

A Girl Talk Get-Away
based on



By Hayley DiMarco

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Introduction

Do any of the girls in your youth group ask questions? Questions about guys? Questions about their friends? Fashion? Faith? Of course they do! Teens are full of questions and as their youth leader, you need to know the answers. They've been asking me these questions for years through letters, emails, and on my website AskHayley.com. And through my books and website, I've been answering them giving them advice on everything they want to know. My new magazine style book, *Ask Hayley*, discusses the latest questions—the ones kids are asking right now—questions like *how tight is too tight?*, *is flirting a sin?*, and *does he want me or my body?* The *Ask Hayley* event guide collects these and other pertinent questions and organizes them into groups to make them easy for you and the girls in your youth group to discuss. Throughout this event, we'll talk about guys (the good, the bad, and the frustrating), dating, purity, and friendship—all the stuff that kids are talking about everyday.

I've designed the *Ask Hayley* event to be a weekend retreat starting on Friday night and ending on Sunday morning. I've given you a suggested timetable for each day in the Overview, but feel free to adapt this schedule as needed. Be flexible and remember that the goal is to have a meaningful event—not to simply “get through” the schedule. Since the timetable doesn't allow for a lot of reading time, I recommend that you hand out copies of *Ask Hayley* to your students at least two weeks before the event. Encourage them to read the entire book/magazine ahead of time so you can focus your together time on activities and discussion. I have incorporated some Quiet Times into the event that can be used for reading or devotions. I've also included devotional handouts that you can give to your girls. Encourage your girls to take this time seriously: if possible, let them spread out so they can have their privacy during their devotional time.

At the event, the contents of *Ask Hayley* will be used to spark discussion. When it comes to discussion, please feel free to use these questions to sculpt your own group time. Give your students the freedom to bring up the issues they want to talk about and recognize that the questions in *Ask Hayley* may incite others... so be prepared. I've given you a number of activity suggestions to go along with the discussion questions provided. These activities are designed to be interactive and easy-going, so let your students have some fun with them. You'll notice that the activities listed will not fill up every minute of the day, so you should have plenty of time for group fun or free time along the way. Consider bringing some games or movies that the girls can enjoy during this down time, but don't be surprised if they simply want to spend more time talking about the topics raised during group sessions!

It's almost time to get started. But first, here are some helpful hints about using this guide in a group setting.

Before the Event

- » **Prepare Yourself:** *Ask Hayley* was written by a girl, for the girls, about girl issues. As such, I highly recommend that this event be led by a girl instead of a guy. If you are a male youth director or pastor who thinks this study would benefit your group, I suggest that you ask a trusted adult woman to lead—or join you—on the retreat. Also, familiarize yourself with this event guide and read through each session’s material checklists carefully so you can gather the necessary items beforehand. Pay special attention to the discussion questions and consider any personal anecdotes or insights you might want to share. You don’t want to do all the talking—but it’s helpful to have some ideas in mind in case the conversation needs a jump start.
- » **Prepare Your Students:** Distribute *Ask Hayley* magazines to your students at least two weeks before the retreat. Tell them that you’ll be giving them some reading time during the retreat, but it might be helpful if they skimmed some of the ideas ahead of time. Also give them a copy of the Reading Guide so they know what sort of topics will be discussed at the event.

Group Rules

Remind your girls that this study group is a place where people are to be valued and respected. We suggest that you share these simple group rules with everyone before you start:

- » **Practice confidentiality.** What’s said in the group stays in the group.
- » **Respect other people’s views,** even when they are different than your own.
- » **Listen. Listen. Listen.** Don’t be the one who does all the talking, but let others have a chance to share their views as well.
- » **Don’t interrupt.** Wait your turn to talk.

Tips for Leading a Discussion

Here’s a few ideas to keep your discussions rolling in a meaningful way:

- » **Prepare.** Make sure you’ve read through the book chapters for each session. As you prepare for the sessions, consider one or two personal anecdotes you may be able to share during the group’s discussion.
- » **Be yourself.** Thank students for sharing their thoughts and opinions, but don’t feel that you need to agree with every one. Be honest with your students about the lessons you’ve learned in your own experiences—even if they may not be what your students want to hear!

- » **Encourage students to go deeper.** When someone gives a simple response, ask them follow-up questions such as “Why do you feel that way?” “What do you mean when you say _____?” “Tell us more.”
- » **Allow for silence.** Remember: Your students haven’t read the questions ahead of time and they may need some time to process a response. Allow for about 7-10 seconds of silence before saying anything further, even when it makes you feel uncomfortable. If necessary, you can reword the question or move on to another topic.
- » **Include everyone in the discussion.** If it seems like the same two or three students are responding to all your questions, look for ways to bring others into the conversation. Some students may need a little encouragement to share their thoughts and opinions. So invite them to talk by saying something like “Lisa, I’m curious what you think about this too” or “Sara, I’d love to hear what you have to say about that.” Be sensitive to their feelings, though: If the student has nothing to say or looks extremely uncomfortable, give them an “out” by moving on to someone else.
- » **Be a good listener.** The goal is to have a true discussion, not just a “talk” from the group leader. Avoid putting words in the students’ mouths or overreacting to comments that you may not agree with. Try asking “mirror” questions that challenge students to clarify or affirm what you’ve heard. For example, say “What I hear you saying is this. Is that what you mean?” or “So what you seem to be saying is this. Would you agree?”
- » **Bring God into it.** Pray for the students before and after each session. Ask God to direct your discussion and be open to the Spirit’s leading: It may be that He takes you in an unexpected direction, so don’t get too hung up on “the plan.” If students are genuinely interested and engaged in a healthy side topic, let the conversation go, saying a silent prayer for God’s to be working on their hearts as you go.

