

Girl can play a crucial role in solving the most persistent development problems we face in the World today. When we include girls in education, health and economic investment we have a better chance of preventing issues such as child marriage, teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and breaking the inter-generational cycle of poverty. But girls can't do it alone; they need the world to listen to them and invest in their potential.

– *The Girl Effect*



I AM ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR THE WOMEN WHO HAVE FOUGHT THE FIGHTS, EARNED MY RIGHTS, OPENED DOORS, AND SET THE STAGE FOR ME TO LIVE VIBRANTLY!

– Sylvia Baffour



Girls of Essence



NEWS EDITION
Empowering Girls and Women



Greetings!

Thank you for taking time to review our first Girls of Essence News Edition which is designed to give mothers, daughters and supporters the opportunity to share their thoughts and views on various topics and issues that girls and women alike experience in a lifetime. We believe that every woman and girl has a voice, and a story to be told that could give hope to someone else.

250 **MILLION**
ADOLESCENT GIRLS
LIVE IN POVERTY.

**THEY ARE THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE
FOR CHANGE ON THIS PLANET**

A Daughter's Voice



Your daughter has a voice, let her use it! It's not about you, it's about her growth."

I can remember me being a girl with a little spunk and sneaky at times. I used my mind to get back at my siblings when they hurt me or when I watched my father and my mother argue. I learned how to beat them up in my mind or tell them to stop arguing and I even envisioned me telling them I love them

You may ask why I didn't speak up. Why didn't I say anything? If you asked those questions, then you missed it! I had a voice that was silent to the ear. I had a voice that was blind to the eye. I had a voice that was minute to the touch. I had a voice, but the outside world would never hear of it. I controlled the voice with my mind because to speak it would have been terrifying

You must start an effective way for a child to communicate how they are feeling. How they are hurting. How what you have said too them, shaped their insecurities. You must allow that inner voice to ring as loud as possible out of a child. The problem is we use the same antics as our mommas and daddies used on us to keep a child in line. Haven't you heard that every child is different? Every child must be treated and raised differently? Of course your children need to have the same guidance, morals and discipline. Reason, you do not

want one of your children to feel less important. Still each child will react differently to your teachings.

When you sow seeds in your children, especially your daughters, you must treat them like you do your garden. Will you give the same amount of water to a cactus as you would to a tomato vine? No, though they are seeds they each require different attention. I have a son that is 4 years old and a daughter who is 13 years old. My son is somewhat easy to raise, though he is supper active and out spoken I tell him something and he does it. My daughter on the other hand is quiet, reserved and sneaky. Look we have something in common, she is sneaky now and I was sneaky then! Our daughters are not that far from who we were as youth. I raised my daughter as I was raised to not have a voice. It wasn't intentional; it was a trait that was given to me without a choice. I didn't give my daughter options or choices. I was her mom and I made the choices and if there were options I decided for her. Guess what I was building, a teenaged time bomb who I despised!

My 4 year old son will tell me quick how much I hurt him, how much what I said hurt and he would request reasons to why he is time out. I know what you may be thinking, because trust me I was thinking the same way. "Little boy I'm you mother and I say what I mean," I would tell him. Then one day a light switch came on. I had a moment. I compared my children. Then I started wishing my daughter was a little open like her brother. I even told her that, she had the most confused look on her face. At that moment I realized that she had the same type of sadness in her eyes as I had when I was a little girl. No! This wasn't supposed to be happening! I was not supposed to make my daughter feel the way I felt. "Oh Lord what do I do?" She has adopted my habits of shutting down and finding ways to comfort her, because she had no voice. She started eating,

by Cilla

stealing, talking to boys and even making herself bleed by scratching sores on her arms and legs.

