

Y's Girl Activities





Start Up Activities



Y's Girl Start Up Activities

★ **Body Signatures**

Girls to stand in a circle.

In the first session begin by explaining what a Body Signature is.

Each session we will begin with our 'Body Signatures'. A Body Signature is a movement of a single or multiple body parts that reflects your mood, feelings and energy levels. As you do your movement you call out your name. The rest of the group will copy your Body Signature and call back your name.

Demonstrate your Body Signature to the girls then ask the girl on your left to perform her Body Signatures and move around the circle.

Encourage the girls to be creative and confident in their Body Signatures by acknowledging the various movements our bodies can perform.

Our body parts can move in so many different and wonderful ways. From your toes, to your nose, your neck, ankle or belly or in combination. Why not see if you can come up with something unique to you?

At the beginning of each session ask a different girl to volunteer to start off with her Body Signature. She can then decide which way they go around the circle.

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★ **Body Moves**

Girls to stand in a circle.

Body Moves follows on from Body Signatures each session. Body Moves helps to focus and centre the girls, ready for the session's activities. One or two Body Moves can be selected each week from this list or facilitators may have some of their own.

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1. Ski Slope

Releases stored and excess emotion and tension through the breath. Explain the activity to the girls.

Imagine you are at the top of a snow capped mountain set to ski down the slope.

Knees bent and hands on skis.

Big breath in filling the belly while you swing your arms up to above you.

Then swing arms forward so they hang and swing back and forth by the sides of your legs. Make a "whoosh" while releasing all the air out through your mouth until the last little breath of air is released.

2. Milking the Cow

Opens and stretches the sides of the body. Explain the activity to the girls.

Left heel flat presses into floor

Other foot pressing up on ball of foot, ankle raised

Left arm stretches up to ceiling and pulls down as if you are milking a humungous cow

Alternate reaching right hand up and pressing down with right heel.

Repeat switching sides 5-6 times.

3. Tree Pose

Effective for balance and focus.

Balance on left foot

Right sole of foot rests on inside of left ankle or knee.

Right hip and knee open.

Bring your palms together in front of your chest and focus on a spot on floor or wall.

Eyes still and body still.

4. Easy Partner Foot Massage

A great introduction to the benefits of partner massage for this age group.

1. Demonstrate first with a partner with girls in large circle.

One partner (receiver) lies tummy down on floor, relaxed with head to side, ankles opening out comfortably.

The other partner (giver) stands facing away from receiver with her feet together between her partners. The 'receiver's' ankles should almost be touching the feet of the standing 'giver's'.

The 'giver' then places the balls of both her feet just in front of her partner's toes, ankles slightly lifted over her partner's feet.

The Giver then keeps her weight grounded and centred on the balls of her feet, helping with her balance.

The Giver then places one heel softly on the sole of the receivers foot. The Giver softly shifts her weight from left to right, gently pressing one heel at a time into the receivers soles.

Note: Only the heels of the 'giver' touch the 'receiver's' feet.

The 'giver' can very slightly shift her own feet so that she is gently massaging different parts of her partners soles.

2. Divide the circle of girls in half, asking one half to create a smaller inner circle and the other to form an outer circle around them. The girls in the inner circle then begin the foot massage to their partner opposite in the outer circle.

3. After two minutes ask the girls to swap over.

★ Emo Game

Ask girls to stand in a circle.

Ask girls to name four different types of emotions that they have experienced.

Explain that we all have an emotional scale, which is the level to which we experience emotions.

For example: Sad

1 = glum, unhappy

5 = head down, little eye contact, not talking

10 = crying, in a crouching position

Role play 'sad' to the girls, making no noise, use your body and facial expressions to show different levels of sadness on the emotional scale. Begin at one and end at ten.

Choose one of the four emotions stated by the girls.

Ask girls to walk slowly and silently around the room and role play the emotion according to the scale nominated.

Call out a number from 1 to 10, allowing enough time between numbers for girls to role play.

Repeat with another emotion.

★ Dance Tiggy

Set up the music player with music.

Two girls are designated 'taggers'. These girls should aim to tag all of the girls in the group.

If you are tagged, you stop where you are and bust out a dance move on the spot.

Once tagged the girl must stop where she is and bust out a dance move on the spot.

After seven seconds of dancing together both are free.

During the game remember to look out for each other and help the girls who have been tagged.'

Ask two girls to volunteer to be 'taggers' and turn on the music. Stop music after one minute and ask another two girls to volunteer to be 'taggers'.

★ Imaginary Object

Ask girls to sit in a circle.

Today we are going to pass an imaginary object around the circle. The object can be anything you would like it to be. I would like you to spend some time exploring the object, even if you don't know what it is.

Begin the activity by informing the girls that the object you are holding is a baby. As you pass the baby onto the next person tell the girls that the object can be changed into anything they like.

Encourage each person to spend some time with the object they were passed even if they don't know what it is.

Support the girls to let their body change depending on what they are holding and encourage them to 'trust themselves and be confident.

★ Mirrors

Divide girls into pairs. Ask girls to partner with a member of the group that they would not usually sit next to.

Ask the girls to stand facing each other and explain the activity;

Today we are going to explore what it is like to mirror each other. One partner will lead while the other partner will mirror (follow) the leader's body movements and facial expressions. There is to be no noise during this activity.

Ask the girls to decide who will lead and who will mirror. Ask the pairs to begin the mirroring activity. After one and a half minutes, ask pairs to swap roles.

After both pairs have had a turn at leading and mirroring ask the girls the following questions for a brief discussion:

What makes it easier to mirror someone?

What makes it harder?

What does it feel like to mirror someone?

Did it feel better to be the leader or the mirror?

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★ Grow Sound Circle

Ask the girls to stand in a circle.

Begin the activity by making a sound and movement at the same time.

Ask the girl next to you to repeat the sound and movement, except this time a little louder and a larger movement.

Explain to the girls that today we will grow a sound. As the sound and movement travels around the circle they both will grow in noise and intensity. When the movement reaches the last person in the circle, the sound should 'explode'.