Friday Night

Dinner

I suggest that you start your event with a meal. Whether you order pizza, hit the drive-through, or brave the kitchen together, dinner is a great time for you and your students to get to know each other. The more comfortable they are around each other, the easier it will be for them to share their honest feelings later on. But be careful not to dull the mood. Keep the time light and fun so everyone has the energy and focus they need to dig into the really meaty issues ahead.

Group Session One: Guys

Opening Activity: Magazine Rack

Supplies Needed: old catalogs/magazines, blank paper, pens/markers

Divide students into groups of two or three for this activity. Give each group several sheets of paper, along with some markers and a pen.

Tell the groups to imagine that they are editors for a major magazine company. They will be brainstorming ideas for the next issues of two men's magazines: "Bad Boys" magazine and "Good Guys" magazine. For each magazine they should create these two elements:

- » A cover mock-up, with title, pictures, and teaser headlines for the content inside.
- » A list of potential advertisers for this issue

Set your students loose for about ten minutes. Then take a few minutes to have the groups share highlights from their magazines with each other

Note: If you have more than three groups of girls, consider assigning only one magazine concept per group (ex. two groups design the "Bad Boys" magazine and two groups design the "Good Guys" magazine). This will shorten the amount of time you'll need for sharing ideas at the end.

Follow-Up Questions

- » What were some of the common themes you saw in the "bad boys" magazines? Do you think the images and stereotypes used were fair? Why or why not?
- » Why do you think girls are sometimes attracted to the "bad boy" type?

- » What were some of the common themes you saw in the “Good Guys” magazine? Were all the images and stereotypes used fair? Why or why not?
- » In general, do you think it’s easy to distinguish between “bad boys” and “good guys?” Why or why not?
- » What are some important red flags that might indicate a guy isn’t good friend or boy-friend material?

Student Feedback

Before moving into further discussion, ask your students to share any other questions or comments they had about the opening activity.

Discussion Questions for Session One

1. Is it possible for guys and girls to be “just friends”? Or is it inevitable that one of them will end up having feelings for the other?
 - » What should you do if you start having feelings for a guy who’s a good friend?
 - » After you break up, can you go back to being just friends? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree with the concept that guys like to do the chasing? Can you think of any real-life evidence to support this view?
 - » If guys like to pursue, then why do they sometimes seem to enjoy having girls chase after them?
 - » Why do you think that girls do a lot of the pursuing in relationships these days? Does this usually result in a secure, healthy dating relationship? Why or why not?
3. Why is it a good idea to have some sense of mystery about you when it comes to dealing with guys?
 - » What are some practical ways to achieve this sense of “mystery”?
4. What do you think of this quote from Hayley: “If he chooses not to chase you, then he’s just not the one for you. It’s a job of trusting God” (p.135).
 - » How can your faith help you handle your feelings for a crush?
 - » In what ways might focusing more on God actually help a girl become more attractive to guys?
5. According to Hayley, what are some good signs that a guy might be interested in you?
 - » How can you encourage his interest, while still letting him do the chasing?
 - » How does flirting play into your relationships with guys?

6. What's the difference between good flirting and bad flirting?
 - » Is it ok to flirt with more than one guy?
7. What should you do if the guy you have a crush on doesn't show any signs of being interested?
 - » Is it ok to keep hoping you'll eventually get his attention? Why or why not?
 - » Do you think there comes a point in time where you have to move on? If so, how do you do that?
8. When it comes to your feelings about a guy, how did Hayley explain the difference between true love and "puppy love"?
 - » Would you agree that most high school feelings are "puppy love"? Why or why not?
 - » Do you have to be dating someone in order to be in love with them?
 - » What's helpful about experiencing "puppy love"? What do you need to be careful about when you're experiencing "puppy love"?
9. How much time and emotional energy should you invest in guys during your high school years?

Free Time

By now your girls have had a great discussion about the world of guys! To reward them for all their hard work today, give them some free time. You might want to plan a special event. Watch a movie together, hold a board game tournament, or just hang out. Don't forget to have fun! Keep in mind, though, that the Saturday schedule is full, so you will want to encourage your students to get some sleep tonight!

Saturday Morning

Breakfast

After a full night's sleep your students will be ready to dig into more *Ask Hayley* topics! While you munch on some cinnamon rolls and orange juice, get the kids talking. If you had free time last night, ask them what they did. If you watched a movie together, ask them how they liked it and what their favorite part was. Keep it fun and entertaining!

