

WOMEN **OF** INFLUENCE

ADVICE TO MY TEENAGE SELF

Intro

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The girls who we have worked with on this year's *Women Of Influence* project are inspirational in their courage and their strength, interviewing a cross section of incredible women in the Cambridge community in an exploration of what being a female role model means to them – with open hearts and confidence. While these quotes are those women sharing *Advice To My Teenage Self*, these pearls of wisdom are relevant to all ages.

I grew up in Cambridge and spent my teenage years convinced that my family were mad, that I'd never come to any good and that following my dream to study at University was impossible because I was so rebellious at college my tutors refused to give me predicted grades. You wouldn't know it on paper – I was at the top state sixth form

college in the country. My father, a kind and intelligent man, turned homeless when I was 16 (he's fine now). It was a horrible time, but throughout it all – I started writing for a girls magazine and presenting a radio show as part of a girls media project organised by a local youth charity, which made me realise that I had a voice, that I mattered. I interviewed pop bands and gained some valuable skills. I went on to be the youngest ever intern on Britain's feminist monthly magazine, interviewing some of my favourite feminist writers at just 16. Somewhere along the line, I stopped caring about the grades and just cared about doing my best – for myself. I learned an important life lesson – to never give up on life. >>

Inspirational Girls

That early experience is also why I believe we need to give support to young women in our city – now, more than ever. You don't find your way out of issues like domestic violence or depression alone.

“Women Of Influence is about celebrating these women and giving young women a voice.”

With the rise of hyper-sexual celebrity female role models comes a setback for many girls (and boys, too). While some, quite sensibly, don't believe the hype, many do. There's a gap waiting to be filled with authentic, real women they can believe in and trust - which is why Bryony Kimmings created *A Credible*

Likeable Superstar Rolemodel - Catherine Bennet - with her neice, Taylor. And why poets like Hollie McNish are so popular - (as our girls say, she's 'real').

Women Of Influence is about celebrating these women and giving young women a voice.

Thank you to all the girls and every single woman who participated this year, to funders Young Lives and to Romsey Mill for the good work they do.

Ruthie Collins

Romsey Mill has been working with a group of girls exploring healthy lifestyles.

These young women have been a big part of the women of influence project, helping with interviews and generally

supporting the work of Romsey Mill.

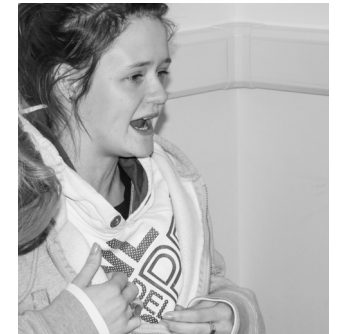
Kayleigh and Zoe have been involved the longest and will probably be part of the next phase of the project.



Zoe Smith



Holly Tompkins



Eva Day Hagger



Kayleigh Baynes



Zoe Smith, Jules Abensour, Kayleigh Baynes, Kharis Lochrie, Ruthie Collins



Kharis Lochrie, Zoe Smith, Kayleigh Baynes

HOLLIE MCNISH

"You are very small and the world is huge, millions of stars and other planets. The things you think are really important - the bad things I mean - the fallouts with friends, the outfits, the boyfriends, the bullies, those issues will soon be gone. You will grow older, and with age comes more freedom, more confidence, more excitement and less bother! So try to have fun.x"



Hollie McNish is a performance poet. UK Poetry Slam winner 2009, she's been commissioned by the likes of Radio 4's Women's Hour and the Tate Modern, with many of her poems going viral online and touching the minds and hearts of people worldwide.

www.holliemcnish.com

"Stand tall. Don't be afraid of being yourself and stand up for yourself. Follow your own path and don't let others bring you down or lead you in another direction. Study hard, absorb everything you can and have fun."

Dawn is a fundraiser for Romsey Mill.

She is tasked with raising income from Statutory sources and grant making trusts. On average, she brings in around £600,000 a year. Her job involves identifying appropriate sources of funding and writing project proposals. She also monitors grant funded projects, providing reports and information to the funders as required. She also takes part in community fundraising activities such as 'Romsey Calling' and our '12 Days of Christmas Campaign'.

www.romseymill.org



DAWN RAINIERIDGE

ALISON BRUCE

"I guess I'd have quite a bit of advice to myself, it took me a long time to find confidence and I suppose I wish I could tell my teenage self that the doubt wasn't necessary after all.

