



TeenTalk

The newsletter for teenage members of The Birthmark Support Group

Welcome to the Spring 2009 TeenTalk Newsletter

And we start with a **BIG APOLOGY!**

We are really sorry that not much has been happening with TeenTalk over the last few months. This is for a number of reasons. Suzanne had to stop organizing things at TeenTalk for family reasons but we are now delighted that Emma has agreed to take over the running of our little group. And her first idea is that we should get something going with **Facebook** as she feels that lots of our age group with birthmarks may like to get in touch with each other to swap stories and experiences, using Facebook rather than formally joining TeenTalk (tho' we'd really like you to do this as well!)

Anyway, Jacki (who has looked after TeenTalk in the past and now has a baby of her own) has agreed to help Emma to set up a Facebook page for TeenTalk and there is more about this later in the newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and please get in touch with Emma and tell her what you think TeenTalk should be doing for you! Look forward to hearing from you! You can contact her by emailing teentalk@birthmarksupportgroup.org.uk.

Introducing Emma



Hi there everyone. My name is Emma Gallacher, and I have recently become involved with TeenTalk. This is my first newsletter for the Birthmark Support Group, and I am privileged to become a member of the team.

I am based near Glasgow in Scotland, and knew little of the support group until I came across it online. After browsing the site and realising what a great group it was I was eager to get in contact. In doing this I found a vacancy for

somebody to volunteer to run the TeenTalk section of the group, and from there everything happened really fast! I met with Nick and Jane, when they visited Glasgow. We discussed the charity and specifically TeenTalk, and I knew it was definitely something I wanted to be a part of.

I am 19 years old and have a Café au Lait birthmark on my face. Having grown up with this, and faced challenges, I now wanted to help others facing those same challenges daily. I never knew about the BSG when I was growing up, and also did not know any other people my age with a birthmark, this is primarily the reason I wanted to become part of the group. I feel having somebody to talk to, even about the silly things that stick in our heads, would have helped me, and so I want all the members of this group to talk to one another, and of course talk to me, so they realise they are not alone!

After leaving school at 16, I decided to go to college and study Beauty Therapy. In my third year at college I really began to excel in my course and put many hours of hard work in, before graduating in October 2008. After qualifying I considered my options and the possible paths I could follow and I am now at college once again studying Make-up artistry, which I love. This is a great course, as I can make people feel great about themselves and give them the confidence to go out and enjoy their lives. Camouflage make-up is an aspect of my course which I am very interested in, particularly because I use camouflage techniques on my own birthmark.

With my own experiences growing up, and situations that I am still facing, as well as my knowledge in camouflage make-up, I am very excited to take on the position in TeenTalk. I hope to hear from you soon, and get everyone chatting and discussing anything from school and social life to make-up tips and advice!

BSG, TeenTalk & Facebook... the start of the idea!



Hi, for those of you that don't know me – I'm Jacki, now 22, and a previous TeenTalk contact. I am also full time mum to 2 month old Dylan!

Having taken a backseat with the BSG & TeenTalk for the past couple of years I thought it might be time to try and make a small contribution again and whilst sitting surfing the internet it occurred to me – what's one of the best ways to promote and stay in touch these days...? Facebook!

The idea I ran by Nick was to set up a TeenTalk "group" that any TeenTalk member can join as a place to communicate, post pictures and videos etc. In addition, a BSG/TeenTalk "page" to help promote the charity as a whole that anyone can view. Both of these would be updated with the latest BSG info including Fun days that are taking place, how to donate, membership info and contact details.

So while Dylan's been asleep I've found the time to move things forward. Read on...

Jacki (and Dylan!)

Facebook.....we're on the way!

With a world that seems obsessed with Facebook, and everyone who's anyone having their own blog, here at BSG we thought we'd jump on the band wagon to bring TeenTalk bang up to date with what's going on. This will make chatting more informal and create a chance for everyone to meet (interactively) and discuss things easily, also everything that's going on in BSG will be posted here. Most people are on the web at least once a week, so everyone can pop on and take a look, leave a comment or message or just have a browse, whatever suits you.

