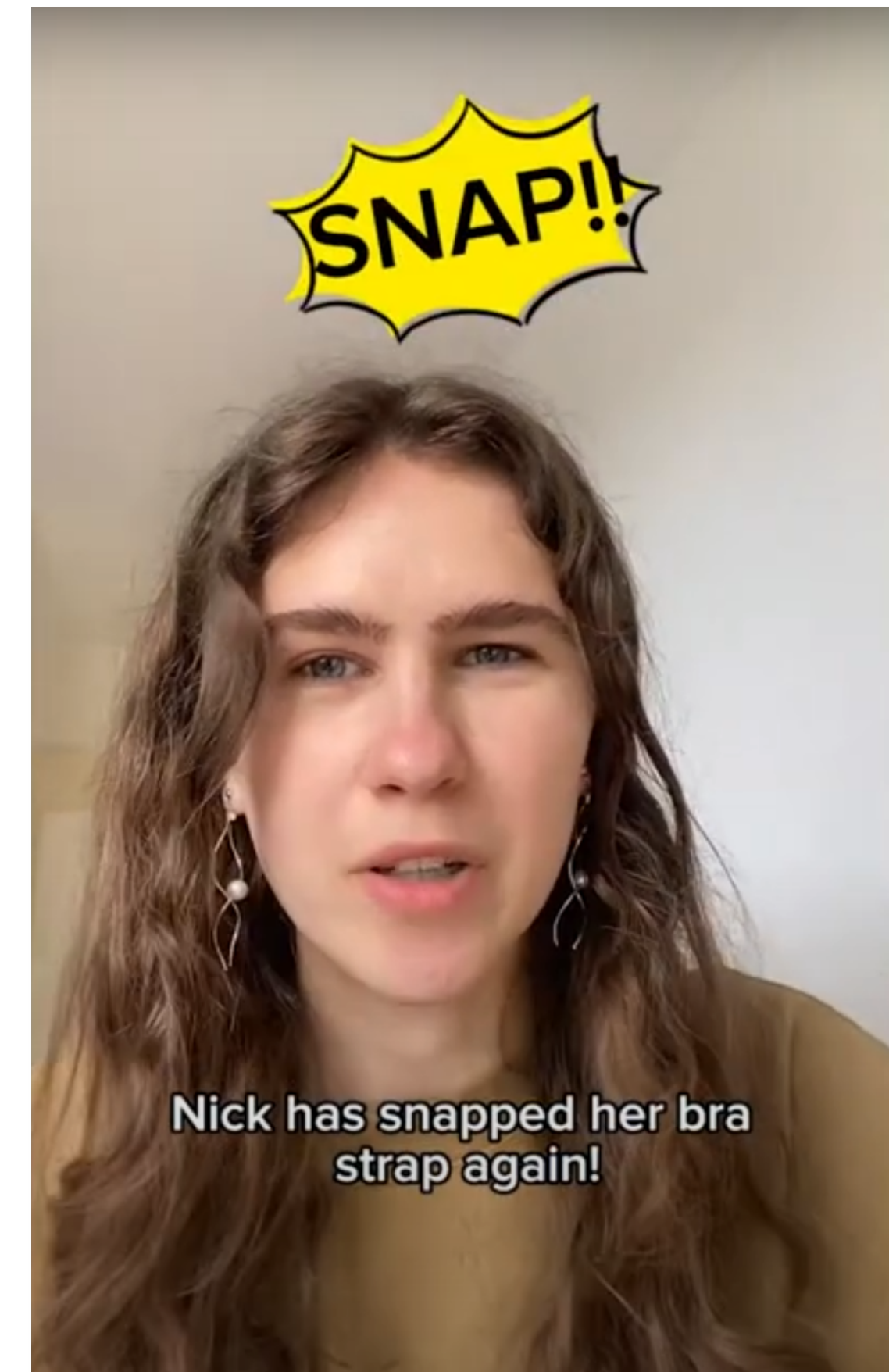


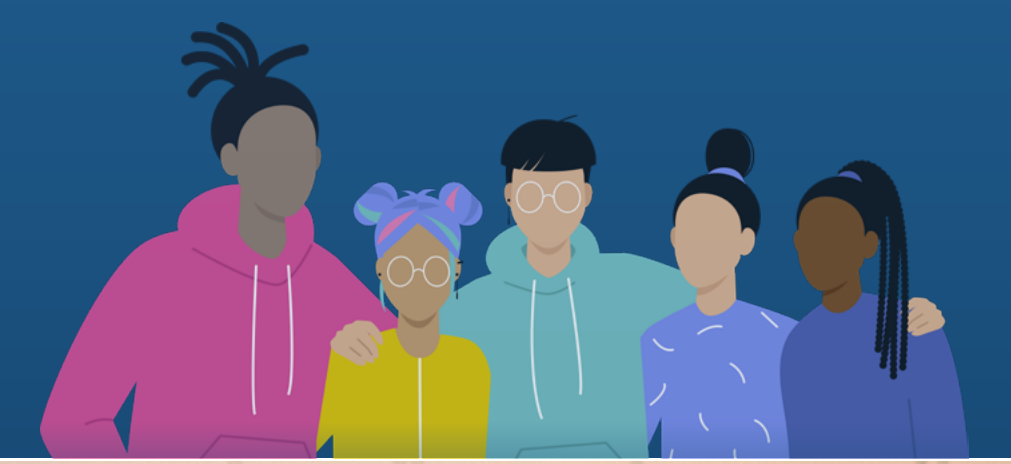
Misogyny in Action

Video: “**Normalizing sexual harassment:
The bra snap!**”

Created by an SSAIS intern

- **Tanya’s complete playlist**





Intervention Strategy: Peer Education

- SASH Club—Students Against Sexual Harassment
- Girls Learn International
- GET: THE PROJECT





SASH Club

SASH Club—Students Against Sexual Harassment—is a peer-education approach to addressing youth sexual harassment and assault. It’s a project of the national nonprofit **Stop Sexual Assault in Schools**.

Watch the AFT webinar **SASH Club: A Peer-Education Approach to Addressing Sexual Harassment and Assault in Schools**.





SASH Club

What are SASH Clubs?

- Safe places for youth to learn about the harms they experience, how to get help, and how to stand up against damaging behaviors
- Opportunities to share opinions, support one another, ask questions, make friends, become leaders





SASH Club

How do SASH Clubs benefit students, schools, and communities?

- Students thrive when they understand and address the harms they experience
- Schools demonstrate their commitment to supporting a culture of respect and gender equity
- Communities and schools can connect through SASH Club activities









SASH Club

What does SASH Club offer?

- Informative **Power Topic** presentations on a wide range of topics of interest to youth
- Educational videos, suggested activities, volunteer opportunities
- Power Topics can be shared with other school clubs or integrated into subject areas
- All resources freely available for download from the SASH Club website
- SASH Club resources are included in the American Federation of Teachers Share My Lesson library: **resources, webinar, article.**



SASH Club Power Topics

Boundaries and Consent  	Sexual Harassment Defined and its Impact on Students  	Rape Culture: Ending Victim Blaming   	Acquaintance Rape and Rape Myths  