Practice the activity using the initial 'pop' sound.

Ask different girls in the group to take turns starting different sound such as 'rah' and 'moo'.

This activity provides an opportunity for the girls to see how each person is contributing to the sound. To help convey this idea to the girls explain that:

'Our sound is like an electrical current travelling around the group. Think of a light bulb: when the bulb has full electricity it is always bright. When there are gaps in the electricity or gaps in our sound this will cause the light flicker. Let's try and have it run bright!'

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★ You/Me

Ask the girls to stand in circle.

Role play to the girls You/Me by approaching a girl in the group and saying 'you' whilst making eye contact. Ask the girl you have approached to reply with 'me' whilst maintaining eye contact.

Take the position in the circle of the girl you have just approached who now walks into the centre of the circle and approach another girl to repeat the you/me process.

When the game is running smoothly stop the game and ask girls to think of three emotions that they actively feel.

After the girls have brainstormed three emotions choose one emotion and ask the girls to take on that emotion.

Resume playing You/Me, however this time the group must role play.

Change the emotion another two times, emphasising the importance of eye contact.

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★ Freeze Frame Pictures

Ask the girls to sit in a group on the floor. Make sure there is a space for the girls to create their picture.

Introduce Freeze Frame Pictures to the girls;

Today we are going to create several pictures using our bodies. The first picture we will create is a picture 'at the beach'.

Ask volunteers one by one to come up and begin building the picture. Encourage the girls to build on each other and to work as a team to develop their picture.

If girls are struggling to fit into the picture you can place your hand on the back of a person in the picture. The girl is then allowed to speak out about what they are being. This can be helpful if it is not clear.

If you would like to extend this activity, you may like to incorporate a 'time jump'.

For example, ask the girls in the picture to make a house. Inform the girls that when you clap your hands you must show me the house in 10 years, then in 50 years, 100 years and finally in 1000 years.

Other pictures you may like to begin with include:

- A bowl of fruit
 - A racing car
 - A hair dryer
 - A wedding
 - A funeral
 - At the beach
 - A fight
 - At the hospital etc.
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Red Dress Activities



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The Red Dress

The Red Dress is a creative means to capture the unique ideas and experiences of each girl throughout the duration of Y's Girl.

In each session (excluding **Session 6**) a Red Dress 'adornment' is created by the girls and added to the dress.

The materials suggested in the activities below are a guide. Facilitators can use materials of their choice that they have at their disposal.

HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN RED DRESS

Preparation:

- 1.7 x 2m red felt
- Red embroidery cotton
- A wooden coat hanger
- Two squares of black/blue felt
- Needle

How to:

- Fold fabric in half (from 2 metres to 1 metre in width).
- Draw out a simple dress shape. Use full length and width of fabric allowing for some shape in waist, neckline and sleeves so that sleeves of dress are flush with coat hanger angle.
- Cut out dress and sew edges.
- Attach coat hanger to the top of the dress with red embroidery cotton.
- Take the black/blue felt squares and cut out two large pockets.
- Sew the pockets on using embroidery cotton.

At the end of the program the Red Dress may be left in a space the girls frequent to remind participants of their experiences during the program.



One of a Kind - Unique Me

Preparation:

- Decorate your own cut-out doll
- 6cm x 5cm cardboard cut out dolls (one for each girl)
- Coloured Textas
- Stapler
- Double-sided Velcro

INTRODUCE THE RED DRESS TO THE GIRLS.

Over the next eight weeks we will be decorating and adorning your Red Dress in all sorts of creative ways. Each week you will add something different to it, so that by the end of the program it has become a beautiful work of art that tells the story of this program and the girls in it. The Red Dress will have a little bit of all of you on it. It will reflect all the unique ideas and experiences of each girl here in this room and put them together to make a beautiful dress.

No one person in this world is exactly the same – no-one is a cut out copy.

Ask the girls:

What makes you unique and special?

Introduce yourself with a pre-decorated cut-out doll focusing on your unique qualities and likes.

Provide each girl with a cut out paper doll. Ask the girls to think about their own personal style and key words that describe their personality and what they love to do. Each doll should reflect the girl's individual style and key attributes.

Once the girls have completed their doll, staple the dolls together and attach them to the Red Dress using double-sided Velcro.



Session 1 Every Girl



Session 2 Y's Talk



What You Find In A Friend

Preparation:

- 10x15cm coloured felt squares, one per group
- Permanent markers, one per group
- Double sided Velcro
- Pink felt heart with the words 'Speak and Listen Smart- Straight from your Heart' written on it in permanent marker. Sew with red embroidery cotton and Velcro the heart onto the dress before the session.

- Girls are asked to decide between themselves following class discussion:
What makes a good friend?
What qualities do you have that your friends appreciate?
What qualities do you appreciate in your friends?
- Once groups agree on one quality that they can all agree on that they have in common, one group member writes it down on the fabric.
- The felt square is then placed on the Red Dress using double-sided Velcro.

Session 3 Girl Support

Rainbow Ribbons

Preparation:

See Activity Number 9.





Good Moves = Good Moods

Preparation:

- Various coloured pipe cleaners, five per girl
 - Scissors x 10
 - Double-sided Velcro
 - Create your own motion figure as an example before the session
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Introduce to the girls the motion figure you have created and describe what activities make you feel good.

Ask the girls:

How do you like to move?

What physical activity do you like to do?

Ask the girls to think about their favourite activity or motion and using malleable material such as pipe cleaners instruct the girls to create themselves doing this activity.

Distribute pipe cleaners and ask girls to share scissors between pairs or groups of three.

Attach the figurines to dress with thread or staple.

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Seeing Beauty In Everything

Preparation:

- A variety of magazines including music, travel, photography and food.
 - Scissors x 10
 - Glue x 10
 - 10x15cm coloured pieces of card
 - Black felt
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Ask the girls to consider:

What is beautiful to you?

Ask girls to write down in their Y's Girl Books things that they believe are beautiful.