I would also say, 'Trust your own judgement because your instinct is one of your biggest assets. Yes, mistakes do happen, but tackle them - take responsibility, seek good advice and persevere. And speak up, it's okay if someone doesn't agree with you, it's not okay if that makes you stay silent; there is no need to be shy or invisible or dismissed. Be loyal to those that deserve it. And enjoy your successes."



Alison Bruce is an author. Her work includes the DC Goodhew Novels, Cambridge Blue, The Siren, The Calling, The Silence and The Backs

www.alisonbruce.com

"If you think you can't do it, you can. The only way to find out is by trying.

Everybody is responsible for their own happiness. Don't let anyone con you into thinking it's up to you to make them happy, and don't make the mistake of thinking you need someone or something outside you to be happy."

Caroline has had a range of jobs: from cleaning, to doing surveys in a call centre, to teaching dance, to being an IT administrator. Along the way she got in contact with Romsey Mill and spent three very happy years volunteering with Transitions. She later trained as an accountant, travelling round East Anglia as an auditor for KPMG. She is delighted to use her monthly volunteering allowance at KPMG to take part in this programme.



CAROLINE WILLIAMS

RUTHIE COLLINS

"Everything you are going through, that feels so isolating and big — will be the very foundations of a strong you, later in life. You just don't know it yet. Your parents do not dictate who you will become. All those rich, hyper confident students around you with perfect families and perfect lives — they are all going through it, too. Live lots, do what you love — most of all, use your mind."

Ruthie Collins is a writer and creative director of the Cambridge Art Salon. She is also an arts columnist for Cambridge Edition magazine and co-facilitator of the Women of Influence project. She produces contemporary arts and media projects with a socially engaged, female or community focus. She also works with imaginative people to help them launch their own creative practices. She studied English Literature at the University of Sheffield.

www.cambridgeartsalon.org.uk



"[Bryony,] I want to tell you a few things that will help you through the next few years:

- You don't need to listen to people and what they have to say about you.
- You don't need to hide your imagination, dreams are what makes this world go round.
- You don't have to cut your hair if you don't want to.
- You don't have to worry about money, mum will do that for you for a while yet.
- You won't always live on this estate, with these people, think bigger... want more.
- Say goodbye to your brother properly.
- Forgive your step mother earlier.
- Don't hate your sister. She is like that because she is sad.
- And don't play with the heater in the hall, it burns you."

Bryony Kimmings is an English live artist based in London and Cambridgeshire. She is an Associate Artist and runs the Youth Company at The Junction in Cambridge, and is Chair of the Solo Artists Group at Soho Theatre, London.

www.bryonykimmings.com



BRYONY KIMMINGS

LOU EVERARD

"[Lou,] you shouldn't limit yourself in your expectations. Just because your mother is a social worker, and you admire her, social work isn't the only thing you could consider. Just because your sister has always been seen as cleverer than you, this doesn't mean you aren't also very talented, and in different ways. Look around at what might be possible, and talk to lots of different people. Don't be shy! Don't worry so much about what people think of you. You don't know yet how much God loves you, but he does, very much, and all things are possible with God."

Lou graduated from Oxford University in 1974 and married Dan Everard, a design engineer.

She became a psychiatric social worker in Cambridge.

In 1981 her first child, Ruth, was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy, and shortly afterwards her second child, Sam, was found to have the same genetic condition. Neither would ever be able to walk. Dan put his engineering skills and contacts to work immediately, and Ruth was mobile in a powerchair before she was 2 years old, which in 1981 was unheard of. Lou has been active since in various voluntary organisations as well as working with Dan to produce and supply the kind of mobility that has made such a difference to Ruth.



"Look at persistent messages you give to yourself that are not serving you well. Step back and trust your instinct, decide if they are 'your truths' or a message, comment said by someone else - a parent, teacher, sibling.

Don't let a negative comment given to you by someone tarnish your life. Trust your instincts and if you can't trust them, check them out."

Polly Plouviez is the founder of Urban Larder.

POLLY PLOUVIEZ



CAROLINE JAINE

"My advice to my teenage self would be to listen to others more. Almost as soon as I hit teenage life I decided I knew best. I was empowered to make my own decisions by leaving home at 16 - however I could really have done with seeking advice and listening to others more."

Caroline Jaine is an artist working in a range of media: She has painted portraits in oils; sketched street scenes in Baghdad; and filmed transsexuals in Karachi. For her Masters in Fine Arts she recorded people defacing images of political leaders, rescued a portrait of Gaddafi from Libya, and tattooed a message on herself. Her interests include political portraiture, the power of the media, nation branding and virtual reality. Caroline is currently Artist-in-Residence at the Humanitarian Centre.

