

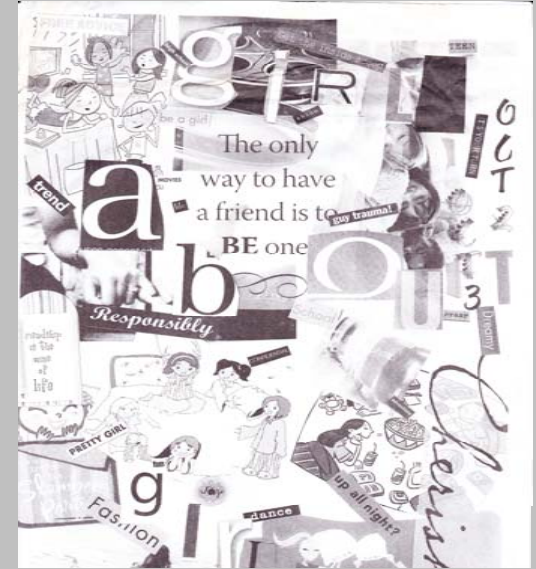
## Student Voice

# Girls Empowering Each Other ...

### About the program ...

Each year at Victoria Park Collegiate Institute, Grade 9 girls hold a sleepover at the school. In 2009, this Girls about Girls event took place in early October with over 100 girls in attendance. During the eighteen hour event, the girls are empowered and make connections with others from different courses and backgrounds through a range of cooperative learning activities, including swimming, dancing, art and drama. Girls about Girls is facilitated by twenty Grade 10 leaders and ten female staff members.

Victoria Park is a culturally and academically diverse school. A third of the school is involved in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. This sleepover helps to bridge the social gap between students from different programs. This is accomplished by creating activity groups that are each made up of a mix of students from both the regular and IB programs.



### Impact on student learning and school culture ...

- The activities focus on building the girls' self-esteem and creating situations in which they find power in their own voices. The Girls about Girls program includes strategies to teach girls how to show respect to themselves and their peers. The lessons taught through the program are reinforced by curriculum in other classes in the school.
- Student leaders and staff work together to develop the program and prepare for the annual sleepover event. The entire staff supports the event by donating their time, resources and classrooms.
- Local businesses sponsor the Girls about Girls program with monetary and product support. These donations are used for refreshments and gift bags for the students. All Grade 9 girls have the opportunity to attend, as the sleepover is free.
- Feedback from parents and students indicates that the experience is memorable for the girls. Participants report that the connections they make last throughout their high school career.

### Testimonial ...

"Girls about Girls is the best way at Vic Park to meet friends and open up to other people."

– Participant and leader 2007-09

### To find out more, contact ...

Toronto District School Board  
Victoria Park Collegiate Institute  
15 Wallingford Rd.  
North York, ON M3A 2V1

School website: <http://victoriaparkci.com/>

Contact: Karen DeRose (Teacher)  
Phone: (416) 395-3310 x20095  
Email: [karen.derose@tel.tdsb.on.ca](mailto:karen.derose@tel.tdsb.on.ca)