Based on what the girls have written down in their books, ask the girls to find an image that reflects what they believe is beautiful.

Distribute magazines, scissors, one coloured piece of card and glue amongst group.

Once the girls have found their image ask them to cut it out and glue the picture to the coloured card.

Ask the girls to place their images in the 'beauty pockets' on the Red Dress.

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Session 4 Y's Moves



Session 5 Beauty Y's





Session Activities



Activity 1 RESPECT



Remember to accept yourself and others.



Everybody is welcome and should feel safe and comfortable in the space.



Speak and listen smart straight from the heart.



Privacy. What is said in the session, stays in the session.



Everybody is different and unique and that's ok.



Comfortable in your own skin and have the courage to be yourself.



Treat others how you would like to be treated.



2

AIM:

To gain insight into what the girls enjoy doing, challenges they face and feelings about their own bodies. This information will contribute to the content and delivery of the program.

PREPARATION:

- Five sticky notes per girl
- One pen/marker per girl
- Five one metre sheets of butcher's paper blued to wall
- Five questions printed out on A4 paper and stuck on butcher's paper

ACTIVITY TIME:

15 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Begin by explaining to the girls:
To make sure Y's Girl is fun and exciting we would like to know all about you, what music you're into and what you do in your spare time.
2. Read aloud the five questions below.
Encourage the girls to be honest in their answers. Remind the girls that this is confidential and they do not have to write their names on the sticky notes.
3. Distribute five sticky notes and a pen to each girl.
4. Play music while the girls are given time to answer each question.
5. Once the girls have answered all five questions thank the girls for their honest answers that will help you to tailor a fantastic program.

QUESTIONS:

1. *What do you like to do in your spare time?
If you had one hour to yourself how would you spend it?*
2. *What's something unique about you that people might not know?*
3. *What's your favourite music? Song? Band? Artist?
What books/magazines/internet/TV shows are you into?*
4. *What's it like being a girl your age? The good bits, the weird bits,
the not so good bits?*
5. *What makes you feel good about yourself and your body?
What makes you feel confident?*

Activity 2 Unique Me



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Activity 3 Y's Friends

AIM:

To explore the unique qualities that we admire in friends and in ourselves.

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PREPARATION:

- Source Pearl Barley and Charlie Parsley by Aaron Blabey (2007) from your school or local library
 - One pen/marker per girl
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ACTIVITY TIME:

20 mins

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ACTIVITY:

1. Read Pearl Barley and Charlie Parsley to the girls.

2. Facilitate a discussion with the following questions:

What makes Pearl and Charlie different?

Why do you think their friendship is so strong?

What qualities do you admire in your friends?

What qualities do you have that make you a good friend?

3. Conclude the discussion by recognising the unique qualities that we each possess that enable us to help others.

'Pearl and Charlie are both very different; because they are good at different things they are both special and unique in their own way and are able to help each other.'

4. Distribute the Y's Girl Books and turn to page 3. Ask the girls to answer the following questions in their books:

What things about you make you a good friend?

What things do you admire or like to have in a friend?

Note: *It can be useful to write the girl's answers on a board during the discussion, serving as a reminder when girls answer the questions in their Y's Girl Books.*



4

AIM:

To explore assertive, aggressive and non-assertive behaviour and how this impacts on the way we feel and communicate with others.

PREPARATION:

- Read over suggested role play scenarios and modify/change to suit your group of girls.
- Three soft dolls, each representing the assertive, aggressive and passive characters.
- Pen/marker per girl.

ACTIVITY TIME:

30 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Ask girls to open their Y's Girl Books to page 7. Explain to the girls that communicating with people can be very difficult, even for grown ups.

Ask girls to place a tick in the box if the situation has ever happened to them as you read out the different challenges.

Ask girls:

How might you deal with such challenges or situations?

2. Introduce the idea of Speaking and Listening Smart Straight from your Heart. Read aloud the three ways girls can Speak Smart from Y's Girl Book.

3. Introduce to the girls the three soft dolls whilst explaining assertive, non-assertive and aggressive behaviour.

Milly is passive; she doesn't state her own needs, ideas and feelings; her language and actions may not express how she really feels; and she often puts herself down.

Milly's message to others *"I'm not OK – You are OK"*

Razza is aggressive, dominates and does not listen to others, she often puts other people down and focuses on getting what she wants without thinking about the needs of others.

Razza's message to others *"I'm OK – You're not OK"*

Asha is assertive, confident, calm and clearly expresses her needs, ideas and feelings. She always speaks and listens smart- straight from her heart. She respects the needs, ideas and feelings of others.

Asha's message to others *"I'm OK – You're OK"*

Activity 4 Speak and Listen Smart Straight from your Heart





Note:

It is recommended if you have a large group of girls and two facilitators to create two groups. This will increase each girl's ability to participate and contribute.

Point out to the girls that this is about behaviour.

You might feel a particular way, however, we don't always act how we feel. For example: Razza appears tough on the outside but it doesn't mean he isn't affected by unhelpful comments.

- 4. Choose one of the suggested scenarios below. Perform a role play to the girls, speaking through the dolls, presenting the three types of behaviour

Next describe a scenario and throw one doll at a time to different girls. The girl receiving the doll should respond to the situation speaking through the doll.

Repeat the activity using different scenarios. Examples below.

SCENARIOS:

- 1. It is your birthday and you got a new CD! You have wanted this CD for ages and are so excited!! You are still holding the CD as you walk into school and your best friend snatches it from you and says that she wants to take it home tonight to listen to it. What do you say or do?
- 2. You are at a sleepover with all the girls from your grade. Everyone is talking about swimming club, but you are the only one who doesn't do swimming club. You feel really left out and no one even notices that you are not talking. What do you do or say?
- 3. You are walking past the water taps and you hear two girls whispering about you, just loud enough so you catch the end of their conversation. You know they said something about your new shoes, but you are not sure exactly what they said. They both begin laughing at you. What do you do or say?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Activity 4 is an adaptation of an activity from Stride Foundation's 'MPower Girls' program.