Quiet Time

Before you begin the next group session, ask your students if they need or want more time to review the next section of the book. Some girls may want to do that. For others, offer them the Saturday morning Quiet Time handout. It will give them time to reflect and prepare for the rest of the day.

Handout

Group Session Two: Dating

Opening Activity: Campaign Ads

Supplies Needed: Posterboard and markers.

Divide students into two groups for this activity: The Dating Team and the Waiting Team. (For groups larger than 11, you may want to divide into four groups instead, with two Dating Teams and two Waiting Teams.)

Tell students to imagine they are political analysts working on an ad campaign for a newly proposed town ordinance: If passed, this new law would ban dating for anyone under the age of 18. The proposal has been dubbed "Proposal W" because it would force teens to Wait for dating.

The Dating Team needs to create a TV ad that would convince citizens to vote *against* Proposal W. They should educate voters about why dating is a healthy option that should be available to the town's teens. They might want to consider Hayley's "Top 5 Reasons to Date" (p. 12), but they should also incorporate their own ideas.

The Waiting Team needs to create a TV ad that *supports* Proposal W. Their goal is to educate voters about why teen dating is unhealthy and explain why waiting is a better option for the town's teens. They might want to consider Hayley's "Top 5 Reasons to Wait" (p. 13-14), but they should also incorporate their own ideas.

Ask the teams to think about real-life political ads they've seen on TV and then encourage them to have fun mimicking and exaggerating some of those styles in their Proposal W ads. Suggest a few ideas, such as choosing an announcer, using posterboard to display key facts, or having some of the team members act out a compelling story that supports their views. Explain that the ads should be no longer than 3 minutes in length.

Give teams 10 minutes to strategize and create their ads, and then gather the group to perform their ads for each other.

Follow-Up Questions

- » Do you think the idea of high school dating is a black and white issue? Is it always right or always wrong? Why or why not?
- » Which set of reasons has more appeal to you personally: Reasons to Date or Reasons to Wait? Why?
- » Do you think it's hard for two girls to be friends if one of them chooses to date and the other one chooses to wait? Why or why not?
- » Based on Hayley's "Top 5 Reasons to Date," what kind of personality would you need to have in order to date in a healthy way during high school?
- » Based on Hayley's "Top 5 Reasons to Wait," what kind of personality types might be better off waiting to date until later?

Student Feedback

Before moving into further discussion, ask your students to share any other questions or comments they had about the opening activity.

Discussion Questions for Session Two

1. What are some of the reasons that girls choose to date in high school?
 - » Which of these reasons are *healthy* reasons for dating? Which ones are *unhealthy*?
 - » Why is it important to have the right motives for dating in high school? What happens if you date for the wrong reasons?

2. What do you think of Hayley's suggestion that "If you want to keep a guy interested, then you have to back off a little and put some more mystery into the relationship" (p.33)?
 - » What does it mean to "put mystery into the relationship"? What are some practical ways to do this?
 - » On the opposite end of the spectrum, what actions destroy the mystery and make a guy feel smothered?
3. What does it mean to have "emotional virginity"?
 - » Why is guarding your emotions a good idea when it comes to high school dating?
4. Why is trust a key ingredient for a successful dating relationship?
 - » In what ways do each of the "7 questions you should never ask a guy" show a lack of trust in the relationship (p. 43)?
 - » What are some ways to build trust in a dating relationship? How do you show a guy that you trust him?
 - » What should you do if you feel like your boyfriend *isn't* trustworthy anymore? Can you change him – or are you better off getting out of the relationship?
5. Hayley suggests that all high school dating relationships are destined to break up eventually. In your experience, is this true?
 - » Why is it unhealthy to enter a high school dating relationship with the idea that it will last forever? What problems does this mindset lead to?
 - » What can you do during your dating relationships to reduce the amount of hurt you will feel when the relationship ends?
6. How can you handle a break-up in a healthy way?
 - » If you're the one breaking up with him, how can you do it in a way that causes him the least pain?
 - » What should you do if a guy breaks up with you? Why is it a bad idea to get emotional in front of him or try to win him back?
7. How would you define "missionary dating"?
 - » Is it ok for Christians to date non-Christians? Why or why not?
 - » Do you think it's possible to change a "bad boy" while you're dating him? Why or why not?
8. What are some signs that you are in an unhealthy dating relationship?
 - » What are some "red flags" that would indicate a guy isn't the right one for you?
 - » Who ends up getting more hurt: A girl who ignores red flags because she's in love with a guy, or a girl who breaks up because of red flags, even though she's in love with the guy?

9. What are some signs that you are in a healthy dating relationship?
 - » The Bible doesn't speak about dating specifically, but what are some general ideas found in the Bible that would apply to your dating relationships?

Free Time

Need a quick break before lunch? If you have a few extra minutes, take the time to regroup. You've all been sitting for a while, so encourage everyone to get up and move. If the weather is nice, take a quick walk or challenge your girls to a game of ultimate Frisbee. A little adventure can be fun!

