

**Title of Session:** Targeting Librarians – Websites for Teen Grrrrls!

**Moderator:** Lesley Farmer

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Room: Hot Tub Conference Room

**LesleyF** joined the room.

**LesleyF:** Welcome, folks!

**BJ** waves hi to Lesley

**KathyBu:** Hi, Lesley!

**SusanR** joined the room.

**LesleyF:** About ready for today's discussion?

**KathyBu:** Ready and able.

**BJ:** eagerly anticipating the discussion, Lesley!

**BJ:** Shall we start with introductions, please?

**LesleyF:** absolutely me first...

**SusanR:** Ready!!

**LesleyF:** I coordinate the library media teacher program at Cal State University

**LesleyF:** in Long Beach

**SusanR:** K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Ottawa, Ontario

**LesleyF:** I'll be facilitating this session on technology, especially web sites, for teen girls.

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped in

**KathyBu:** I'm a prep teacher in an elementary school library in Sacramento City Unified School District, Sacramento, California.

**BJ** waits for Joel to introduce himself to the group

**JoelRS:** I am a student in California in educational technology and this is my first session

**LesleyF:** Great! So what enticed you folks about today's topic?

**BJ:** I was interested in your resources for Girls, Lesley.

**BJ** . o O ( since I work with all boys )

**LesleyF:** It's a fascinating trip...

**KathyBu:** Growing up, I was often told I couldn't do something because I was a girl-Ha!

**LesleyF:** Lots of stories about that...

**LesleyF:** Joel? Susan?

**KathyBu:** I want to facilitate everyone's use of technology, especially girls.

**SusanR:** I am interested in what really appeals to girls in terms of technology

**JoelRS:** I am interested with the Internet these days your perspectives on what is getting kids in the actual library and how that could be improved.

**LesleyF:** Great! Well, we have our work -- and fun -- cut out for us.

**LesleyF:** Know that I uploaded a file for you on this topic; it's an article I wrote on this subject (no peeking until the end...)

**KathyBu:** Was it the CSLA article?

**JoelRS:** Oops I already looked

**LesleyF:** There still is a gender issue with regard to technology, even though girls now comprise the majority of telecommunications folks.

**LesleyF:** That's OK, Joel...

**LesleyF:** The deal is that girls have a notion about the tech world --- and it doesn't appeal to them.

**LesleyF:** Quick! When you think of someone in a tech career, what's the first image that comes to mind?

**KathyBu:** Brainy!

**JoelRS:** Male

**SusanR:** Computer Nerd

**LesleyF:** Yep, that's what more teen girls say too.

**LesleyF:** And it doesn't help that many adult women have that image too, and they covertly pass on that stereotype.

**JoelRS:** So is it purely an image thing do you think?

**LesleyF:** Well, although 60% of jobs now entail technology, less than 20% of people in those jobs are women.

**LesleyF:** It's sort of a vicious cycle.

**LesleyF:** And girls are amazingly ignorant about the variety of jobs that entail technology, and girls don't take the classes that would help them get those jobs...

**KathyBu:** 95% of my student helpers using my library's automated system to check out materials are girls.

**LindaU** joined the room.

**LesleyF:** SO, as Joel noted, how can the Net be used to get girls interested in technology beyond IM?

**LesleyF:** Hi, Linda, here for the tech talk on girls and technology, especially Web?

**LindaU:** yes

**KathyBu:** Downloading music is another big interest, I've heard.

**LesleyF:** I did lots of surfing to see what was out there in this area, and that's what I want to share, OK?

**KathyBu:** Sounds great!

**LesleyF:** Web sites tend to fall into 3 main areas: megasites ... and then commercial, business, and educational.

**LesleyF:** While there are 1000s of sites in this area, and 100s of megasites, they really fall into about 3 main sites. There is LOTS of overlap!

**LesleyF:** Surprisingly, one of the best megasites is found through Google's directory.

**LesleyF:** Let me give you that URL and you can explore for 5 minutes, OK?

**BJ . o O ( click on the hyperlink Lesley is going to show us )**

**LesleyF:** ready?

**KathyBu:** Ready.

**LesleyF:** [http://directory.google.com/Top/Kids\\_and\\_Teens/Teen\\_Life/Girls\\_Only/](http://directory.google.com/Top/Kids_and_Teens/Teen_Life/Girls_Only/)

**LindaU:** Interesting... some seem to be the typical teenage girl type "stuff" while others seem to have more substance.