5

AIM:

To develop self confidence and build positive relationships between students through sharing positive affirmations.

PREPARATION:

- Five pieces of coloured card to fit in envelopes per girl
- One envelope per girl
- One pen/marker per girl
- One glue stick per girl

ACTIVITY TIME:

15 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Break girls into two groups and ask each group to form a circle.
2. Give each student an envelope and pen. Ask the girls to write their name on the front. Whilst this is happening provide each girl with five pieces of card.
3. Ask the girls to pass their envelope in a clockwise rotation. When you call stop, girls must stop passing the envelopes.
4. Instruct the girls to write a positive note about the girl whose envelope they are holding. It might be something they think is cool about that person, something they admire about that person or even something that they noticed about them in the session today.

The girls can write their name on the note if they choose to, or remain anonymous. Once the girls have written their note, place the card back into the envelope. Begin passing the envelopes around and call stop, making sure girls receive a new envelope to write a positive comment in. Repeat another three times.

5. Ask girls to pass the envelopes back to their owners, who must seal their envelope.
6. Distribute glue sticks and ask girls to glue their envelopes into their Y's Girl Books face down. The girls will have the opportunity to read their letters after they receive their Y's Girl Books to keep in the final session.

Activity 5 Y's Letters

Note: *It's important that during this activity the girls do not read each others or their own - no peeking in envelopes or peering over shoulders. This is private and confidential. Make sure this is explained before the activity starts.*

6



Activity 6 Circus Balances

AIM:

To develop confidence in the girls to try and experience new things.

To build a sense of trust and teamwork amongst the group.

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PREPARATION:

- It is important that you read through each Circus Balance carefully to ensure that the right safety measures are in place.
 - Clear open space.
 - Carpet or soft landing space.
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ACTIVITY TIME:

30 mins

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ACTIVITY:

1. Introduce activity to the girls:

Today we are going to learn four circus balances that require everyone to have confidence and trust in yourself and your team.

It is extremely important that you listen to instruction and are aware of the girls in your team. In two of the four balances we will require spotters. Spotters are supporting girls who make sure everyone involved in the balance is safe.

Note: Explain to the girls that circus requires girls of all different shapes, sizes and strength. Everyone can be involved in circus. Circus requires you to trust your partner and your team.

2. Demonstrate the first circus balance. Give girls the opportunity to practice the circus balance. This is repeated for the next three balances.

Note: In the balances the girls are encouraged to try all positions and focus on doing them safely and correctly.

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Circus Balance: Trust Circle

Divide girls into groups of 8-10.

Instruct groups to stand in a circle with their shoulders almost touching.

Ask one girl from each group to stand in the middle of the circle.

Direct the other girls place their hands out with palms open in front of chest.

When the girl in the centre feels comfortable ask her to close her eyes, cross her arms across her chest and stand with feet together.

Tell the girl to slowly lean back allowing the group's hands to support her. The group can gently move her around the circle. Encourage the girl in the centre to allow the group to fully support her.

Note: During this balance ask the girls to consider how they would want their group to be, i.e. focused on her, strong hands and supportive bodies, supporting comments and direction from group members.



Circus Balance: Lean-To In Pairs

Divide girls into pairs.

Ask girls to stand with their feet together facing one other. The girls should be no more than twenty centimetres apart.

Ask girls to hold each others arms in Monkey Grip.

Next ask pairs to begin with their elbows bent, arms at ninety degrees. Pairs slowly and synchronised, as if mirroring each other, begin leaning backwards.

As the pair is leaning back ensure that both girls straighten their arms and keep their legs and backs straight.

When the balance is complete the girls should form a triangle shape.

Note: Monkey grip requires girls to grip the upper forearm of their partner, spreading their fingers tightly to grip.





Circus Balance: Purple Chicken

Girls break into groups of four.

Position 1: Base

Base positions herself on her hand and knees. Her hands should be almost directly under the shoulders providing strength and support. The Base's back should be straight and relaxed.

Position 2: Connector

Connector sits on the Base's back.

The Connector should position herself towards the tailbone of the Base. Her legs should be rooted strongly to the ground to help to take the weight of the Flyer.

Position 3: Flyer

The Flyer engages in monkey grip with the Connector. The Flyer slowly places her left foot, followed by the right foot on the Connector's thighs.

As the Flyer feels confident she should begin to lean back, stretching her arms out straight.

Position Four: Spotter

The Spotter is an extremely important position. It is the Spotters role to ensure that the team is feeling safe and comfortable. The Spotter should also assist the Flyer when placing her feet on the Connector's thighs.



Circus Balance: Thigh Stand Wall

One row of girls squat engaging her leg muscles so she is stable.

A row of girls stands behind the squatting row.

The girls place their hands on the shoulders of the girls in front (one hand on one shoulder of each girl either side).

Slowly each girl places one foot at a time on the girls thigh standing in front of them.

The girls squatting in front support these girls by wrapping their arms around their lower leg.

A row of spotters will be needed to support the girls flying as they step onto the thighs of the squatters.



7

AIMS:

To recognise a 'helpful' and 'unhelpful' comment and understand how comments affect others. To provide skills to deal with and respond to unhelpful comments and build resilience in girls.

Activity 7 Sticks and Stones

PREPARATION:

- A4 colour images of duck shaking water off it's back and sticks and stones.
Both images available online at www.ywca.net

ACTIVITY TIME:

15 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Briefly discuss the difference between 'helpful' and 'unhelpful' comments.

Helpful Comments: a comment that might make you feel positive and good about yourself.

Unhelpful Comments: a comment that might make you feel bad about and doubt yourself.

2. Ask the girls to contribute various unhelpful and helpful comments to discussion as examples. Do not agree, disagree or judge the comments that are made. Prompt the girls by asking;

'What could a parent, friend or teacher say to you that is unhelpful?'

E.g. you can't wear that; you never do your hair nicely etc.

3. Ask the girls:

'How would you feel receiving unhelpful comments?'