Saturday Afternoon

Lunch

How's the weather outside? If it's nice, why not have a picnic? Recruit your students to help make sandwiches, pack juice boxes, or wrap brownies. They can split up the responsibilities or work on them together. Teamwork is great! When you're ready, ask each student to help carry some of the food to a nice picnic area outside. If the sun is out, take advantage of the weather and have some fun.

Quiet Time

Before you begin the next group session, ask your students if they need or want more time to review the next section of *Ask Hayley*. Let them know what pages you will be going through in the next group session so they can look ahead. Encourage them to jot some notes or think about some questions they want to ask. Maybe they want to keep a journal and reflect what they've already learned this weekend. However you want to use this time, encourage the girls to take some time for to reflect and pray.

Group Session Three: Purity

Opening Activity: Battle of the Sexes

Supplies Needed: posterboard, markers, one or two popular teen magazines such as *Seventeen* or *Cosmo Girl*

Before this session, label four pieces of posterboard, each with one of the following categories: TV, Music, Movies, Magazines. Hang the posterboards at various places around the room and set a few markers by each one.

As the girls arrive, ask them to help "educate" you about teen culture. Encourage them to walk around the room and write down their favorite TV shows, music groups, movies, and magazines on the appropriate posterboards.

When you notice that each posterboard has at least 5-10 suggestions, move on to the next part of the activity. Divide the girls into 4 teams, giving each team one of the posterboards and

a marker. (Give the Magazine team one or two magazines as well.) Explain that the groups will compete in a “Battle of the Sexes”: They will have 10 minutes to write down as many sexual references as they can think of for the shows/movies/singing groups listed on their poster-board. (The magazine group will be limited to writing down references from the magazines you provided).

Read through the following list so the groups will know what qualifies as a “sexual reference”:

- » scenes, lyrics, or articles that depict or imply people having sex
- » Scenes, lyrics, jokes involving sexual innuendo
- » Characters and/or celebrities in each category who dress in a sexually suggestive way (The magazine group may write down celebrities from any category as long as they are pictured in their magazine with sexually suggestive clothes on.)
- » Real life celebrities in each category who’ve been openly involved in sexual relationships (The magazine group may write down any celebrities that are mentioned in their magazine.)
- » TV or magazine advertisements that have sexually suggestive content.

After the ten minutes are up, have each team count up their total number of sexual references and choose their top three most flagrant sexual references. Give each team a chance to share their final score and their top three references with the large group. Give a small prize to the winning team and then ask the following questions:

Follow-Up Questions

- » Do you think it’s healthy for teens to be exposed to this many sexual references in their everyday entertainment choices? Why or why not?
- » Do you think it would have been easier or harder to come up with references to abstinence, modesty, and sexual purity in your categories? Do you think our culture respects these ideas? Why or why not?
- » If our culture had higher expectations of teens when it comes to sexual purity, do you think teens would act any differently? Why or why not?
- » How does a Christian view of sex differ from the messages you see in the entertainment industry?

Student Feedback

Before moving into further discussion, ask your students to share any other questions or comments they had about the opening activity.

Discussion Questions for Session Three

1. How would you define “sexual purity”?
 - » Is this something you only need to worry about when you’re dating? Why or why not?
 - » If a girl wants to be sexually pure, how would that affect each of these areas: Her speech? Her dating choices? Her dress? Her entertainment choices?
2. What is the link between fashion and sexual purity?
 - » Why do you think so many girls dress immodestly? What are they trying to accomplish by dressing this way?
 - » How might dressing sexy actually undermine a girl’s desires when it comes to romance and love?
3. Hayley suggests that you shouldn’t wear anything that’s going to attract sexual attention to your body. What do you think of this idea?
 - » What’s wrong with wanting guys to think you’re hot?
 - » What *should* be your motives for choosing what you wear?
 - » Besides clothing, what other current fashion trends draw sexual attention to a young woman’s body?
4. Is it fair to hold a girl accountable for what a guy is thinking when he sees her clothes? Why or why not?
 - » Do you think current fashion trends make it easy or difficult for a guy to control his thoughts?
 - » Who should have more responsibility for sexual purity: The guys—to control their minds? Or the girls—to dress in clothes that won’t tempt the guys to impure thoughts?
5. How can you tell if your clothes are too sexy? What guidelines should you use to determine what you wear?
 - » What are some current fashion trends that you feel are “too hot”?
 - » What are some current fashion trends that could help you look more modest?
6. How should a girl decide where her physical boundaries will be when she’s in a dating relationship?
 - » What do you think of Hayley’s suggestion: “If you think that what you are doing with him could be causing him to think about sex with you, then you’ve gone too far” (p.29)? Given that teenage guys tend to have a lot of hormones racing around, does this rule out doing *anything* physical?
 - » Hayley also says that “sin starts in our minds” (p.45). How do you think your physical actions affect your mental thoughts while dating?

