



## GIRLS GET VIOLENT FOR FAME?

### A momlogic Discussion Guide for Moms and Teens

Whether your child has witnessed a physical fight in person or online – or even been involved in one herself – these talking points will help you keep her safe.

**Tip: Ask your child what she thinks about girls fighting.**

**Script: "Have you heard about girls at your school fighting? What happened?"**

**Why It Works:** "The number one thing you should do to is talk to your child -- and listen to what she says," suggests psychologist Dr. Lisa Boesky. "She might not only be the victim of this behavior, she could be the one perpetrating it."

**Tip: Keep the lines of communication open.**

**Script: "What would you do or say if a friend made you angry or hurt your feelings? Who could you talk to?"**

**Why It Works:** "Give them the words and skills to deal with jealousy, conflict, anger, and competition," says Boesky. "Someone may steal your daughter's boyfriend, but the answer is not to beat that girl up. Too many girls today are reacting in a physical way to hurt the person who hurt them."

**Tip: Set a no-tolerance policy.**

**Script: "I will not allow fighting -- period."**

**Why It Works:** According to Boesky, "A lot of parents send the message, 'If someone disrespects you, you need to make them pay.' Wrong! "Set specific, consistent, and strong consequences for physical aggression -- and for drugs and alcohol, which contribute directly to this behavior," says therapist Dr. Shannon Fox. "You can't just say, 'Oh, well, you were mad,' or 'It wasn't that big of a deal,' because your attitude about physical aggression really colors your teen's attitude about it."

**Tip: Restrict your child's access to the computer.**

**Script: "I will be limiting and monitoring your time on the computer."**

**Why It Works:** "I spend 15 minutes online with my son every night, looking over his shoulder," says Rabbi Sherre Hirsch. "When I see something I don't like, I shut the computer off. He hates it, but you know what? I'm his parent, not his friend." Boesky agrees. "Research shows that watching violence can desensitize viewers and increase aggression." In other words, watch what your daughter is watching.

**Tip: Let your child know that standing on the sidelines isn't OK.**

**Script: "If you see something like this, tell me or another authority figure."**

**Why It Works:** "Tell her what she should do if she witnesses this sort of thing going on," says Boesky. "She shouldn't be taking pictures or cheering it on -- she should be going to get help and making it stop." Hirsch adds, "We need to teach our children that right and wrong applies in the virtual world as well as in the schoolyard. Tell your child that if they see violent posts on YouTube, they should talk to you."