First call of action is prayer. She didn't trust me to be open. Why? I'm her mother. We tried counseling, mentors, aunts and uncles and whoever would listen to my cry. Of course her dad is not in her life, but that's another blog. What do I do? How to do I turn 13 years of my blind eye to my daughter around? Slowly I started making changes within myself, because guess what, I had so much past bagged that I would not be the best example for her. I had some inner demons that I had to pray for God to break the chains to. Next ask her about her day. I had to show her that I was interested in just how her day was. As we were doing better and getting alone, here comes the devil showing his ugly face. She started to undercover dating a little nappy headedboy. Which was a big no, no and when I asked her my rules about that, she told me verbatim. It took everything in me to remain calm!! No matter what I said, Mrs. Donna at MDK said, or the man with the blue face in the moon said, she believed this little boy. He took my place. He listened to her! She had a voice with him. She expressed to him how much I hurt her. He called her "Bae." He told her she wasn't "just a friend" and "how she is not like the other girls" and "how beautiful she was." Now I do tell my daughter she is beautiful and I give her roses and chocolate, just because, but he was more special. Listen moms don't let your daughters go out in the world and connecting with terrorist who comes to destroy their future and be that "Example" you are supposed to be to them.

Now like most moms I could have gotten distracted and I could have went back to my old ways of handling my daughter, but I got God in my life and He told me to be patient and talk to her and don't discipline her. See when you are desperate for a break through, the directions that just don't make sense be the ones that turn everything around. One day my daughter and I was driving in the car, now one thing about me, I started talking to my daughter about sex, boys, lies and truth and honesty since she was an infant, I just never let her have an input/output. I asked her about this boy "Darrell" she was talking too. I expressed to her some truth about boys and about not having her dad can be the reason for the connection to the male species, but guess what else I did. Instead of talking down to her, I allowed her voice to come up and include her response. Not only did she respond, but she also had my ear. For the first time my daughter had my ear and I listened and I responded in a way that changed her life. It changed my daughter. That moment bonded my daughter and I. Guess what else. She cleans her room, she dresses more like a young lady, she spends time with her brother and she started her own business. Also she now set goals, just like she made the Volleyball team at her school.

I had to humble myself if any chains were going to be broken between my daughter and I. No matter what they say or how much it hurts you, Shut Your Damn Mouth and let your daughter speak. Let her have a voice, God gave her one and it must be used. Our daughters are struggling and out there in the world going from example to example, when we, the mothers, are supposed to be there example, especially when their fathers are absent. I employ you to try it. I prayed to God to show me the way, because I was losing my daughter and I refused to have let the world have her. She is the most important thing to me. I love my daughter with my all of my heart. You should love yours too!

Your daughter has a voice, let her use it! It's not about you, it's about her growth.

Girl, Don't Let a Boy Get in Your Way

by Genezia Johnson



Want me to tell you why I am writing you this topic? Well, I am going to give you some reasons why:

- + *Say you are in school and you find this "special" guy that you believe it's who you've been looking for and only focused on, so you start asking about him.*
- + *You're always looking at him and he is looking back at you and he may be saying, "Why is she looking at me?"*
- + *You're failing in your schoolwork, because you are now going out with this boy that was so "special" to you.*

The reason that I am saying this is because I had a boy in my way over the summer and it was hard to not be around him. I did like him and I had to learn the hard way that a boy is never a good choice and he really don't care who you are and what you find in him. Don't let boys get in your way, because some boys now are very tough and they will do anything to hurt you and they won't care. But at the end of the day he goes home and talks about you

to his friends in a bad way. Then you go home beat up emotionally and your parents are wondering what kind of day you had. It is so hard to tell them what happens, because you don't want them to be yelling at you. Then you tell parents and then they go tell the police and all of that begins. So that's why I stay away from boys I like, because I don't want anything to happen to me. So never let a boy treat you some type of way, because boys aren't the best choice right now! I say that, because how they act now and then, so this is why I don't let a boy get in my way and you should not have them get in your way too, because they are not good.... right now.

The Season to be Thankful

Be Thankful

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire, If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something For it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times. During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations Because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge Because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary Because it means you've made a difference.

It is easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks.

GRATITUDE can turn a negative into a positive. Find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they can become your blessings.

Author Unknown