

Michael Thompson      Monday, January 23  
Chaminade College Preparatory School

**Best Friends/Worst Enemies: Friendship Development, Popularity and Social Cruelty in Childhood**

Children don't want adults to be involved in their social lives. They hate it when teachers “interfere.” Yet teachers are witnesses to the exclusion of low-status children in elementary schools and the popularity wars of middle school and they must act to protect the weak. Parents also see the friendship difficulties of their own children. Some take their children's social ambitions to heart and worry that their children are not popular. Other parents hope the school can protect their children from all social pain.

Social cruelty among kids is one of the most difficult things that adults have to confront in raising or educating children. Experienced teachers can be confused about how to protect a child in class, for fear of putting a rejected or controversial child in “the limelight.” They can also feel defensive when parents of neglected or victimized children come to the school for help.

This presentation walks teachers and parents through the complex social world of childhood and addresses a number of questions: What do social relationships in school predict about happiness in adult life? What is the normal sequence of child friendships, from the parallel play of the two-year-old to the intimate self-disclosure of the adolescent? Why do cliques form and what are the differences between boy and girl groups? Why are children scapegoated and how can their parents and school protect them? Dr. Thompson will draw on research to highlight the differences between friendship and popularity. He makes suggestions about the management of social problems in schools and makes the case that while all children yearn for popularity, it is friendship that helps children survive and thrive.

**Michael Thompson, Ph.D.** is a consultant, author and psychologist specializing in children and families. He is the clinical consultant to The Belmont Hill School and has worked in more than five hundred schools across the United States, as well as in international schools in Central America, Europe and Asia. He is an author and co-author of numerous books and articles on raising and educating boys in America; most notable is his New York Times best-selling book, *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys* (Ballantine Books, 1999). Publisher's Weekly review declared about one of his works, “Not since Dr. Spock and Penelope Leach has there been such a sensitive and practical guide to raising healthy children.” Dr. Thompson's works have helped parents understand the complex journey of children through school, from Kindergarten through senior year. A dedicated speaker and traveler, Michael Thompson has appeared on The Today Show, The Oprah Winfrey Show, ABC 20/20, CBS 60 Minutes, The Early Show and Good Morning America and National Public Radio. He has been quoted in the New York Times, The Washington Post, Newsweek, Time and U.S. News and World Report. He has written, narrated and hosted a two-hour PBS documentary entitled “Raising Cain” broadcast in January of 2006.

**Program Time:**            4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

**Program Fee:**            The cost of attendance for each of the “Rush Hour” sessions is \$40 per person. If 5 or more teachers attend from one school, the cost of attendance is \$30 per teacher.

	<b>ISSL</b>	
	<b>Member Schools</b>	<b>Non-member Schools</b>

<b>Michael Thompson</b>	<b>\$40.00</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
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Monday, January 23, 2012

Registration Deadline: January 16

**To Register For Michael Thompson:**

Register online at [www.independentschools.org](http://www.independentschools.org) or fill out the information below and mail to the address below.

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Please make checks payable to:  
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Name changes and substitutions may be made up to three business days before the start date. Your registration will be confirmed after all fees are paid in full. No Refunds.

