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Sidman: Hey, have you heard the latest rumors about school gossip?

By **Melanie Sidman**/ Guest Columnist

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Everyone gossips. It happens during class, in the halls, at lunch, and after school. Some of the things you hear have the slightest bit of truth to them, but 99.9 percent of the juicy stories flying around the school gossip network are entirely made up.

So how does it start and how in the world does it spread so fast? Gossip starts by someone not respecting another's privacy. It could also be a special discussion between friends that was supposed to be kept quiet. If you want to get an idea of how quickly a rumor can spread around school, consider this: I could tell my friend a story during first period (yes, I am gossiping) about Timmy and his girlfriend from Mexico, and by the time fourth period comes around, half the school is already talking about Timmy and his girlfriend from Bulgaria and that they eloped and moved to Georgia.

Something that starts off as an innocent chat between you and your friend becomes everyone's way to pass the time. Most of the time, these stories evolve into the moldy cherry to top off someone's year. Rumors and gossip are a lot like the game "operator" or "telephone." By then end of the game, the whole sentence is different. Friendships are broken over stories that start about someone. There are people who even feel the need to go to another school because they are so hurt.

Why does it also always seem that it is mainly girls who are doing the gossiping? Girls fight by using complicated mental tactics. There is no "meet me after school" or "I'm going to punch your lights out." Every battle is a mental game between girls. They may act like friends in front of people, but all the fighting is done undercover. Starting rumors is a sure-fire way to get back at an old friend or a new enemy. Of course, the person you started a rumor about could just start one about you, but the emotional damage caused by a rumor could take you out of the game.

There also is no real way to explain starting a rumor about someone. What do you say; "Oh, sorry, my mouth decided that it didn't like you and the words just came out?" Making up isn't that easy, and truly special friendships can easily be wrecked. Guys start rumors too, but they usually don't seem to escalate to the levels of the back-stabbing vicious girl rumors. Is there really a need for gossiping? Of course, if it's harmless it's fine, but it doesn't need to become cruel and used as an intentional way to hurt someone. Many of the kids who attend RMHS, or

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any high school, have probably had a rumor started about them, big or small. It isn't fun if it's something bad, and if you enjoy having bad rumors spread about you, than there is something going on with you that needs to get checked out professionally. People need to be more careful about whom they are talking about and how greatly that person could be affected by the rumors and gossip that is spread through school.

I could probably tell you about some of the stories I've heard floating around school and the things that have happened to the people they were about, but then again, that would be gossiping.

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