7. Sometimes girls set firm boundaries for themselves, but they end up crossing the line while they're in a dating relationship: Why do you think this happens?
 - » Why are sexual sins so tempting for teens?
 - » Are there some practical guidelines that would help you avoid sexual temptation to begin with? (for example: not being together in a house alone)
 - » Do you think most teens have accountability when it comes to sexual sin, or are they trying to stay sexually pure on their own? What kind of people make good accountability partners?
8. Is it important for a guy and girl to talk about their physical boundaries if they're dating? Why or why not?
 - » At what point in the dating relationship would it be a good idea to have this kind of discussion?
 - » What if the guy you're dating doesn't agree with the boundaries you want to set? Is it ok to compromise on boundary lines as long as you both share the basic commitment to not have sex?
9. How does a girl's emotional and spiritual health impact her ability to live a sexually pure lifestyle?
 - » In what ways could a poor self-image or spiritual life prevent a girl from making healthy sexual choices?
 - » What can you do to keep your emotions and your spiritual life headed in a positive direction?
10. What are God's standards when it comes to sexual purity?
 - » Is it possible to be a virgin, technically speaking, but still be living a life of sexual immorality?
 - » Ephesians 5:3 says there must not be even a "hint" of sexual immorality among you: Can you think of any behaviors and/or fashion trends that your church or school generally accepts, but that still have a "hint" of sexual immorality?
 - » Given this standard, are there any behaviors in your own life that you'd like to improve?

Free Time

This girl talk get-away wouldn't be a true get-a-way unless you take some time to relax. You'll probably get finished with session three early or mid afternoon. Between then and dinner, put the book, handouts, and questions aside and go have some fun with your girls. You might want to plan some activity that will help them relax and get to know each other as friends. Find a local ice cream parlor, take a walk, or go for a short hike. If all else fails, hit the mall (teen girls LOVE to window shop). Plan it out though so that you and your girls know when to be back for dinner and the evening group activity. Have fun!

Saturday Evening

Dinner

After a couple hours of free time, gather your girls together for dinner. When the food is ready, open with a word of prayer. Then, during dinner, keep the conversation light and entertaining. Ask them questions about what they did this afternoon and if they had fun. Near the end of the meal, call the girls together to tell them how the rest of the night will play out. The group activity coming up may need a little prep time—but it will be fun!!

Group Activity

Up until this point, your group's been doing a lot of talking. So for Saturday night, plan a little break from the dialogue and get your group involved in a fun activity. I've listed several ideas below—all designed to let your group unwind while bringing home some important points from the group sessions. Consider the girls in your group and then choose an activity that will work well with their personalities, interests, and concerns.

Option 1: Fashion Show

Before the retreat, ask each girl to bring along two outfits for a fashion show. (They may bring their own clothes or borrow from friends.) Then, on Saturday night, host a Fashion Show where each girl can model her clothes. Set aside some extra time for the girls to do their hair and makeup before the event. While they get ready, tape two sets of Christmas lights on the floor to create a runway effect, and find some upbeat music to play during the show.

Before you actually start the fashion show, explain to the girls that they'll have a chance to offer feedback about the "sexiness" of each other's clothes: After each girl walks down the runway, the other girls will offer some honest feedback about whether her outfit is too sexy. If

the clothes are a little too revealing, have the girls offer suggestions for how the outfit could be tweaked for a more modest look (adding a layered tee, wearing leggings under a short skirt, etc.). Encourage everyone to be open to suggestions about their clothes and to be kind when offering suggestions to others.

After the girls have finished showcasing their outfits, end the evening on a light note by hosting a Pajama Fashion Show. Have everyone change into their pajamas and then walk the runway one more time in their PJs. (You might give some silly awards such as “Funniest Pajamas,” “Frilliest Pajamas,” and “Fuzziest Pajamas.”)

Option 2: Fashion Review

If you’re not sure your group can handle the direct critiques of a Fashion Show, try this alternative. Prepare a Powerpoint with fashion pictures you find on the Internet. (Check out online catalogs and fashion magazine sites for ideas.) Display a variety of looks from “nerdy” to “cute” to “sexy.”

As you display each picture for the girls, have them offer a fashion review of the outfit. Encourage them to discuss what they like and dislike, and then have them offer suggestions for improving the look from both a fashion and a modesty standpoint.

End the evening by allowing the girls to give a fashion review to you as their leader. Ask them to tell you what they like and dislike about the clothes you wear. Do they think you dress modestly? Are any of your clothes too revealing? Do they have ideas for how you could dress more stylishly? Encourage them to be honest about their suggestions and try to accept all of their comments graciously: This is your opportunity to set a good example for accepting honest feedback about your wardrobe. Then encourage the girls to consider asking a friend and a parent to give them their own fashion review when they get home.