**JoelRS:** But isn't that okay as long as it is "reaching them" through the technology

**LesleyF:** That's right -- they tend to be journals/writing, advice, fashion, entertainment, health, news, social, sports, hobbies, school, health, family

**LindaU:** I wasn't passing judgment.. just found the list interesting, but you raise a good point

**LesleyF:** Little on tech per se and little on careers.

**LindaU:** Is anything ok just as long as it involves technology? hmmm need to ponder perhaps.

**LesleyF:** I agree that these attract girls' interests and are a way to use technology for things that interest them.

**LesleyF:** Tech for tech sake, no... (IMHO)

**LesleyF:** What's amazing is that almost ALL megasites are based on DMOZ, which is an open source project. Other groups who use/adapt it are supposed to give them credit (about 400 do), but over a 100 others don't. Ready to look at that site?

**KathyBu:** Ready!

**KathyBu:** I've found the teens part but not the girls part.

**JaneGst2** joined the room.

**LesleyF:** [http://dmoz.org/Kids\\_and\\_Teens/Teen\\_Life/Girls\\_Only](http://dmoz.org/Kids_and_Teens/Teen_Life/Girls_Only)

**KathyBu:** Hi, Jane. Good to cyber see-ya!

**LesleyF:** Hi, Jane! Hear to talk about the Net and teen girls?

**JaneGst2:** Yes, sorry am so late...

**LesleyF:** No problem. We're looking at a megasite (mother of all web sites for girls...)

**JaneGst2:** Great!

**JaneGst2:** Hi Kathy!

**JaneGst2:** Is there a way to see the website and stay in the chat?

**LesleyF:** What do you notice about Google and DMOZ in terms of how they construct the path to their megasites?

**KathyBu:** It seems like they both have huge lists of sites with various kinds interspersed not separated by topic area.

**LesleyF:** Yes, most of the time, the megasites list their links alphabetically.

**LesleyF:** Part of the reason is that site individual sites often have a variety of topics

**KathyBu:** If I was a parent of a teen, I would have concerns about all these chat rooms, even if they are supposed to be only for girls.

**LesleyF:** If you look closely, you'll find that about a third of the sites have some form of the word girl in them so it's really hard to differentiate them too.

**LesleyF:** As for the chats, yes, it attracts girls -- but it also attracts non-teen girls and guys...

**LesleyF:** So you really have to dig deep to see what's going on.

**KathyBu:** Lesley, any thoughts on how to choose better, safer sites or ones which are monitored? Or do you have to go on each ahead as i do for other things?

**LesleyF:** Glad you asked!

**LindaU:** This is a huge concern

**LesleyF:** Some of the best sources/megasites are from organizations that are into empowering girls -- notice I did NOT say commercial sites.

**LesleyF:** I'd like to show you a couple of those, OK?

**KathyBu:** So we should look for an .edu or.org

**KathyBu:** Good!

**LesleyF:** Right

**LesleyF:** If you think your girls like to chat -- and you do want them to think about tech futures, one of the best sites is from the Girl Scouts, who are working with the Advertising Council, surprisingly, on this issue. Want to see?

**KathyBu:** Yes!

**JaneGst2:** Sure!

**SusanR:** Please

**LindaU:** yes

**LesleyF:** <http://www.girlscouts.org/girlsgotech/index.html>

**LesleyF:** What do you think?

**KathyBu:** Site under construction but I read the basics under the parents part.

**LesleyF:** Oh, argh! Glad the parents' part gives a little info.

**JaneGst2:** JCS kids wouldn't go for this site, am pretty sure...I opened the info part and is too conventional for our kids...

**LesleyF:** Here's another. It's a bit uneven, but it's appropriate and has links to web sites that most of the others don't include. It's from Girls Best Friend foundation.

**JaneGst2:** But for the few younger ones would be a possibility

**LesleyF:** You're very right, Jane. I'll show you a popular site among teen girls, right after I show you the PC one, OK? Very enlightening!