'How would you feel if you received unhelpful comments everyday?'

Explore the idea of being assertive when responding to unhelpful comments.

Facilitation Note: Remind the girls of how Asha would respond to an unhelpful comment. Asha is assertive, she speaks and listens smart, straight from her heart and believes that she is OK and that you are OK.

Ask the girls:

'How do you think Asha would respond to an unhelpful comment?'



Note: Throughout the duration of this activity it is important for girls to recognise how unhelpful comments make people feel and how we respond to comments.

4. Highlight to the girls that throughout our lives we may receive unhelpful comments from other people. This is something you cannot control but you can decide how you will respond to it and how it will affect you.

5. Introduce two concepts to the girls to help deal with unhelpful comments.

'Sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me.'

Acknowledge that words cannot physically hurt you. Instead it is important that we react to unhelpful comments calmly and clearly. We can express our needs, ideas and feelings to the other person.

'Water off a duck's back.'

Introduces the idea of 'water off a duck's back' and ask girls to consider if they could disregard unhelpful comments that come their way.

Can you decide if you are going to let the 'unhelpful' comment hurt you?

'Unhelpful comments are common and do not make us feel good about ourselves. This may sound silly but the next time you receive an unhelpful comment, pretend that you are a duck. When ducks swim through the water the oily coating on their feathers allows the water to roll off their backs. Whenever you hear an unhelpful comment, let the comment slide down off your back rather than carrying it around with you, weighing you down. Continue swimming upstream, leaving the comment far behind you.'



8

AIM:

To provide girls with the skills to deal with and respond to unhelpful thoughts and build resilience in girls.

PREPARATION:

- Suggested music: 'Beautiful' by Christina Aguilera or 'Video' by India Arie.
- Bubble mixture and blowers.

ACTIVITY TIME:

10 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Ask girls;

How do you treat your own friends? Would you say to your friend, 'Oh you look horrible today,' or 'You're terrible at maths, why even bother, or 'Why did you say that, it sounded so stupid?

No? Yes? Why?

So why do we sometimes say these unhelpful things to ourselves?

2. Introduce to the girls the idea of being your own best friend;

Being Your Own Best Friend means that you treat yourself like you would treat your friends.

Be kind to yourself and do things that you enjoy doing, think helpful thoughts and take care of yourself.

Ask Girls; Do you ever think thoughts in your head that are unhelpful? Thoughts that don't make you feel good about yourself, your abilities and how you look?'

Comparing yourself to others can be a very unhelpful thought.

3. Ask the girls to lie down on the floor. The girls need to be spaced apart so they cannot touch each other with their arms spread out.

Ask girls to think of an unhelpful thought that they have said to themselves before? It could have been this morning or last month.

Play music. Begin blowing bubbles over each girl and explain:

As these bubbles are floating above you, focus on a bubble near you and imagine that it's that unhelpful thought that you really don't need in your life and... POP it!!!!

Now let's fill that space in our minds with a helpful thought. Can you think of a positive thought about yourself that you can replace it with?'

It could be something that someone important said about you, something they noticed about you that was special and made you feel good.

Activity 8 Be Your Own Best Friend

Note: *If this session follows Y's Talk refer to what the girls wrote on their felt squares on the Red Dress. Remind the girls of what they value in their friends and how they like to be treated by them.*



Activity 9 Rainbow Ribbons

AIM:

To provide girls with an opportunity to communicate how they see each other using supportive materials such as ribbons and colour.

PREPARATION:

- 15cm pieces of blue, white, red, pink, purple, yellow and green coloured ribbons. Two per girl.
- Print off each colour and corresponding adjectives on separate pieces of paper.

ACTIVITY TIME:

30 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Ask girls to arrange themselves by date of birth from January to December in one line across the room. They will need to communicate clearly with each other to check where they are positioned and support each other so girls aren't 'left out'.
2. Equally divide this line in two and ask both lines to face each other sitting down.
3. Ask the girls:

*How do you feel when you receive a compliment from someone?
How do you often react?*

Demonstrate by giving a sincere and considered compliment to a girl and ask her to respond.

Encourage discussion amongst group:

Why can it feel uncomfortable sometimes when receiving a compliment?

Have you ever considered how it might make the person offering the compliment uncomfortable if we fob them off and with comments such as:

"Oh rubbish I am not."

"Oh yeah my fingers are OK, but hey I have the ugliest toes, you should see them, they are gross."

Ask the girls:

How can we respond to compliments?

Note: Remind girls that when responding to compliments we must speak and listen smart straight from our hearts.



4. Introduce Rainbow Ribbons:

Now we have a beautiful activity that will help us to practice giving and receiving compliments.

Pick ribbons and matching adjectives out of the box and place between the two rows of girls.

While doing this introduce Rainbow Ribbons by explaining the meaning of each ribbon as you place it down.

Note: *You can demonstrate instructions 5 and 6 with one of the girls.*

5. Ask one row of girls to turn to the girl now facing directly opposite them and consider what adjectives they feel best describes her and, most importantly, why?

Note: *Important that girls take their time with this activity and not rush or race comments.*

Ask the row of girls to respectfully, without rushing, stand up and pick a coloured ribbon for their partner.

Once the girls have chosen their ribbons ask them to walk over, sit down in front of their partner and tie the ribbon around her wrist. While they are doing this encourage girls to tell their partner why they chose that ribbon.

Ask the girls to remember to look at each other in the eye and speak clearly to each other.

6. Encourage the receiving girl to accept the compliment and thank her ribbon giver.

7. Once the girls are back seated in their row position, ask the other row to stand up, chose a ribbon and repeat with their partner.

8. Ask the girls to all move along **one** position in their row (bottom becomes top) and repeat the exercise with a different partner.

This time girls only give their partner the ribbon and compliment. **They do not tie it around her wrist.** Instead the girls hold on to their ribbon.

9. Ask the girls to form a circle on the floor and tie their ribbons together.

Begin with the person next to them, cooperating and communicating with each other to create a long string of ribbons all tied together.

