

First Person Exposé

By Deb Mann

“He started going after her, so I jumped up in between them. I was always the one in our family that tried to keep the peace; I’d try to diffuse a situation, hoping to just get everyone to be quiet and forget about it. I didn’t want him to make a scene in the crowded theme park surrounded by other normal happy families. I don’t remember the details of what happened next – it happened so fast – but I do remember that it all ended when my father pulled his arm back and punched me below my right eye. No one even stopped to see if I was all right or to ask if I needed help.”

The “first person expose” is a staple of the teen magazine. In it, an actual teen recounts something that they’ve experienced, positive or (more commonly) negative, in the first person. It represents an opportunity to integrate serious, issue-driven content into each issue, and opens up dialogue on things like violence, racism, pregnancy, and eating disorders. The first person expose is frequently accompanied with contact information for organizations equipped to deal with the problem discussed in the article. For example, a first person expose on bullying might include the Kids’ Help Line number, while one on teen pregnancy might refer readers to Planned Parenthood. Keep this in mind when you receive your monthly batch of teen magazines, and consider maintaining a corresponding list of local contacts at the reference desk. Sometimes magazines will run first person exposes to correspond with larger national initiatives like Black History Month or anniversaries of significant events like the Columbine shootings. These could come in handy if you are planning programming or outreach related to such events.

Programming Ideas

by Robin Illsley

Spring break provides a great opportunity for the library to market itself to students. Here are some ideas on programming for teen girls. The descriptions are general so that you can add your own flavor to each program.



Lip stick Guessing Game

Girls apply either lip stick or tinted lip gloss and make an impression of their lips on a small piece of paper. Try to provide a variety of colors, or get girls to use their own. The anonymous imprint is then tacked up on a bulletin board along with imprints from all the other participants. The identity of the imprint is on the back of each sheet. The girls then try to match up the imprints with the correct identity.

Display: Mystery books



How to Make Café Mocha

A local barista (or a staff member with similar knowledge) demonstrates how to concoct the perfect café mocha. It is a very interactive demonstration, with the barista and staff asking participants what sort of drinks they like and talking about their favorite hangouts. Each girl receives café mocha at the end of the session. Try to include snacks like cheese and crackers, fruit trays, and a dessert tray. An alternate beverage should be provided for those who do not like the café mocha.

Display: Non-alcoholic drinks books



Magazine Talk

This activity begins with girls browsing magazines that are being circulated. Staff will then moderate a discussion involving issues such as: body image, eating disorders, unrealistic portrayals of models, and how the media shapes teen attitudes. Lighter topics will also be covered, like favorite magazines, least favorite magazines, and what content the girls would include if they were running a magazine.

Display: Books relating to these themes, along with alternative magazines



Hip Handbags

Try playing popular music throughout this activity. Staff will demonstrate how to make a cute handbag using one of the patterns in a book such as, *The Hip Handbag Book: 25 Easy-to-Make Totes, Purses, and Bags* by Sherri Haab.

Display: Other trendy craft books



Frenemy Bracelets

Every library's done friendship bracelets, but what about frenemy bracelets? These are for those girls who are superficially friends, but deep down are bitter rivals. Of course, this is just a ploy to get girls interested. They can jokingly give their real friends the bracelets. There are many books on creating friendship/frenemy bracelets. For an older teen audience, try beaded bracelets like the ones found in *It's All About the Beads!* by Barbara Case.

Display: Make-your-own jewelry books



Chick Flick Movie Marathon

This program can last for an afternoon, with people dropping in and out for specific movies, or you can turn it into a slumber party. There are numerous chick flicks to choose from; make sure to ask your teens for their picks. You may want to include some discussion or trivia questions after each movie.

Display: Books the movies were based on, or thematically related books



Celebrity Fashion Show

Fashion is found throughout most teen magazines. Bring these ideas to life with a celebrity fashion show. Girls can imitate their favorite, or least favorite, celebrity's fashion. Get inspired by looking through magazines in the library. Try to recycle old clothes that girls bring in, or from a thrift shop.

Display: Fashion books and magazines



Reveal the Sex God

Cover posters of teen heart throbs with multiple pieces of paper. The covering sheets of paper will have numbers on them. The girls are divided into two teams. The teams must answer pop culture questions correctly to remove the sheets of paper. The first team to guess the celebrity underneath wins the poster. This program can be made for younger or older teens, depending on the posters and the questions.

Display: Celebrity biographies or thematically related works



Yoga and Smoothies

Help girls find their inner peace, and stay healthy with a session of yoga. A yoga instructor from your town may be willing to give some free sessions in return for marketing space in the library. This program may require registration, as yoga can take up a lot of space. Ask the yoga instructor to narrate the session with helpful advice about how to stay healthy. To finish off the program, blend some nutritious fruit smoothies and hand out recipes.

Display: Yoga or other exercise books, and books with smoothie recipes



Scrapbooking 101

Many teens love crafts, and creating decorative scrapbooks with their own pictures is both fun and practical. Teens bring in 3-5 pictures that they want to scrapbook. The library will provide most of the supplies for a simple two-page layout.

Scrapbooking is a favorite past-time of many adults, so try and get some local enthusiasts to help with the program and donate any of their surplus supplies. This session is meant to be a basic introduction, since complex pages can cost a lot. Try using patterns from scrapbooking books like *The Joy of Scrapbooking* by Kerry Arquette et al.

Display: Scrapbooking books and magazines



Paparazzi Photo Contest

Get girls to take fake paparazzi photos of their friends. Their friends can be dressed up as celebrities, or just caught off-guard. Make sure the people in the pictures are willing to share their run-

in with the paparazzi! Prizes should be awarded to the best photographs.

Display: Books on photography



Celeb Crush Poetry Contest

Girls can vent some of their frustration over unrequited love by composing poems about their celebrity crushes. This activity may appeal to teens who don't want to write anything too personal, but who want to show off their talents. The poems can be published online or in the library newsletter, or girls can read them out on a special poetry night.

Prizes should be awarded.

Display: Works of poetry and books about writing poetry

Inspiration from:

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(More) teen program ideas. New York: Mid-Hudson Library System. Retrieved March 26, 2007, from http://midhudson.org/department/youth/Teen_Programs.htm