In 2012 she was shortlisted for the Searle Award for her book-art work "five migrants".

She has exhibited widely in the UK, Europe and Asia and curated the work of others. She is also the Director of Cambridge International Arts and was once a British Diplomat!

www.carolinejaine.wordpress.com



"Don't think life is over for you just because you fail the first time!"

Dr. Soraya Jones is currently the CEO of Cambridge Wireless. She was born in Malaysia but spent six years in the States where she completed her Bachelor of Science in Education and Master of Science in English Education. She lectured at the National University of Malaysia for several years before pursuing her doctoral programme in education at the University of Cambridge. She then worked at Cambridge Training and Development Ltd (now Tribal Plc) as the Business Development Manager. She left CTAD to work at the University of Cambridge in 2001, where she spearheaded a number of innovative postgraduate and leadership programmes including the Diploma in Cross-Sector Partnership. In 2002, she returned to Tribal Plc as the Director of Commercial Partnerships, being responsible for business development and bidding for large EU tenders, as part of a consortium approach to bidding.

www.cambridgewireless.co.uk



SORAYA JONES

JOSIE
CAM

"Don't take anything too seriously. It's all complete nonsense. Just enjoy the days, and the people you are with."

"Work harder at the things you are passionate about. Don't try so hard getting people to like you. You've got a beautiful body - love it while you can. Friends come and go."

JULES
CAMERON



Josie is a professional artist and caricaturist working in Cambridge. She's taught at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Anglia Ruskin, Rowan Cambridge and other organisations, plus exhibited in Cambridge and Berlin. Josie has a degree in Fine Art from Anglia Ruskin and and MA Art History (Dada and Surrealism).

Jules broke away from the corporate world to focus on spending more time around music and the people who love it as much as she does! She's worked in banking and management consulting, driven the delivery of large-scale creative projects and done lots of voluntary work for community groups. She's also keen photographer and an enthusiastic (spot the euphemism!) singer.



About

Women Of Influence is a project partnership between Romsey Mill and the Cambridge Art Salon.

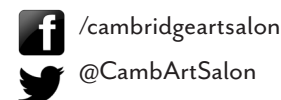
Romsey Mill

Romsey Mill is a Christian charity committed to overcoming disadvantage, challenging injustice and promoting social inclusion with young people, children and families. Our work is long term, relational and needs-led. We work with participants to develop their skills and to enable their progress towards training, work and positive involvement in the community. Romsey Mill's vision is of a transformed society in which all young people, children and families fully belong, positively contribute and thrive. Romsey Mill creates opportunities with young people, children and families in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire to overcome disadvantage, promote inclusion, and develop personal, social and spiritual well-being.

The Cambridge Art Salon

The Cambridge Art Salon is a not for profit arts hub for the community based in an old motorbike shop in Romsey Town, Cambridge.

It houses creative practitioners and artists from all backgrounds with affordable studio space plus provides a gallery for the community, regularly hosting workshops, exhibitions, talks and networking events. It nurtures creative businesses and projects with Creative Kickstart support sessions and in awarded the first ever Creative Kickstart bursary prize in 2013 to help inspire a sense of possibility and hope for a new creative business. It pioneers contemporary arts and media projects that engage with the community, such as the Romsey Art Festival.



www.cambridgeartsalon.org.uk

www.romseymill.org

Funded by
Young Lives

REBEL WOMEN

INSPIRATIONAL GIRLS

LAUNCH EVENT:
MARCH 7TH, 6.30PM - 8.30PM

EXHIBITION, TALKS, NETWORKING AND WORKSHOPS.

You are invited to celebrate International Women's Day 2014, plus a year long 'Women of Influence' project led by Romsey Mill and the Cambridge Art Salon, empowering young women in Cambridge.

**MARCH 7TH - 19TH 2014. FRI, SAT, SUN
10AM - 5.30PM & OPEN FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS**

29 CROMWELL ROAD, CB1 3EP

This creative showcase features a series of interviews with women in the Cambridge community, led by a group of teenage girls supported by Romsey Mill throughout 2013, with selected photography, film, text and art documenting an exploration into modern day female role models for teenage girls. It also marks the launch of a new creative programme of support for young women in Cambridge, supported by Romsey Mill, with an active call for partners from organisations and groups who work with young women in the city to engage with the project.

www.cambridgeartsalon.org.uk
www.romseymill.org

#rebelwomeninspirationalgirls



*Rebel Women - Inspirational Girls' is produced by Creative Director of the Cambridge Art Salon, Ruthie Collins.