Tie the two ends together to form a necklace. Place the necklace on the Red Dress.

Point out to the girls that the Rainbow Ribbon necklace represents all the wonderful things we have noticed about each other.

Note: *Important that girls take their time with this activity and not rush or race comments.*



- 10.** Distribute Y's Girl Books and ask girls to write down the two compliments they received.

After the girls have written down their compliments ask if any of them would like to share what they have written down and what they experienced during the activity.

Prompt the girls with the questions below:

Does anyone want to share their experiences?

Were you surprised by what another girl said to you?

How did that make you feel?

How did you respond?

Was it difficult to tell another girl why you chose her that ribbon?

Note: Music can be play throughout this activity.

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| Blue | | |
| Open minded | Peaceful | Easy going |
| White | | |
| Supportive | Calm | Understanding |
| Red | | |
| Energetic | Bold | Enthusiastic |
| Pink | | |
| Caring | Friendly | Honest |
| Purple | | |
| Original | Independent | Intelligent |
| Yellow | | |
| Helpful | Curious | Sunny and smiley |
| Green | | |
| Nature loving | Considerate | Outdoorsy |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Activity 9 is an adaptation of an activity from 'BodyThink' - a program administered and delivered by The Butterfly Foundation.



10

AIM:

To broaden the ideas girls have about beauty and self-image by exploring beauty practices from across the world.

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PREPARATION:

- Print off resource posters available online at www.ywca.net
 - Print off country names
 - Read through session notes
-

ACTIVITY TIME:

25 mins

.....

ACTIVITY:

1. Introduce the phrase - 'Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder'.

'Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder is an old saying, but it is still very meaningful today. In modern day terms, this means 'if you see something as beautiful then it is.'

'It is up to you to decide what is beautiful; no one can decide that for you.'

2. Display the beauty posters for girls viewing and ask the girls to gather in front of the images.

Introduce the activity:

'Today we will explore ten different beauty practices. We are not judging the practices, instead we are learning from them and recognising that beauty ideals are constantly changing and evolving.'

Begin by holding up the name of a country. Ask the girls to think about what image they think matches with the country.

Choose one girl to place the name of the country with the corresponding image. Once the girl has completed this begin discussing the beauty practice undertaken in that particular country.

Repeat this process until complete.

Activity 10 Beauty Allsorts



3. Highlight to the girls throughout and at the conclusion of this activity the following points:

'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, it can be found in everything.'

'Beauty is constantly changing and evolving across time and cultures.'

'Beauty has no definition, each one of us has own ideas about what is beautiful.'

4. Ask girls at the end of activity:

'Can beauty be found in everything?'

'Who in these pictures is deciding what is beautiful?'

Note: *It is important to have a brief understanding of each beauty practice. Aim not to judge or discriminate against a practice. The aim of this activity is to reveal the different ideas surrounding beauty and how they can differ and change across cultures and time.*

If you would like to further explore beauty you might like to discuss;

Who decides what is beautiful?

Where did these beauty 'ideals' and 'practices' come from?

In some cases it was men, e.g.: Karl Lagerfeld (fashion designer) thinks his clothes only look good on very tall, thin women. The Chinese emperors thought small feet were beautiful and due to his powerful position it became a common practice across the country.

One person's idea can influence our ideas about what is beautiful and what is fashionable.

Several beauty practices are very painful and unhealthy. A number of beauty practices can cause suffering and difficulty.



11

AIM:

To encourage girls to form their own ideas about beauty and consider what is beautiful to them.

PREPARATION:

- Split the class into groups of three.
- CD to be played throughout activity.
- Three plastic drop sheets.
- A case to carry make-up and decorating materials.
- Ten application brushes.
- Face pencils and crayons.
- Face paint; 6 small tubs of Vaseline or alternative sticky substance that is suitable to place on the face.
- Various coloured shaped sequins and twelve cylinders of glitter.
- Face wipes for girls.

ACTIVITY TIME:

30 mins

ACTIVITY:

INTRODUCE DECORATE AND CELEBRATE:

'Today we are going to decorate our partner's arms and/or face in beautiful colours and designs. I would love you to be imaginative, creative and look after one another during this activity.'

1. Explain to the girls that we have set up three drop sheets. Split girls into three groups and direct each group to a designated drop sheet.

2. Ask girls to choose a partner to decorate within their group. Once girls have paired off inform girls of the following:

'Please ask your partners how they would like to be decorated. If they don't want glitter, that's fine, if they only want their hand decorated that's fine too. It's up to you to decide how you would like to be decorated.'

'Please make sure that you support each other and make each other feel special and pampered.'

'Think carefully about what it is that you like, think about beautiful designs, colours and different types of shapes. You may even be inspired by the beauty practices we discussed earlier.'

3. Distribute decorative materials to each group. Play music as girls decorate.

Activity 11 Decorate and Celebrate

Note: Remind girls that there are no mirrors or running off to mirrors during session.

12



Activity 12 A World of Difference

AIM:

To broaden and diversify girls ideas about body shape and size.
To encourage girls to accept that everyone is different and that is OK.

PREPARATION:

- Print out animal and dog posters available online at www.ywca.net
- Blu tak posters to clear wall
- Collect 4-5 different shaped leaves from garden.

OPTIONAL - Bugs in a Blanket by Beatrice Alemagna, Phaidon Press, 2009

ACTIVITY TIME:

15 mins

ACTIVITY:

1. Begin discussion about body shape and size by showing girls a variety of leaves. *'Leaves come in all different shapes and sizes. We see beauty in all leaves so why don't we give them a hard time about the way they look? We don't say 'Ooh look at that skinny little leaf' or 'Ooh that leaf is far too green. Humans are also like leaves, we come in different shapes and sizes and that's OK.'*
2. **Highlight** to the girls the diversity in appearance among the animal kingdom. **Focus** on the capabilities of the animals bodies rather than the way they appear. Emphasise that we don't criticise the giraffe for having a long neck or the starfish for having five arms.