**SusanR:** There is an ad campaign to encourage girls to develop an early interest in math, science, and technology on <http://www.girlscouts.org/girlsgotech/adCouncil.html>

**LesleyF:** Yes, Susan, that's the background of the GS effort...

**LesleyF:** Ready for [http://www.girlsbestfriend.org/artman/publish/links\\_girls.shtml](http://www.girlsbestfriend.org/artman/publish/links_girls.shtml)

**SusanR:** Ready!

**LesleyF:** It's highly selective

**JoelRS:** How do you mean selective?

**LesleyF:** Just 22 sites as opposed to over 100 sites. And What do you think of their choices? Now you're going to notice that commercial sites tend to have shorter, easier-to-remember names. Hmmm -- I wonder why...

**JaneGst2:** JCS kids will love this site...also could have used this with the class of girls I had last year...so will definitely encourage the two teachers with girls to offer this one...will be great for our kids

**JaneGst2:** Such great choices here...

**KathyBu:** Wow! Like a normal girl on it! Way cool. Also info for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LBTQ) girls. Gay left out cause it's addressed to girls.

**LesleyF:** It's not afraid to tell it like it is usually. I'd be interested in digging down more because I would think they would acknowledge that life choice/

**JaneGst2:** Kathy, you're so adept at communication !

**LesleyF:** duh, yes, Kathy, I'm reading you better...

**JaneGst2:** Questioning is a new term for me

**KathyBu:** I hadn't heard it put like that either till I read this now under the NEW on the purple marquee.

**JaneGst2:** Our girls will really like that part of the site as a significant no. of girls are questioning...also is a huge issue in the living units and the girls need a place to get info that is unbiased and supportive

**JaneGst2:** Our girls are treated punitively for any reference to same gender concerns...also can be kicked out of treatment for any reference to lesbian interests.

**JaneGst2:** So...bottom line is this site will be GREAT!

**LesleyF:** now look at this site in contrast --- <http://www.girltech.com>

**SusanR:** Not much depth to the site

**LesleyF:** What do you notice different about content and appearance?

**KathyBu:** So why does the first link on the left say click here if you're a boy? If you're a boy, get outdahere!

**LesleyF:** The emphasis is on interactive participation, and there's a GIRLS ONLY clubbiness...

**LesleyF:** Now, then, want to know who actually creates this site??

**BJ** hopes our token male, Joel, isn't offended

**LindaU** left the room (signed off).

**LesleyF:** I'm not groovy about the Boys Keep Out message myself...

**KathyBu:** I think teen girls would love this site for some of the same reasons I can barely stand it. Sorry, Joel, nothing personal.

**KathyBu:** I meant that in a site for girls, why is the first link to boys? My apologies.

**JaneGst2:** I agree Kathy, and our girls would love it as a free time activity...

**LesleyF:** so want to know the originator???

**JaneGst2:** Tell!

**LesleyF:** Whew

**SusanR:** Actually it is a Great free time site!

**LesleyF:** Radica games, which makes electronic entertainment games -- and they use cookies...

**KathyBu:** Oh-oh.

**LesleyF:** Can you guess what kinds of banners will appear in those girls' browsers soon?

**SusanR:** Oh!

**LesleyF:** This is a case when you want to help students see what/who is behind the mask and what the hidden agenda is...

**SusanR:** Oh Oh!!

**LesleyF:** It IS a fun site for girls, but they should be aware that they are being test marketed...

**JoelRS:** As to the previous, I am not offended in anyway. I just am enjoying the dialogue. Not sure I have as much to contribute though.

**JaneGst2:** Gets complicated, for sure...

**LesleyF:** Now it's cool that a REAL girl is on the Girls Best Friend site, but I gotta tell ya that the icons and flash attract...

**LesleyF:** Well, let's think about how folks find these sites, both boys and girls...

**LesleyF:** I found most of the sites by using the phrase "teen girls and technology"

**LesleyF:** When I used the phrase Web sites and teen girls I got articles about porno and about teen USE of web sites...

**LesleyF:** When I used the term "female" and technology, I often got "mature" sites (i.e., sex trade).

**LesleyF:** It's sad when a 9-10 year old girl wants sites about her interests, and then finds that she's classified by the technology as a babe site type....

**LesleyF:** Now a neat site that does have girls express themselves and lets them COMPARE commercial products is done by the Natl. Science Foundation and the U of Michigan. Want to see?