Teen Dating Violence   	Alcohol & Date Rape Drugs  	What is Sextortion?   	Title IX Basics   
Boundaries and Consent  	Sexual Harassment Defined and its Impact on Students  	Rape Culture: Ending Victim Blaming   	Activism Basics: How to Advocate, Influence, Communicate, Organize  
Sexual Harassment and Assault Happen to Males Too  	Sexual Harassment and Assault of Students with Disabilities  	Sexual Harassment and Students of Color   	Can Dress Codes Harm Students?  
How to Reform or Abolish School Dress Codes  	Sexual Misconduct by School Employees  	Misogyny and Male Supremacy  	



Our latest Power Topic





Misogyny and Male Supremacy: It's Not Just a Joke

In this **SASH Club Power Topic**, middle- and high-school students will learn:

- What is male supremacy?
- What are examples of male supremacist language and concepts?
- How are boys and young men exposed to misogyny and male supremacist beliefs?
- What is the appeal of male supremacist beliefs to certain individuals?
- What is the impact of misogyny and male supremacist beliefs on students of all genders?
- What are responses educators and students can take to counter misogyny and male supremacist language?





Girls Learn International

GLI educates young people of all genders, ages 10-18, to take action for human rights, gender equality, and access to equitable education.

GLI provides educational materials and opportunities focusing on obstacles girls and gender-expansive youth face in realizing their full rights in the U.S. and globally. GLI teaches leadership skills and connects student advocates and leaders locally, nationally, and globally.





Girls Learn International

With 165 school and community-based chapters, GLI is building a movement of informed advocates devoted to social change. Participation is free of charge.