EXAMPLES OF ANIMALS AND THEIR CAPABILITIES:

Whale: The Whale is thought to be so large they live in such a gigantic space and need a lot of strength to swim from ocean to ocean.

Starfish: Starfish usually have five arms; however some starfish can have up to twenty-three! Each arm has tube-like suction discs on the bottom that help it to crawl along the ocean floor.

Giraffe: The Giraffe's neck allows it to reach for food in high places during times of drought and food shortages.

Praying Mantis: The Praying Mantis straight, leathery forewings and very powerful jaws are used for devouring its prey.

Chameleon: The Chameleon changes its skin colour to reflect its mood and the temperature of its environment. The ability to change colour helps with hunting.

3. Conclude discussion by showing the girls a variety of dogs;
'Each dog is different, but we don't give the dogs a hard time for the way they appear.'

4. OPTIONAL:

Girls can be read the imaginative picture book Bugs In A Blanket to reinforce not only the normality of diversity but also demonstrates how we can celebrate it.



13

AIM:

To explore how girls talk about themselves and each other in a group and how this affects how they feel.

Activity 13 Body Talk

PREPARATION:

- Read through scenarios and adjust according to your group
- Three stuffed dolls that will play Milly, Razza and Asha

ACTIVITY TIME:

25 mins

ACTIVITY:

Girls from a circle.

Read scenario to girls:

'Melody is really good friends with Amy, Salem and Heidi. They are always talking about things that are going on at school. Sometimes they get talking about how they look. Usually it starts with one of them saying "Oh my nose is a funny shape, oh I wish I wasn't taller than everyone, my ankles are like tree stumps or my belly is wobbly" Often someone else will say "No I'm the one who is too short I'd love to be tall like you...or "No way, you should see my belly, it wobbles like jelly".

Soon they are all thinking about how they look and worrying about whether they look OK or not? By the end of the conversation they are concentrating on what they don't like about themselves and are all feeling bad.'

Questions for discussion:

Does this ever happen with your friends?

Have you heard girls and women talk like this with each other?

How does it make people in the group feel when someone says 'I'm so unco' or 'I'm so fat'?

Why do you think people act like this or say negative comments about the way they appear?

Highlight to girls that people talk negatively about their own and others bodies for various reasons. It could be that they are seeking reassurance and attention from their friends.

Negative body comments can make people feel like they should be concerned about their body and their appearance.



Note:

It is recommended if you have a large group of girls and two facilitators to create two groups. This will increase each girl's ability to participate and contribute.

Introduce the three characters that will be used in the role plays;

RAZZA is aggressive. Her message to others is *"I'm OK - You're not OK"*

MILLY is passive. Her message to others is *"I'm not OK - You're OK"*

ASHA is assertive. Her message to others is *"I'm OK - You're OK"*

Read Scenario 1, in nominated doll character.

Ask the girls if any of them has an idea of how MILLY, RAZZA or ASHA might respond. What they might say?

Throw the doll to the girl who volunteered her response. Allow time for her to respond fully and encourage her to speak and act as her doll would.

WHAT MIGHT MILLY, ASHA OR RAZZA SAY THEN?

Repeat these role plays with Scenarios 2 and 3. Aim to give each girl the opportunity to contribute and 'speak through' the dolls.

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SCENARIO 1

Razza, Milly and Asha are spending their first recess together after being away over the school holidays.

RAZZA - "Golly haven't you two become chubby over the holidays. Did you have a few too many Easter Eggs?"

.....
SCENARIO 2.

ASHA - "Hey Milly, are you going to go in the school dance performance, you need to put your name down today, rehearsals start next week! I know you love to dance!"

RAZZA - (Razza butts in before Milly has a chance to answer) "Nah, Milly's not doing it, her legs are too short and stumpy to be a dancer and she'll look stupid in a leotard with all her fluffy fur... although I did suggest she shave it off..."

.....
SCENARIO 3

MILLY - "Ohhh Raz and Asha I've got the stumpiest legs. I wish I had nice long legs like you two"

RAZZA - "You reckon you're legs are weird, mine are so skinny that people say they will snap in half... but hey I just tell them they've got rotten, horrible teeth, not nearly as good as my shiny sharp choppers!"



Following the role plays ask the girls to contribute their ideas about how the dolls might have felt when comments were said to them.

Ask the girls;

'What things can we do to help our friends to feel good about their own bodies?'

E.g. Helpful thoughts and positive comments.

Revisit the idea of 'being your own best friend' and ask the girls the following:

'How would you feel if you overheard a group of girls talking unkindly about your good friend?' 'What would you do?'

'Would you defend your friend?'

'Or when your good friend says 'I'm so stupid,' 'I'm not fast enough to be in the team!' What would you say to her?'

14



Activity 14 Image Y's

Note: It is important to interact with the girls throughout the presentation. Ask questions and value their input, this will help the girls to form their own ideas around how body image is presented in the media and help build resilience.

AIM:

To introduce the concept of what body image is and how the media can influence the way we feel and relate to our bodies.

To explore the use of digital manipulation in the media and how this impacts our ideas of what is beautiful and our body image.

PREPARATION:

- Download DOVE Film Clips, Amy and Evolution.
- Download Image Y's Point Presentation at www.ywca.net
- Download Power Point Slide Notes at www.ywca.net
- Set up lap top and projector.
- Test videos and power point.
- A variety of magazines aimed at girls and young women. approximately 20-30.

ACTIVITY TIME:

25 mins

ACTIVITY:

SLIDE ONE:

Revision from previous sessions.
'Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.'

SLIDE TWO:

'Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.'

Ask the girls; *Do you agree with this? Why?*

Ask several girls to share with the class what they wrote in the journals last week and name something that is beautiful to them and why.

SLIDE THREE:

Introduce the notion of body image and positive body image.

Body image is the way we feel and relate to our bodies and what you imagine it looks like.

Positive body image is feeling comfortable about how you look.



SLIDE FOUR:

Question ideas about our own bodies and what we think about them.

Who decides what the perfect body is?

And compared to what?

