Girls Solving Real Social Issues

Catherine O’Kane
Principal
All Hallows’ School, Brisbane
NCGS Conference, Washington, June 2017
All Hallows’ School

- Independent Catholic, all girls’ school founded in 1861 by the Sisters of Mercy
- Oldest secondary school in Queensland
- 1550 students, Years 5 – 12
- 210 permanent staff, 150+ seasonal/casual staff
- Located in the Brisbane CBD on 3 hectare, heritage listed campus
Why Girl Talk?

Police investigate pornography ring targeting Australian schoolgirls

Schools address 'disturbing, predatory, misogynistic' content
Brisbane's Southern Cross Catholic College held a meeting with all staff and students this morning.

Principal Brad Horton discussed the website and the language "which is disturbing and devalues predatory, misogynistic and violent content".

"I explained some of the real-life consequences of sharing these images which range from humiliation and ostracism through to legal implications including criminal charges," he said in a statement.

Brisbane's All Hallows School principal Catherine O'Kane has written to parents acknowledging the school was named as one of those targeted.

"Today and during the remainder of this week, we will meet with our students in Years 7 to 12 to discuss the ongoing challenge that pornography presents for our young women," she said.
Why Girl Talk?

• Year 11 and 12 students raised the issue that “we don’t know what is really happening” in girl-world.

• Initially about social media – how could we “message” more effectively to our girls?

• We thought that we knew the right messages ….. but did we?

• Even if we had the right message, were the girls listening to “us”? 
Leaning In – Building our network

• Letters to Minister for Education and Commissioner for Children’s Safety
• Invitation for our girls to present at the “Out of the Dark” Forum;
• Invitation for our girls to assist at the Children’s Safety Information Festival at the Queensland State Library
Leaning In – Building our network

Our girls presented at the “Out of the Dark” Forum
Lauren with Cheryl Vardon, Commissioner for Children’s Safety
Brisbane, Feb 2017
Cheryl Vardon, Commissioner for Children’s Safety visited Girl Talk on International Women’s Day Brisbane, March 2017
Getting down to work

Regular Girl Talk team meetings were established April – June 2017
Meeting 6: 11 May 2017

Wednesday, 10 May 2017 | 2:02 PM

Agenda Item | Notes
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Launch Feedback | N/A
Survey Results | Soc tab
Topic and format for first gathering | 1st. Friendships - Navigating Friendships
 | 2nd. Body image
- Past it makes on small - so people don’t have to speak
- Soc, think, wonder about All Hallows’ girls
- Use the screens to put up a PowerPoint slide
- Statement time: go to one end of the room if you agree/disagree
- Keep all conversations positive!
- Don’t let it become a female dog session
- Do a scenario and a response card
- How would you use character strengths to solve problem?
NAME: Talking the Sens on the Friend-Ship
PLAN FOR THE ISS:
- Start with a large group - this conversation is directed by you
- There will be no true or name asking
- Begin with a warm-up - number 1.
- If you strongly agree and number 3. If you don’t agree
Questions to ask:
1. In your year level, are most groups stable?
2. In your year level, do you observe bullying?
3. In your year level, is their movement between groups?
4. In your year level, would people be anxious if someone moved out of their group?
5. In your year level, do you find people drifting?
6. In your year level, do you think people can solve their own friendship problems?
7. Something positive?
- Move to small groups - find out what kind of behaviours you observe?
- Share great and had experiences!
Getting down to work

• Terms of Reference:
  • A student led and organised group providing forums for discussion of topics that are relevant to young women and as determined by All Hallows’ girls.
## Agenda Item

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<tr>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Out of the Dark</strong> CEA</td>
<td>Thank you to all who attended - your help was most appreciated by the organisers. Student response - it was fun; it was a worthwhile experience; made some good contacts with organisations.</td>
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<td><strong>Alannah and Madeline Foundation (Hannah)</strong></td>
<td>Great resources for 5&amp;6 as well as 7&amp;8. The eSmart Digital Licence program. <a href="http://www.digitallicence.com.au">www.digitallicence.com.au</a>. CEA to contact Foundation to find out more (contact made via email 14/3)</td>
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<td><strong>Class OneNote CEA</strong></td>
<td>CEA to set up OneNote for collection of resources as well as meeting notes</td>
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<td><strong>Year 9 Assembly - Term 2</strong></td>
<td>Milana and Harper to coordinate: • Available apps and how they can be used positively • Screencast walkthrough the app and the privacy settings • Shared wisdom about the use of these apps</td>
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<td><strong>Official Launch of ‘Girl Talk’ group</strong></td>
<td>CKA to discuss with Mr Adamson a possible launch date for a full school assembly. Assembly launch coordinators are: Hannah, Eleanor, Esther and Madeleine. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51-hepLPBi4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51-hepLPBi4</a></td>
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<td><strong>Possible topics for ‘Girl Talk’ to focus on</strong></td>
<td>• Mental health issues • Social media and digital presence • Violence • Navigating friendship issues</td>
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<td><strong>Next Meeting</strong></td>
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Survey of all students to determine topic:
- Navigating difficult friendships
- Healthy relationships
- Peer pressure
- Positive uses of social media and internet
- Managing stress and maintaining balance
Getting down to work – Forum #1
Respect
Compassion
Integrity
Joy
Service
Justice

Getting down to work – Year 9 Assembly Presentation
What next for Girl Talk?

• One Student Forum presentation each term.
• One Assembly presentation each term.
• Considering guest speaker presentations.
• Feedback is obtained from each presentation.
• Provides an excellent leadership opportunity for our girls;
• We did not have the correct messages (eg content of social media, focus on “what is wrong” with social media);
• Our girls will listen to the older girls;
• There is strong interest in the work of this group.
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