



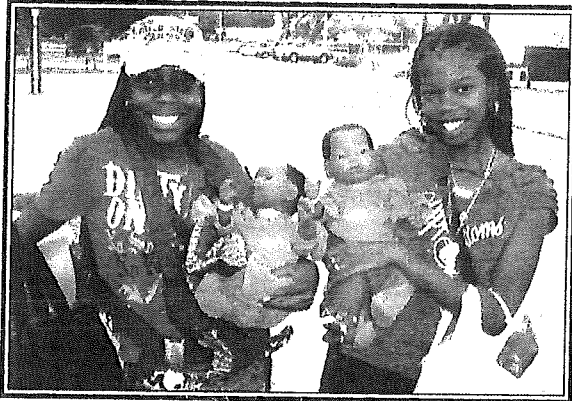
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## NEW PROGRAM GETS GIRLS TALKING

*By Carisa Biesecker*



*KAYLA AND DYEISHA, MEMBERS OF THE G.I.R.L.S. TALK PROGRAM AT MIDDLETON HIGH SCHOOL WHICH IS SOON TO BE AT EAST BAY HIGH SCHOOL, WERE GIVEN INFANT SIMULATORS TO CARE FOR OVER A THREE-DAY PERIOD OF TIME.*

"Now more than ever, girls need positive adults who they can talk to and who will help guide them in the right direction," states MemorieAnne Brown, program specialist of the Girl Scouts of West Central Florida's G.I.R.L.S. (Girls in Real Life Situations) Talk, which is soon to unveil at East Bay High School in January.

Having begun in September, G.I.R.L.S. Talk is a 10-week session within the designated McLane and Burnett middle and Middleton high schools, soon to be at Simmons Career Center in November and East Bay High School, whereat girls focus on the areas of self-esteem, self-awareness, the media's impact in their lives, self-concept; decision-making, conflict resolution and sexual responsibility.

Initiated by GSWCF through funding provided by 21st Century, the Community Foundation of Greater Sun City Center and the Greater Brandon Community Foundation, girls from sixth to ninth grade

can take part in the program for free after having a consent form signed, with an annual total of 100 expected to be reached.

"G.I.R.L.S. Talk strives to reach girls who might not otherwise have a chance to participate in Girl Scouting. The program is designed to facilitate open and honest conversations about the sometimes difficult topics and issues that girls face in today's world," comments Linda Scott, membership collaborations manager. "The girls in the program love it! They feel free to discuss the issues that pertain to them

most, such as stereotypes, media messages and sexual responsibility," adds Brown.

After participating in the program, the girls are encouraged to stay active within the Girl Scouts by becoming members of GSWCF, which encompasses Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sumter counties, serving 33,000 girls.

"Through the G.I.R.L.S. Talk program, we hope that girls will learn to use critical thinking to solve problems in their everyday lives and learn to make wise choices," concludes Brown.

The GSWCF hopes to expand the program to all middle schools throughout the eight counties in which it serves. Schools interested in the program are encouraged to call 262-1696 or email [lscott@gswcf.org](mailto:lscott@gswcf.org). For additional information on Girl Scouts of West Central Florida, please visit [www.gswcf.org](http://www.gswcf.org) or call 262-1696 or 262-1811 or email [lscott@gswcf.org](mailto:lscott@gswcf.org) or [mbrown@gswcf.org](mailto:mbrown@gswcf.org).