



## *'Go Girls Go' Group Program for Girls*

*At Castlemaine District Community Health*

A group program for young women who want to have fun while working on their self-esteem, body image, relationships, assertiveness and learning to express and manage their emotions better!



## Target population.....

- Young women who may benefit from a psychosocial group program to improve mental health
- Aged from 13 to 18 years
- This program will provide a safe environment to encourage experiential learning, therapeutic group factors and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) principles to assist in learning healthy thinking, new life skills and experience activities that improve self-esteem and confidence.

## Presenting issues -

- As identified by self, family, GP or school welfare officer; low self-esteem, poor peer relationships, lack of confidence, anxiety and depression, problems at home and school (non-attendance), family conflict, family violence, anger problems, diverse family care arrangements, out of home and foster care situations, self-harm

## Outcomes: Feedback from previous participants

The girls reported on what they thought was good about the group program.....

- meeting others, making friends, talking about anger, learning new stuff about other people.
- feeling more confident with others
- knowing more about stress
- violence doesn't solve anything
- 'good talking and bonding'
- learning how to stop fighting
- don't feel so alone
- the 'girls only' space felt safe to talk in



## Feedback continued.....

- Some of the participants reported feeling better in themselves and feeling not so alone with their problems.
- Through the process of developing a safety plan for themselves they were able to identify their G.P. as someone they would approach if feeling at risk of low mood or self-harm..



## Every group has -

- flexibility so the participants can choose topics, type of food and activities of interest
- a 10 min break with healthy afternoon tea (fruit, dips, flat bread)
- a folder that they decorate and keep for handouts
- certificate of achievement at the end of the program
- a workshop on the last day of the program involving trying something new

## Week 1

- Theme 'Getting to know each other'
- Overview of the group program
- Brainstorm; ideas for group activities (i.e. crazy hair day) and topics of interest (favourite music) .
- Administer K10, HAD scale and Adolescent Coping Scale
- Develop rules for the group i.e. safety and confidentiality
- Introductions – name tags, activity (names, four lies one truth, say one thing you like about yourself or would like to change)

## Week 1 (con)

- GGG talking – open group with reflections of the week - using St Luke's Reflexions cards or Deep Speak cards and discussion on the theme
- Personalize the group sessions - girls organise something for each group (i.e. activity, favourite colour day, hat day, favourite item, photos to share with group)
- Give out folders for group worksheets and handouts
- Activity – stretching, fun line up in birth order, tallest to smallest oldest to youngest.



## Week 2

Theme – 'Trust'

- GGG TALKING - opening group with reflections of the week and explore the theme of trust, each persons experience, what it feels like to trust/mistrust, how to earn trust from others.
- Activity; scrap booking – each girl to individually decorate own folder
- Exercise – relaxation activity or for example fire twirling practice



## Week 3

Theme – 'Emotions'

- GGG TALKING – open group with reflections of the week and explore themes of conflict; assertiveness vs. anger, how to manage anger by identifying triggers and explore strategies that help.
- Activity - body language (body sculpture in pairs or explore facial expressions of emotion – pulling faces)
- Exercise - relaxation (deep muscle relaxation) or fire twirling activity

## Week 4

Theme – 'Being me'

- GGG TALKING - opening group with reflections of the week and exploring the theme; self-esteem, body image, sexuality, caring for ourselves
- Activity - sharing stories (bring photo or favourite items to talk about)
- Exercise - relaxation (guided imagery) or fire twirling activity

## Week 5

Theme – 'Good Thinking'

- GGG Talking - open group with reflections of the week and discussion on theme; self-talk, unhelpful thinking styles, good thinking, sharing experiences and practising new ways of thinking about these situations.
- Activity - window shopping and hot chocolate
- Exercise - Yoga

## Week 6.

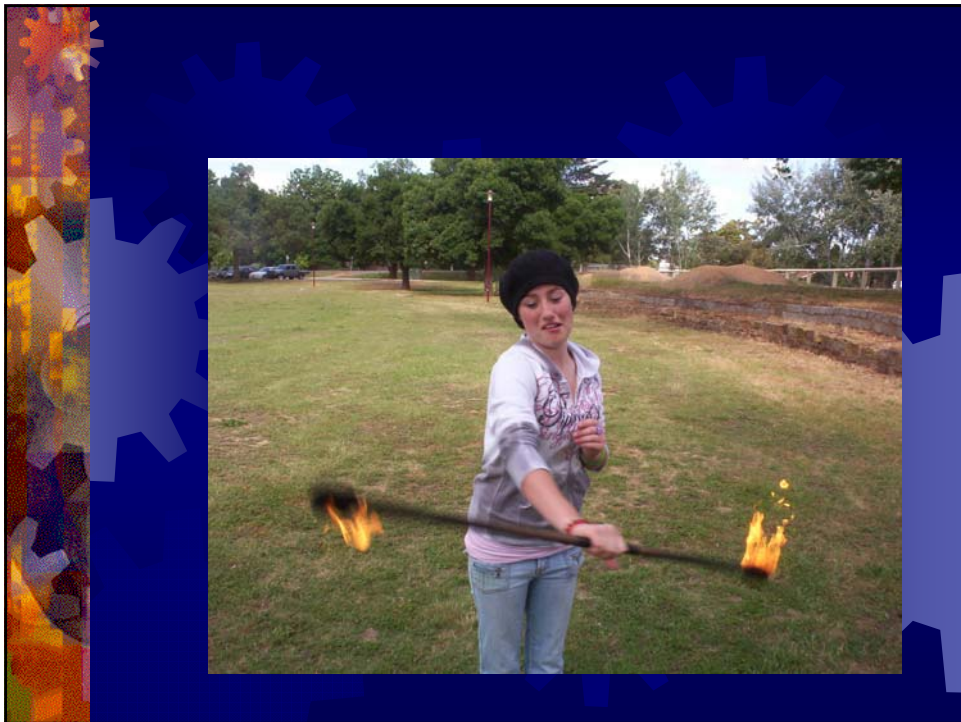
Theme – ‘Party Girls’

- GGG talking - open group with reflections of the week and discussion on theme; info on how to party safely, learn about risk reduction and self-management
- Activity – hot chips in the park
- Exercise - walk

## Week 7

Theme – ‘Trying new things’

- GGG talking with reflections of the week
- Review of their experience of the program, things that worked and things that could change
- Administer K10 and HAD scales and Adolescent Coping Scale
- GGG DOING – workshop, for example, fire twirling in the park and pizza



## Other outcomes

- Early identification of girls with mental health issues who may require further intervention for example; youth specific GP appointments, youth counselling, youth workers and DHS
- There have been strong links made in the broader community, that is, with the welfare staff at the local Castlemaine Secondary College as they directly refer to the program.

## Other outcomes

- Approximately 90 girls have attended the program over the last 2 ½ years
- Go Girls Go – ‘Risky Business’ group developed for ‘high risk girls’ who have mental health issues and require individually tailored programs with more intensive staff time
- Go Boys Go – new pilot program being developed for boys using the same structure as GGG



## Funded by

- Central Victorian GP Network through the Better Outcomes for Mental Health

## For More Information:

Joanne O'Connor at CHIRP on 54791000  
or Mary Edmonds