You can make your own Facebook page and link up with the BSG blog. If anyone would like help and advice on how to go about this, e-mail one of us and we will get you started. The group has already been created and you

should find it if you search for "Birthmark Support Group" or you can follow this link: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=34600538673>

To register with Facebook is free and can make communicating fast and easy: You can do this by going to www.facebook.com

Hope to hear from you soon and to see you at one of the Fun Days!

Jacki and Emma

Fun Days

Why not join us at one of our Fun Days this year? Both of these are being held at schools,

where we have the use of swimming pool, tennis courts and other sports facilities. We will have a barbecue and also plan to have a bouncy castle and other outdoor games. It will also be an opportunity to meet Emma and Jacki (and baby Dylan!).

The first of these will be on Saturday 9th May at Manchester Girls High School and the second on Sunday 27th September at Chigwell School, Chigwell, North London, both are between 12 noon and 5.00pm. Full details of how to get to these are on the website.



We appreciate that the cost of travelling to these can be expensive but if you would really like to go, but can't afford it, do let us know and we *may* be able to help.

If you are thinking of coming do let us know. Hope to see you there!

My Experience as a 'model' for Veil camouflage make-up!

At the Birthmark Support Group Fun Day last May in Birmingham, I met one of the new owners of Veil make-up, called Carolyn, who let me try their make-up out, which I really liked. Carolyn then asked me if I would like to be a model for their new brochure, advertising all their products. This would entail having photos taken of what my birthmark looked like with no make-up on, followed by photos of what I looked like with the camouflage make-up on.

So in the school holiday in May, my Mum and I went to Darlington for a night, for a make-over experience. We were met at the station and taken to a leisure club where we met the other two models. We were given lunch and then I had lots of photos taken of what I looked like without make-up – this was scary because there were lots of people who I didn't know looking at me, but they were all very friendly and encouraging. The next bit was the fun part! I was taken into the beauty salon where I had my hair washed and then make-up was applied to my birthmark. My birthmark is quite extensive so it took one and a half hours for the beautician to apply it everywhere, but I felt a million dollars when it was done! Then my hair was curled and put up into a fancy hair do – everyone said I looked about 20, when in fact I'm only 14!! Then I had my 'after' photos taken which looked great.

After a hectic afternoon, we were driven to a posh hotel called 'The Tall Trees' and went to dinner with one of the other models and the owners of the company. I felt really pampered and special! The next day we were driven to the station to go home, but the owners of the company had one last treat in store – we were driven to the station in a Ferrari! The whole trip was a real experience – maybe it's not all bad having a birthmark after all!!

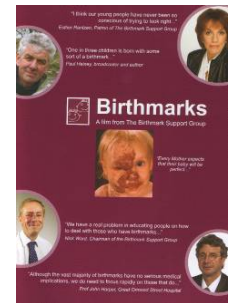
You can find out more about Veil camouflage creams by clicking on their website www.veilcover.com You can also see Holly's pictures by clicking on 'Gallery'



By Holly Farquhar

The BSG DVD

We produced this last year and it has already won an award at a film fest. It contains 3 films, one of which has 9 members of TeenTalk. This section is aimed for use in secondary schools, maybe in an assembly or PSHE class. If you are at secondary school your head-teacher should have received a copy last summer. We do have some copies left and if you would like your own please let us know. You can see a clip from the DVD on our website.



Two other new things from the BSG this month!

We have just produced a new leaflet about birthmarks and the BSG which we're sending to every doctor's surgery in the UK. If you would like to see a copy (or if you are planning a fundraising event and would like several copies to help publicise it) we'll be happy to send you one (or several!)

We've also just launched a new website which we hope is more user-friendly. You can find it at the usual address. Do let us know what you think of it and what we should put on the Teentalk section.