Option 3: Chick Flick Review

Host a showing of a popular chick flick and then lead a discussion afterwards. You may want to use some of the following questions after the show:

- » What did you like about this movie’s story line? What did you dislike?
- » Is this movie plot a fairy tale or could this story actually unfold in real life?
- » What did you like about the leading man in this story? Do you think he gives a realistic picture of guys? Why or why not?
- » Can real-life guys ever compete with the guys you see onscreen? Why or why not?
- » How does a constant diet of chick flicks affect your view of dating relationships? Will it help or hurt you in finding the man of your dreams?
- » In general, how often do you ask yourself questions like these after you’ve watched a movie or TV program? Do you tend to “turn your brain off” when you’re watching entertainment?
- » Is it important to analyze what you’re watching on TV and in the movies? Or should we just lighten up and enjoy the show?
- » What are some dangers of viewing movies and TV mindlessly?

Option 4: Mystery Women

Make the idea of being “mysterious” more memorable for your girls by hosting a murder mystery party. This will take some extra planning, but using a murder mystery kit will make the process easier for you. (Be sure to read through the kit beforehand, however, as some murder mysteries can have racy elements in the storyline.)

If you choose to host a murder mystery dinner, make sure you hand out character descriptions to your girls at least one week before the event. Encourage them to bring along props and costumes for their characters. And don’t forget to take a picture of the entire group when you’re all dressed up for the dinner!

It will be difficult for you to facilitate the murder mystery and handle dinner preparations at the same time, so ask for some volunteers (parents, adult youth sponsors, or fellow church members) who’d be willing to cook and serve during this event.

Option 5: On Air

If you have a group that just loves to talk, keep the conversation flowing with this activity. Before the retreat, seek out three or four adult female volunteers who’d be willing to come and answer questions about the retreat topics (Guys, Dating, Purity, Friends). Consider asking some women that your girls already know (adult youth sponsors, parents, teachers, etc.), or seek out some of your own friends and acquaintances who would be comfortable discussing these topics.

At the end of your Saturday afternoon activity, hand out slips of paper to the group and encourage them to jot down some questions about the topics you’ve been discussing. Put a container in the center of the room and ask the girls to put their questions there before leaving the room.

For the evening activity, set up a room to look like a TV talk show set: rows of chairs for your girls (the audience) and a few chairs at the front for your guests (the adult volunteers). Bring along a microphone and dress yourself up as the talk show host. As the girls arrive, have them draw questions out of the container that they will ask during the “show.”

Once everyone’s seated, introduce yourself as the host of “Girl Talk, the show where real girls talk about real stuff,” and then introduce your guests. Have each guest begin by briefly talking about her own teenage years—specifically mentioning the kinds of questions and problems they faced during that time in their lives. Then open up the microphone for your audience to ask their questions.

Note: You may want to have your adult volunteers arrive up to an hour before your activity so that they can have time to look over some of the questions your girls handed in. Encourage them to skim through Ask Hayley so they’ll have a general idea of what topics you’re discussing and the perspective you are trying to teach the girls.

Sunday Morning

Breakfast

As the girls wake up this morning, ask them to start to pack up their things. Eat breakfast together and then clean up. After the next Quiet Time and Session Four, you'll have a quick closing activity before you leave, so take some time now to get things in order.

Quiet Time

After you have everything picked up, give each girl a copy of the Thanksgiving Time handout and ask them to spend at least a half hour working through it. They can also use this time for devotions and prayer.

Handout

Group Session Four: Friends and Foes

Opening Activity: Prom Dress Auction

Supplies Needed: Fashion Cutouts (see Prep Work below), varying amounts of play money in envelopes

Prep Work: Before this session, create some "Fashion Cutouts" by cutting prom dress pictures from catalogs or magazines and pasting them to a sheet of paper. Most of the dresses should be a trendy teen style, but mix in a few business suits and "grandma style" dresses as well. Cut out about 15-20 dresses, and glue each of them to a piece of paper. Write a "Starting Bid" at the bottom of each page. (Try to keep the starting bids between \$50 - \$100.) Next, put together envelopes of "bidding money" using play money: Put \$1000 in one envelope, \$500 in two envelopes, \$250 in three envelopes, and then put \$100 or less in the rest of the envelopes.

As the girls arrive for this session, explain that you're going to be holding a Prom Dress Auction and start passing the Fashion Cutouts around so they can take a look at the items up for bid. While they look at the Cutouts, pass out the envelopes of bidding money and explain the "rules" for bidding:

1. Your goal is to buy at least one item—preferably something you would actually want to wear to the prom.
2. You may buy more than one item, as long as you have enough money for it.
3. You may only bid with your own money—you cannot combine funds with anyone else.
4. Raise your hand to make a bid.

Once everyone has looked at the Cutouts and counted their bidding money, you can start the auction. Have fun working as the auctioneer and try to coax girls into raising the bids. If no one wants to bid on a particular item, try lowering the starting bid. If it still doesn't get bids, set it aside and move on to the next item. After you've finished auctioning off the last item, move on to the follow-up questions below.

Follow-Up Questions

- » What role does fashion play when it comes to trying to fit in with friends? How about money?
- » Did any of the items go for a small amount of money or end up being rejected all together? If so, why didn't anyone want them?
- » Do you know any girls who get treated like "rejects" at your school? Why are they treated that way and how do you think they feel about it?
- » Did you have fun bidding against the other girls for prom dresses—or did you feel frustrated? Why?
- » In what ways do girls "bid against" each other in real life? Is competition an issue for teenage girls? Why or why not?

