

# REAL LIFE

home town  
LOS ANGELES



**WE WERE BULLIED**  
Lauren and Molly now help bullies break the habit.

EVERYDAY HEROES

## Anti-Bullying Buddies

Two women who were bullied as teens use their stories to teach girls how to be nice to one another

**ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS** Lauren Paul, 30, learned in the seventh grade had nothing to do with math or science—it was that, in a heartbeat, your soul can be crushed by the actions of peers. A group of girls Lauren thought were her friends organized behind her back to launch a two-year reign of emotional terror against her, pushing her to the brink of suicide. “I was scared to go to school,” she says. “Finding places to hide there became a daily routine.” Years later, in college, she confided her desire to film a documentary about girl-on-girl bullying to a friend, Molly Thompson, who confessed that she had been bullied, too. Together, the two embarked on a minivan road trip to film women and girls across the country talking about bullying. “We found heartbreaking stories,” says Lauren. “Women sharing experiences of what their daughters go through, how their own experiences still affect them...it felt like we were popping the lid off something.” Their documentary, *Finding Kind*, has been shown →



**COMPASSION CURE**

Lauren and Molly spreading their message of kindness. “We tell them, ‘We’ve been there, we remember what it’s like, and we survived. You will, too,’” says Lauren.

in 1,550 schools worldwide as part of the Kind Campaign, a nonprofit organization Lauren and Molly, also 30, founded in 2009. Through it, the two host school assemblies for girls, starting each by asking who has been affected by something negative that someone has said to her. “Every hand in the room shoots up,” says Molly. “Then we ask them to keep their hands up or raise them if they’ve ever said something negative to another girl. And pretty much every hand stays up. We do that to showcase that we are all in this together; it’s not about labeling anyone as a victim or a bully.”

**APOLOGIES THAT HEAL**

Next, Lauren and Molly tell their stories of being bullied and show the documentary, “which leaves them feeling inspired and hopeful,” says Molly. Afterward, the girls take the Kind Pledge, a promise to create change in their school or community; write a Kind Apology, a note they give to a person they’ve hurt; and make a Kind Card, a thank-you to someone who has had a positive impact on their life.

“It’s incredible to watch a girl fill out her apology and give it to the person she’s hurt,” says Molly. “The healing takes place because of a simple sheet of paper that starts an important conversation between those two people.”

**THE POWER OF BEING KIND**

To support the assemblies, Lauren and Molly fund-raise and partner with companies such as Kohl’s and Keep Collective to produce Kind Campaign T-shirts and jewelry featuring anti-bullying slogans like “You can sit with us.” (See their merchandise at [kindcampaign.com](http://kindcampaign.com).)

Over the years, Lauren and Molly have witnessed many breakthrough moments: a girl who made a courageous speech to her peers about how she felt invisible to them—and was embraced by a standing ovation; a teen who wrote that she had been suicidal the morning of the assembly but that the Kind Campaign had saved her life. “That struck us deeply,” says Molly. “Stories like that inspire us to make sure we reach as many people as possible.” —Jennifer Chen

**SWEET TEES**

Cute tops that lift your spirits—and enhance women’s lives

What started as a side hustle for stay-at-home mom Mandy Osborne, 35, quickly grew into a full-fledged business: Since 2013, Milk and Honey Tees ([milkandhoneytees.com](http://milkandhoneytees.com)) has made stylish shirts featuring fun, positive prose, with a portion of profits benefiting an entrepreneurial program for women in Rwanda. “As someone who runs a business and a family, it’s important to me to empower women to be able to do the same,” says Mandy. (Learn how to jump-start your own side hustle on page 79.)—Alexis Relford



**YOUR BOOKSHELF**

**Hot New Reads**

Stash a page-turner in your beach bag!



**MARRIAGE DO-OVER**

**THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY** by Leigh Himes

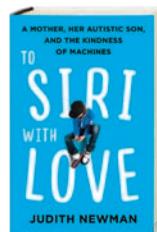
Overworked mom Abbey bonks her head and wakes up as the rich wife of a man she passed up years ago. Is this cushy life better? A fresh, creative love story.



**TRUTH TIME**

**THE LYING GAME** by Ruth Ware

The author of *The Woman in Cabin 10* delivers a thoughtful thriller about four friends whose shared childhood secret threatens them now. A gripping whodunnit.



**MOM MEMOIR**

**TO SIRI WITH LOVE** by Judith Newman

The author’s son, who has autism, finds his BFF in Apple’s personal helper. This warm series of stories offers a glimpse of what it’s like to parent a child who has a touch of magic in his soul.