



## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual UR Retreat for Young Women Sponsors and Supporters Thank You

Dear Sponsors, Parents, and School Co-Ordinators,

The UR Retreat for Young Women has now enabled 770 young women to change the course of their lives over the past 15 years. During the first week of the school holidays in September 2022, we held the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual UR Retreat for Young Women, which supported 70 young women to Create; Immerse; Empower and Celebrate themselves in their own ways.

The Retreat allowed the 70 young women to undertake their own journey of discovery to find their true direction in life, and gave them a positive environment to do so. Throughout the four days, the girls were given tools to assist with their self-discovery through a variety of inspirational guest speakers including Charlotte Pascoe, CEO of Stockdale and Leggo and Gillian Franklin, Business Entrepreneur. We also had lots of interactive workshops including Edwina Ricci, Project Manager MPEN and empowering activities such as vision boards, the flying fox, and an empowering dance session!

The past few years have seen a variety of new challenges face our community, and we have seen this impact in our young people. With online learning, isolation and lockdowns, and major changes to the way we connect and socialise, it has been even more important to create a space for young people to come together and connect. Due to this and the high demand of need, we increased our numbers this year. This was only possible due to our generous sponsors and support from community.

The entire leadership team did an outstanding job in mentoring and journeying alongside the young women, helping to provide them with a safe and encouraging place where they could learn from each other. I am incredibly proud of the leaders and not only what they achieved with their journeys with the girls, but also the growth within themselves. 12 months of planning and effort they put in most definitely changed lives last week, they are simply amazing!

On behalf of Bridge Builders Youth Organisation, the UR Retreat Team and our beautiful young women; I would like to thank you for your contribution to this year's UR Retreat – your support is priceless and continues to grow this powerful movement that is empowering a generation!

Every single contribution has shown these young women that they are worthy, they have great potential, that there is something to fight for, and that their journey is significant and beautiful.

Please find below some of the experiences and impact from the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual UR Retreat through the eyes of our participants and leaders.

Kind regards  
**Bonnie Knight**  
UR Retreat Manager





## Participant Testimonials

“I have now become more confident; it not only changed my life but I will get to tell people what I learnt to hopefully change theirs too” - Ash

“I feel I am much better and a changed person after the 4 days I look at life differently and am very excited about my future” - Taylah

“I learnt exercises that can help me stay fit, I learnt amazing life lessons that will help me in the future and I learnt how to be successful” - Chloe

“I have made new friends, learnt new lessons, heard peoples amazing stories and grown as a person” - Rachel

“It made me realize I was stronger than I thought I was and it gave me more confidence in myself” - Olivia

“I now know that I am who I am and I shouldn't change that for anyone” - Emma

“Before going on the retreat I didn't know anyone and was really nervous to make new friends and be in a new place and experience. I wasn't sure if I was going to fit in at the start. Soon after on the first day I found some lovely people to hang out with and was more confident with myself and my surroundings. The nerves soon went away as I realised everyone doesn't care about appearance or anything and are really nice, especially the leaders! After leaving the retreat I have a much more positive mindset than I ever thought I would have. From the journey I've had a great experience working with other people and the fun activities. Having this retreat has changed my life physically and mentally by all the talks and kind people come in to help myself and others. Ever since I have had so much confidence in the way I feel and express myself. All together I recommend coming to bridge builders, it will change you in the best way possible!!”

- Hayley





## Leader Testimonials

I have always donated money to charities that support children, but this year was the first time I have volunteered my time, by attending the 4 day Bridge Builders UR Retreat. I met Bonnie a few months ago at a business networking event, and she explained who Bridge Builders were, and the amazing things they do to support our local youth. The camp was such an amazing experience for all, and it was so rewarding to see how it changed the lives of so many teenage girls. I will certainly be volunteering at future UR Retreats.

- **Vanessa**

My name is Mikayla and I've been a leader at bridge builders for just under 2 years. The UR retreat was something I was instantly drawn to, it wasn't an opportunity that I wanted to miss out on. As I am only 20 years old I know what it's like being a 13-15 year old trying to navigate being a teenager as a young women. I recognise the challenges that come with being a teenage girl and understand the importance of the UR retreat and how much this experience would have benefited me in high school.

My experience as a leading lady on the UR retreat was everything I dreamed of and more. It was such an empowering experience to watch the girls transform in only 4 days.

Watching these girls come out of their shell and feel confident in being unauthentically themselves is a feeling you cannot describe. It was a privilege for me to share my personal experiences & knowledge with the young people. I know how important it is to have strong role models in your life and being able to be that for these girls was incredible. I have never felt more in the right place at the right time. Not to mention, the incredible team I served with and watching the growth in each and every leader. The bond I share with the leaders is unbreakable.

I feel so honoured to have been a leader on the 2022 UR retreat and have since made a promise to myself, I will devote my life to changing the lives of young people. 💖 💖 💖

- **Mikayla**

## Parent Testimonials

Dear Bonnie, Mikayla, Lesley and the rest of the team,

I just wanted to thank you all very much for looking after my daughter on the recent UR retreat. She had a great time and came home buzzing, which is a totally opposite reaction than she has had to other camps. She seems a bit more confident since her return which is awesome.

Keep up the great work and I hope you got to have a good rest after all that! Warm regards and Thanks again

Hi

Thanks heaps for the amazing camp. My daughter hasn't stopped talking about it.

Have a grouse day

