

THREE QUESTIONS / HALEY KILPATRICK, founder of Girl Talk

A dream team — 10,000 strong

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Some girls just want to have fun, and some want to make a difference in life. Haley Kilpatrick, 20, is actually a little of both.

The founder of a girl-to-girl mentoring program while she was still in high school in Albany, Kilpatrick is ecstatic that Girl Talk recently received a \$100,000 founding partner grant from Atlanta-based Bell Capital Management.



Kilpatrick founded Girl Talk — which trains older teens how to talk in small groups with younger teens about sticky subjects the younger girls might not want to discuss with their parents — as a result of her own difficult middle school years and a desire to protect her younger sister, KellyJ, from the rough time she had in the middle school years.

"I wanted so badly to make her little world perfect," said Kilpatrick, now a junior at Kennesaw State. Thus, Girl Talk came about when Kilpatrick was still in high school.

The program has been so successful that it operates now in 19 states with 10,000 volunteer girls.

We asked Kilpatrick about the need for girls to help one another out during the tough adolescent years and about Girl Talk.

Q: What made you think that a girl-to-girl mentoring program would help teenage girls?

A: When I got to high school, I knew the cheerleaders and the girls on the math team, and so I knew they had a big influence on me and other girls. It was helpful to be able to look up to them and realize that they had been through what I and so many others go through, too.

Q: What was that?

A: Sometimes other girls can be really mean. And there are so many other issues that teens don't want to talk about with their parents — anorexia, boys, you name it. So we bring in girls who have been through some of those issues to talk to the groups.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you have for teenage girls?

A: There's a misconception that our generation is flawed, that all we can do is play PlayStation. Do not let your age get in the way. It's really important that kids don't [feel they] have to wait to accomplish their dreams.

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