Beauty comes in millions of different forms and that's a great thing.

However, sometimes the media seems to concentrate on a certain kind of beauty.

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SLIDE FOUR:

Ask girls;

What is the media?

.....

SLIDE FIVE:

Media comes in many different forms including:

| | |
|---------------|------------------------|
| The internet | Newspapers & magazines |
| Television | Radio |
| Books | Video games |
| CDs & tapes | Billboards & posters |
| Text messages | Movies & video |

.....

SLIDE SIX:

Explore how women are presented in popular media.

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SLIDE SEVEN:

Alien Activity

(Break from slide presentation)

1. Ask the girls to form groups of 3 or 4 on the floor where they are sitting.

Alien Scenario

2. Ask the girls to imagine they are a group of aliens that have come to visit Planet Earth to find out what "humanoids" are really like.

What could they look like? Are they one eyed?, two toed? Are they all the same? Or are there different kinds?

"So you, the aliens from Planet Spooknik have arrived. But, alas all the humanoids got word of your arrival, freaked out and taken off to Darwin on planes. Oh well, you might as well have a look around the town to see what you can discover about them. You love a bit of research...

You find a vacant magazine stand on the main street and have a flick through the magazines..."



- Hand out magazines to each group.
5 per group.
- Give the girls a few minutes to flick through them and consider how girls and women are featured in them.

What types of people are featured?

Young? Old? Male? Female? Skin colours?

Cultures? Shapes or sizes?

Is there a common type?

Any common themes?

Ask the girls to share their thoughts and observations.

AN EXAMPLE FROM A PREVIOUS Y'S GIRL PROGRAM:

What Did The Aliens' Find?

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| NATIONALITY | Americans, white-coloured |
| AGE | Twenties 'they are all quite young so 20s' and teens, no old people |
| SIZE | Skinny, before and after sizes, Oscars, Muscled men |
| WHO | Girls, famous people, celebrities |
| WHAT DO HUMANS DO | Wear high heels, singers, posing, fashion and clothing |
| WHERE | America, Spain, Famous places |

- Collect magazines and ask girls to form one group again on the floor, facing the slide show again.

SLIDE EIGHT:

Introduce digital manipulation.

What is digital manipulation?

Digital manipulation is the changing or manipulation of photos, film, video clips and everything that we see using computer programs.

This is the woman from the movie Slum Dog Millionaire.

The image on the right has been photo- shopped to feature in a popular magazine.



Can you notice any changes between the two photos?

- Skin colour
- Hair, silky and smooth

Did you know that it is possible to change your skin colour?

Why do you think they would have changed her skin colour?

How do you think it would have made her feel to have her skin colour changed?

Some women around the globe use products and methods to change their skin colour, including skin bleaching and solariums.

INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS.

Skin Bleaching destroys the black pigment found in the top layer of skin. Many skin bleaching creams contain Mercury and Hydroquinone that can have damaging effects on a person’s health. Skin bleaching can increase the chance of skin cancer; increase the risk of liver and kidney damage and cause a person’s skin to become blotchy and stained.

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SLIDE NINE:

Begin by introducing a ‘before and after’ shot of Nikki Webster which clearly shows how much can be changed using computer programs.

Ask students if they can spot any differences.

Highlight to the girls that many of the images we see are not even real!

Digital manipulation has created a new type of ‘beauty’ that is often unrealistic and unachievable, because a lot of what we see has been altered and changed. To look like the images we see in the magazines is impossible!

.....

SLIDE TEN:

Re-touching is common and some schools even have the option to have school photos re-touched.

Many photos are re-touched like the one on the screen;

Can you spot the difference?

DOVE VIDEO 1

Play ‘Evolution’ (Play twice if necessary)

Note the difference between the model that walked in the door and the image on the billboard.

It takes up to three or more hours of work on the model including make-up, hair and hair.

Lighting is then used to change the way the model looks.

Then after all that work the photos are taken and downloaded on to a computer where they are altered with computer software.



SLIDE ELEVEN:

Glowing skin with a light tan is often seen a 'beautiful' and many of the models on the catwalk have a tan.

Tanning and solariums are extremely unhealthy practices.

Introduce the story of Claire Oliver...

'Clare Oliver started using solariums when she was 19, She saw a cheap offer at the Tanning Salon which said 'buy 10 sessions and get 20.'

Clare said that the girl working at the tanning salon said the fastest way to get a tan was to come in every second day and use speed cream.

Clare's mum said it was abnormal to get in a box and fry yourself, but Clare told her it was cool and everyone was doing it.

At 22, she was diagnosed with cancer and died when she was 26 after fighting several different tumours.

Before Claire died she wrote an article to the newspaper and told Australia that 'if I could go back and talk to myself when I was 19 I would tell that girl not to use a solarium. That a melanoma is not a small cancer that you just have cut out and you will be fine.'

Is a tan worth dying for?

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INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

A solarium is a tanning unit that a person might use to tan their skin using ultraviolet (UV) radiation. Solarium tans are not safe tans. UV radiation from solariums can increase your risk of developing skin cancer and can also cause eye damage and immediate skin damage such as sunburn, irritation, redness, premature ageing and swelling.

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DOVE VIDEO 2

Play 'Amy' Video.

Ask girls:

Why Amy would not come out of her room?

What was Amy missing out on?

If Amy was your best friend what would you tell her?



15

Q

Activity 15 The Gifts Food Gives

What one thing can...

- *give you beautiful glowing skin?*
- *help with muscle strength and coordination when you dance, do handstands and run for the bus?*
- *give you long and strong nails?*
- *give you shiny, silky hair?*
- *help you feel happy and calm all day long?*
- *give you clear, sparkly eyes?*
- *give you energy and make you feel like doing cartwheels?*
- *help your brain function and help you concentrate?*



A.

FOOD

*Foods that are FULL
of nutrients your
body needs.*

For example:

*rice, fruit, nuts, yoghurt,
vegetables, bread, cheese,
eggs, fish, meat and noodles.*

