

# Learning to embrace their natural beauty

## FYER holds workshop Monday

BY MIKE PATRICK  
REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

WATERBURY — It didn't surprise Jacquee Porter when news reports surfaced last week that an African-American news anchor in Mississippi was told her natural hair was "unprofessional."

Porter is creator of Save Girls on FYER, a city-based charity that holds workshops and programs aimed at empowering girls.

On Monday, her organization will host a workshop aimed at helping those girls learn to appreciate their natural hair.

"Because of social media and just society, and you see people in corporate America and different settings saying their natural hair is not appropriate, we want girls to know that this is what they were born with and this is their natural beauty," Porter said Friday.

African-American women have long been taught by society their natural hair was unacceptable, she said, adding the wives of slave owners would routinely shave the heads of female slaves, fearing the natural look was too alluring for their husbands.

The free workshop, titled "Love Your Kinks," will include that history lesson, she said.

Porter called the recent trend that has seen more African-American women wear their hair naturally "a major movement," driven, in part, by black celebrities who have embraced the look.

"Growing up in our age, we would get perms or chemicals in our hair because it



CONTRIBUTED

Jacquee Porter, whose Save Girls on FYER girl-empowerment charity will host a workshop Monday aimed at helping African-American girls learn to appreciate their natural hair.

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# NATURAL: 10 girls have signed up

wasn't considered beautiful," she said. "I think culturally, that has changed and we've gotten back to people accepting who they are, taking care of that natural hair."

To help the girls take care of it, they'll use natural materials to create their own hair care products. A photo shoot afterward, she said, will help them "embrace their natural beauty."

About 10 girls between the ages of 11 and 17 have signed

up for the workshop, which has room for a total of 15 girls, she said.

"We're basically showing them it's acceptable because this is your natural form," said Chamayne Christian, event coordinator for Save Girls on F.Y.E.R. "You're not anything less. You don't have to conform with dying or bleaching or straightening it."

Love Your Kinks will take place Monday from 10 a.m.,

to 2 p.m., at Save Girls On FYER, Inc., 276 Highland Ave.

The organization is also accepting registrations for its Girls on FYER Leadership Academy, an eight-month course that teaches girls of color strategies to succeed.

To register for either event, search for it on Facebook or call 203-596-0700.

*Contact Mike Patrick at [mpatrick@rep-am.com](mailto:mpatrick@rep-am.com)*