Learn more:
<https://girlslearn.org/>



GLI A Program of the
Feminist Majority Foundation™





- **GET: The Project Curriculum** (Gender Equity Training) is a bold new free curriculum to challenge gender-based discrimination and foster equity.
- It weaves together leadership development, mental health interventions, media literacy, social-emotional learning, and gender-based violence prevention.
- The curriculum, aimed at high school and college students, features eight modules. Each module includes facilitator guides, handouts, and video clips from The Representation Project films.
- Learn more:
<https://therepproject.org/education/get/>

A screenshot of a digital interface showing a list of workshop topics. The interface has a blue header with three white diamonds and a close button (X) in the top right corner. The title "WORKSHOP TOPICS" is in bold blue text. Below it is a numbered list of eight topics in blue text.

WORKSHOP TOPICS

1. **MEDIA & RIGID GENDER NORMS**
2. **HEALTHY MASCULINITIES**
3. **HEALTHY BODY IMAGE**
4. **HEALTHY DATING RELATIONSHIPS**
5. **IMPLICIT GENDER BIAS**
6. **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**
7. **SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH**
8. **GENDER JUSTICE ACTIVISM**



After completing the GET curriculum, students reported:

**A SIGNIFICANT
DROP IN THEIR
OVERALL SEXISM
SCORE**

**from 52.5
(out of 60)
to 38.5**

25.8%

increase in
knowledge about

**HEALTHY
MASCULINITIES**

24.4%

increase in
knowledge about

**THE HISTORY OF
GENDER JUSTICE
ACTIVISM**

14.3%

increase in
knowledge about

**GENDER
JUSTICE
ISSUES**

9.9%

increase in
knowledge about

**HEALTHY
SOCIAL MEDIA
USE**

7.3%

increase in
knowledge about

**HOW TO EFFECTIVELY
ADVOCATE FOR
YOURSELF**

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Resources





Resources

- Bystander Intervention Models
- Not Just a Joke
- Misogyny and Male Supremacy: It's Not Just a Joke



Bystander Intervention Models

Culture change models that are being used to combat interpersonal violence. Generally, includes three steps:

- Recognizing problematic behavior
- Developing skills to intervene
- Creating community where violence is less likely to occur



Not Just a Joke

Not Just a Joke: Understanding & Preventing Gender- & Sexuality-Based Bigotry was developed by a collaborative team of experts at PERIL and SPLC. This guide provides all adults in the continuum of care that supports young people at home, in school and across their communities with the resources to help prevent manipulation by male supremacist and anti-LGBTQ+ disinformation. For further support and resources, please contact periltrainings@american.edu.



To cite this guide, please use: Bates, Lydia, et al. 2024. "Not Just a Joke: Understanding & Preventing Gender- & Sexuality-Based Bigotry." Southern Poverty Law Center, December 10, 2024. <https://www.splcenter.org/peril>.



Poll Question

Will these resources be useful?

- All of these tools will be useful to me in my classroom/school.
- Some of these tools will be useful to me in my classroom/school.
- I don't think I would be allowed to use these tools in my classroom/school.
- None of these tools are a good fit for me in my classroom/school.



Selected Resources

- [Not Just a Joke: Understanding & Preventing Gender & Sexuality-Based Bigotry](#) (with curated resources)
Bates, Lydia, et.al 2024, Southern Poverty Law Center, Dec. 10, 2024
- [Researchers report stunning surge of misogyny post-election](#) (PBS Newshour, December 2024) with Cynthia Miller-Idriss, professor at American University and director of the school's Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab
- [Misogyny and Male Supremacy: It's Not Just a Joke](#) SASH Club Power Topic, Lydia Bates at the Southern Poverty Law Center and research team at the Polarization and Extremism Research & Innovation Lab at American University
- [Misogyny and gender bias are on the rise: What can educators do?](#) Joel Levin in Share My Lesson Blog
- [The Power of Peer Education to Combat Sexual Harassment](#) Joel Levin in Share My Lesson Blog
- SASH Club [website](#) and [Power Topics](#)
- Stop Sexual Assault in Schools [website](#) and [toolkits](#) for creating gender equity
- Starting important conversations: [How to Address Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault with Children](#)
Jo-Ann Finkelstein, Stop Sexual Assault in Schools



Contact Information

- **SASH Club email:** sashclub@ssais.org
- **SSAIS email:** info@stopsexualassaultinschools.org
- **Instagram:** [@sashclubs](#), [@ssaisorg](#)
- **SASH Club website**
- **SSAIS website**
- **Otis McGresham** otis.mcgrisham@vanderbilt.edu
- **Pasha Dashtgard** dashtgard@american.edu

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Thank you

