



## Ophelia's Place

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To: Jessica Smith <jessica.smith@albany.k12.or.us>

Thu, May 18, 2017 at 2:32 PM

### Ophelia's Place

Hello board members,

My name is Aisling Malone and I am here today to talk to you about Ophelia's Place. Ophelia's Place was a group of girls that got together every Tuesday, 1:30-2:15, to talk about things that can bring girls down sometimes. Like body image and toxic relationships. We talked through how we feel about it and how to make ourselves feel better about it. It gave us the power to stand up and believe in our emotional and physical safety. To feel good about ourselves and know that we are not alone. I asked a few of my group members to describe how Ophelia's Place helped them:

Maggie Bedrin, "You get to create greater friendships in a place that's hard to make friends."

Destiny Waterworth, "It was fun and easy to talk in the group. When they taught us about girls rights it was easy to understand and helpful to be reminded that we deserve respect, to be listened to, and to say no. This group was very helpful and I would recommend it to other girls. To let them be listened to. Give them support. Help them through their difficult struggles or problems.

Liana Lahann, "What I looked forward too during the week, provided a completely secure environment, made new friends and provided solutions in a written, and organized fashion."

it made us feel powerful. And that's a feeling that all girls should feel but don't. We were some of the lucky few who got the chance to experience what should be ours in the first place. We talked about how body image is a thing we control and not others. We talked about what a toxic relationship is, whether with friends or with significant others and how to deal with it and get out of those relationships. Our group leaders, Laura and Anuhea, gave us the resources to get help, whether with suicidal thoughts or with just connecting to people who are just like us, and we thank them for that. Many girls would benefit from this type of help. If we could put this group into other schools, girls of all kinds would start to understand how much power they really have in their normal day lives.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to talk.

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Thu, May 18, 2017 at 3:58 PM