



MENTOR: Founder and principal of Beautiful Minds Marina Passalaris with a pupil.

Educator believes every girl has a beautiful mind

Course helps to prepare for life as a young woman

It is a story heard many times before: teenage girl struggling to find an identity, feels like an outcast at school and finds her confidence at rock bottom.

But the difference with Katie Tidswell's tale, is that it resulted in a happy ending for the Year 12 student.

When she was 16, Katie Tidswell wasn't part of the "cool" set and as a result, her confidence was at rock bottom.

"I always felt like an outcast at school," she said. "I didn't have dollars, the right clothes and the right look, so I felt I didn't fit in."

With the pressures of Year 12 just around the corner for her daughter, Katie's mother, Robyn, was keen to offer as much support as she could and when an opportunity in the form of the Beautiful Minds program presented itself to Katie, through her school, she jumped at it.

"I found out about the course through school, my mother was really supportive about attend-

ing," she said.

Beautiful Minds is specifically aimed at girls aged 12-18 which teaches them valuable self-improvement and life skills mixed in with fashion, hair styling and make-up advice.

What Katie took from the 10-week course was a major boost in her self-confidence. So much so that by the time she started Year 12 she had gone from feeling like an outcast among her peers, to choosing to become a student leader.

"Before the course I thought 'there's no way I'm going to be a student leader'," Katie said. "But then after the course I just thought 'alright, now I'm ready to be a student leader in Year 12,'" she said.

According to the founder and principal of Beautiful Minds, Marina Passalaris, it's all about moulding young minds in a positive mentoring environment.

"A lot of girls are really embarrassed when they first start the course; they have a real fear

factor," she said.

"However, we push them outside their security zone.

"It is a mentoring program. I provide my email at the start of the course and they email me about their development..

"What we find is after the course girls have better relationships and boundaries, and a stronger map on what to do in life."

The course covers just about everything a teenage girl could want to know. There are lessons in make-up, artistry, the art of self-promotion, and dress sense and how to dress like a queen on a budget. It also teaches girls how to apply for jobs and write resumes. The courses, which are held in Maroochydore, end up with a photographic shoot, which leaves the girls with a memento of their life journey.

Beautiful Minds has a few places left in the upcoming July course. Call Marina on 0410 424 701 / 5493 2463 or visit www.beautifulminds.com.au.

Time for 'critical leadership'

FEDERAL Families Minister Jenny Macklin says she felt "horror" at the cases of child neglect brought to light this week.

She said the cases highlighted the urgent need for governments to do a better job to protect children from harm, neglect and abuse.

"To be confronted with the horror of malnutrition and starvation of children I think is shaking every one of us to our foundations," Ms Macklin told parliament.

"As a nation we not only need to

see the people perpetrating it punished, we also need to do a much better job at protecting children from abuse and neglect."

Ms Macklin said the government needed to provide "critical leadership" on the issue and intervene in cases where there was evidence of child neglect or abuse.

She said the government was focused on improving its national child protection framework, including better prevention measures, integrating services, and ensuring an adequate workforce. — AAP

Thank You 

P100

LATINUM

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New journey of discovery

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The technique she advocates has worked for Jackie. She now has a good relationship with her children, Cody, 3, and Ryan, 2, and has embraced her life as a

full-time mum.

At her suggestion, she and her husband, Steve, have sold their home and shade sail manufacturing business, and the family hit the road last week to

travel indefinitely in a caravan.

Jackie said they wanted to spend as much time as possible with the boys while they were young enough to want to

spend time with their parents.

She's happy to be free of most of their worldly possessions and wants to give life its head to see where it takes them.