Student Feedback

Before moving into further discussion, ask your students to share any other questions or comments they had about the opening activity.

Discussion Questions for Session Four

1. According to Hayley, what are some characteristics of a "Mean Girl"? (Check out p. 84-85 for some ideas.)
 - » Do you know any real-life Mean Girls? Describe what they are like without using their actual names.
 - » Why do you think girls are so mean to each other at times—even with their own friends?

2. What should you do when people are mean toward you?
 - » What do you think of this statement: “Seeking revenge, getting mad, or becoming devastated by what girls do to you will only backfire on you emotionally and spiritually” (p.59). How exactly does revenge backfire on someone?
 - » What are some healthy alternatives to seeking revenge toward a Mean Girl?
3. Who should be more important to you at this stage of life—your friends or your boyfriend? Or are they equally important? Why?
 - » Can a boyfriend be a good substitute for girlfriends? Why or why not?
 - » How can a dating girl show her girlfriends that she still cares about them?
 - » How can a non-dating girl try to be understanding toward her dating friends?
4. Why is it important to have good girlfriends at this stage of life?
 - » If someone is looking for good friends, what are some practical ways they could meet them?
 - » What are some signs of a healthy friendship?
5. Do you agree with this statement: “The best thing to do about friends who are bringing you down is to avoid them” (p. 80). Why or why not?
 - » What are some signs of an unhealthy friendship?
 - » Is it possible to help a friend change her bad patterns or behaviors? If so, how?
 - » How do you know when it’s time to stop hanging out with someone?
6. Do you tend to feel like your parents are your friends or your enemies? Why?
 - » How can you get parents to stop nagging and start respecting you more?
 - » Why is it important for teens to respect their parents’ authority? Do you think most teens actually do respect their parents?
7. What are the dangers of being a people pleaser?
 - » When does trying to fit in with others become a problem?
 - » How does putting your focus on God help you deal with feelings of wanting to fit in?
8. Do you think girls ever let their friendships and/or dating relationships define who they are? Why or why not?
 - » In what ways *do* your relationships reflect who you are?
 - » What’s the danger of finding your identity in friends or a boyfriend?
 - » Where should your sense of identity come from?

Closing Activity

Supplies Needed: an inexpensive pair of sunglasses or reading glasses for each girl (dollar stores often carry these items), bright-colored ribbon, permanent markers in various colors, stickers

At the close of your retreat, gather the girls together and thank them for making time out of their schedules to come to the event. Then ask them to consider this question:

- » What is one area where you were challenged to see things differently this weekend?
- » (You may need to get the ball rolling by offering a few leading questions such as: Did you feel challenged to change the way you talk with your friends? Did you change your perspective on how to date or how to dress?)

Explain that each person will take a turn to share their response to the question and then give them a few moments to think about what they'd like to say.

As each girl shares her thoughts, hand her a pair of glasses/sunglasses. When everyone's finished, say:

As girls, we like to talk about guys, clothes, friends, and life in general. But all of our talking is pretty worthless if it doesn't actually help us grow in our friendships or grow as a person. That's why I'm so glad each of you found something that challenged you this weekend. And I hope that idea will truly change the way you live when you leave here today.

As you shared, I gave each of you a pair of glasses as a symbol of your "change in vision." Hopefully, you see the world a little bit differently as you leave here today. Maybe you see your dating relationship differently, or you have different feelings about what you should wear. Maybe you just see yourself differently and you want to focus on more positive things instead of the negative stuff. Whatever it is, I want you to remember your new perspective every time you look at these glasses. So take them home and put them in a place you'll see every day: And when you see them, ask God to help you live out your new perspective.

If time allows, give the girls 5-10 minutes to decorate their glasses with ribbon, markers, and stickers. Encourage them to write a few words on the lenses that will remind them of their new perspective.

End your retreat in prayer, thanking God for each girl who came and the time you were able to spend together.

Handouts

Reading Guide

Session One: Guys

Does he like me, like me? Or are we just friends? p. 16-17
Does He Really Like You, Like You (Quiz) p. 18
Asking Guys Out p. 20-21
Is It True Love or Just the Puppy Kind? p. 36-37
Does He Like Me? p.38-39
Is Flirting A Sin? p.46-47
Are You a Good Flirt or a Bad Flirt? p. 48-49
Is He Boyfriend Material? p.50-51
He's Leaving Her For Me p.72-73
How Do I Tell Him I Like Him? p.104-105
The Art of Body Language p.106
Dateless p.112-113
My Best Crush Has a Girlfriend p.116-117
How Do I Get His Attention? p.134-135
I Don't Have Time for Boys p.140-141

Session Two: Dating

Is Dating Biblical? p. 10-11
Top 5 Reasons to Date or to Wait p. 12-15
Why Is He Feeling Smothered? p.32-33
13 Surefire Ways to Keep the Mystery p.34-35
Who's He Talking To? p.40-41
7 Questions You Should Never Ask A Guy p. 43
Missionary Dating p.52-53
He Won't Go to Chick Flicks p.56-57
He's Breaking Up With Me p.62-64
Looking Our For Your #1 Ex p.66-67
It's Over p.68-69
Bad Boy Addiction, Bad News? p.86-87
Does He Want Me or My Body? p. 110-111
We're Taking a Relationship Time-out...Help! p.118-119
Playing Hard-to-Get p.122-123
Can a 19-Year-Old Date a 15-Year-Old? p.124-127

Session Three: Purity

How Far Can I Go? p. 28-29
What's Wrong With a Back Rub? p.44-45
I'm A Technical Virgin p.60-61
Tickle Fights = Foreplay? p.92-93
Why Can't Guys Control Themselves? p. 94-95
When Do You Put Baby in a (time-out) Corner? p.96-99
How Do I Tell Him I'm a Virgin? p.120-121
How Sexy Are You? (Quiz) p. 27
Belly Button Jewelry p. 30-31
How Hot Is Too Hot? p.54-55
I Wanna Smoke p.70-71
Environmental Quiz p.81
Ask Dr. Marissa! p.100-102
How Tight is Too Tight? p.108-109
I'm a Makeup Junkie p.114-115
She's Not Easy, She Just Dresses That Way p.132-133

Session Four: Friends & Foes

Best Friend Trouble p.22-23
Why Does Everyone Think I'm Easy? p. 24-25
Not Invited p.58-59
My Best Friend is Easy p.74-75
My Parents Won't Stop Nagging Me p.76-77
My Emo Friend p.78-80
Friend Fight p.82-83
Is Your Friend a Mean Girl? p.84
10 Clues Your Friend is Bad News p.85
My Friends Think I'm Weird Cuz I Don't Date p.88-90
I'm a People Pleaser p.128-130
Can We Still Be Friends After We Break up? p.136-138

Girl Talk Tune-Up

It's no big secret that girls love to talk: When we're not talking to other girls, we're often talking to ourselves! Talking is great, but sometimes all that conversation can pull us down. If we're not careful, all that girl talk can turn really negative. Soon we're just having a major crabfest that leaves us feeling angry or depressed! So what can you do to keep your conversations on the positive side? Take a minute to read through Phil. 4:8 (it's printed right below) and then give yourself a girl-talk "tune-up" by reflecting on the questions that follow.

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."
—Phil. 4:8

1. True

- » Do your conversations tell the truth? Or do you sometimes let gossip and half-truths slip in?
- » Do you ever tell intentional lies to your friends? Your parents? Others?

2. Noble

- » Do you ever talk about noble actions you could take to help others?
- » Do you tend to focus on people's negative traits – or do you try to recognize the outstanding things about them?

3. Right

- » When you start discussing an upsetting situation or a person who's done you wrong, do you seek ways to make the situation right—or do you focus only on the problem?
- » When you discuss decisions, do you usually look for the right answers or the easy answers?

4. Pure

- » Are your conversations clean—free of dirty jokes and sexual innuendos?
- » Are your conversations ever polluted by put-downs of other people?
- » Do you have pure motives when you start discussing another person who isn't there?

5. Lovely

- » If someone listened in on your conversations, would they see love for others? Would they see any anger or hate?
- » Are your words generally motivated by love—or by something else?

6. Admirable

- » Do you discuss admirable qualities in others? Or do you spend more time making fun of their mistakes?

7. Excellent

- » Do your conversations encourage you to do your best in your tasks? Or are you satisfied with just doing the minimum to get by?
- » Do you discuss ways to excel at life—or do you focus on all the obstacles to doing well?

8. Praiseworthy

- » Do you ever give your friends praise? Do you encourage them when they do something well?
- » Do you spend any time praising God and discussing the cool things He's done in your life?

WRAP IT UP: If you're a normal person, you probably found at least a few of those questions pricking your conscience. So write down one or two ways you'd like to improve your girl talk below. Make a commitment to put these goals into practice next time the conversation starts to roll.

Thanksgiving Time

If you haven't done it already, take a minute to read through the short article, "Turning the Tables" on p. 143 of *Ask Hayley*.

Replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. Feeling better about yourself. Getting closer with God. That all sounds great, right? So give Hayley's idea a try and write your own "Thanksgiving List" below. You'll see a few categories listed to get you started, but feel free to add anything to your list. (And go ahead and doodle that turkey. You know you want to.)

» People I'm Thankful For

» Opportunities I'm Thankful For

» Places I'm Thankful For

» Memories I'm Thankful For

» Things I'm Thankful For

About the Author



Hayley DiMarco is chief creative officer and founder of Hungry Planet, where she writes and creates cutting-edge books that connect with the multitasking mind-set. She has written and co-written numerous best-selling books for both teens and adults, including *Dateable*, *Mean Girls*, and *Marriable*. Hayley has also spoken at conferences like Women of Faith. She and her husband, Michael, live in Nashville, Tennessee. Find out more at www.hungryplanet.net.