**JaneGst2:** Sure!

**SusanR:** yes, please

**LesleyF:** <http://www.smartgirl.org>

**LesleyF:** I stress the issue of word usage because it applies to boys/males too when they are looking for sites about girls -- maybe they want to know more about that strange species called a teenage girl...

**JoelRS:** At the risk of going against my original thought that all context that draws the learner in can be used to teach. My interest is less about the content, per se, but more how educationally it moves young women toward careers in technology. Is there a specific effort out there and what are their grassroot efforts? I have always heard quoted yet not sure it is true, that girls as a rule are not drawn to math and science courses and that this partly explains the prevalence of males in these fields. 1) is this true and 2) what if anything is to be done

**LesleyF:** YES!

**LesleyF:** Universities and businesses are doing just that, Joel. I'll show you a couple, OK, everyone?

**KathyBu:** Ready.

**JaneGst2:** Ready~

**SusanR** nods

**LesleyF:** [http://research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links\\_girls.html](http://research.umbc.edu/~korenman/wmst/links_girls.html) This is from the Univ. of Maryland; it is a bit feminist, but it does have sites for daughters/dads...

**LesleyF:** It has more on careers than most any other.

**JaneGst2:** This is a great resource for our program...will spend some time there later and get familiar...

**LesleyF:** It's very rich and deep. Seattle school district has a great community partnership, and their site includes ways to visit tech places and have mentors. Want to see?

**KathyBu:** Yes, please.

**LesleyF:** <http://www.ignite-us.org> it's a good model for other communities.

**JaneGst2:** Yes, yes

**LesleyF:** One more I'll share is from Silicon Valley, and it builds on girls' social awareness. They help girls do community-based improvement projects that incorporate technology. Want to see? (don't you love the suspense??)

**JaneGst2:** YES!

**LesleyF:** <http://www.girlsforachange.org>

**SusanR:** Demonstrates real life career options for girls

**KathyBu:** I'm on the edge of my chair...

**LesleyF:** yes, I like the reality check...

**LesleyF:** So how do you think you can use these sites?

**JoelRS:** This is more what I was talking about because it is not just about dispense information, it is more about advocacy of the topic.

**LesleyF:** You're right!

**JaneGst2:** To introduce them to classroom teachers, invite teachers to drop by and see the sites and to visit classrooms with a lesson and then direct to these sites.. The girls' units are very open to expanding curriculum...teachers, not probation

**KathyBu:** Perhaps starting a local chapter of Ignite or encouraging girls who have home technology access to volunteer to work on Ignition, the online 'zine. We can't use chat or email at school at this time.

**JaneGst2:** Our kids can't relate to the idea they could change the world, but our Teen Advisory Team kids could really grow from these sites

**JaneGst2:** Am going to invite the girls units into the library for a special activity with these sites...

**JoelRS:** I just participated in a class at school where we built webquests. I could see this as a natural way to foster dialogue in the classroom.

**JaneGst2:** Also will be sure to provide the info to the computer lab teacher and program

**LesleyF:** I like the advisory approach!

**KathyBu:** Also just helping girls to know about these sites so they don't have to wade through all the junk Lesley had to sift to find these.

**JaneGst2:** Treatment girls will love these sites!

**SusanR:** Could school guidance teachers use some of these sites?

**LesleyF:** Yes, sharing them with school counselors is great!

**LesleyF:** It would be good to show some of the sites to tech teachers too...

**JoelRS:** I have enjoyed the dialogue, but must leave

**LesleyF:** And you can bookmark them on the library sites.

**LesleyF:** Thanks, Joel!

**LesleyF:** Those of you who are left, what would you like to talk about in Jan.?

**SusanR:** Thank you Lesley. This was an eye opener.

**LesleyF:** I was really surprised myself, Susan, with what I found.

**BJ . o O ( January 20, 2004 )**

**KathyBu:** What about teaching Internet copyright issues when info searching or creating Powerpoints?

**JaneGst2:** How about something to do with at-risk learners?

**JaneGst2:** And reference, of course~

**LesleyF:** hmm, both good topics! well, all three, though I treated the reference one lately...

**LesleyF:** I think that copyright might be interesting to at-risk learners, especially if you weave in piracy, hacking, etc...

**JaneGst2:** I meant reference re the at-risk kids!

**LesleyF:** wonder how tech ethics for at-risk kids could be done interestingly, want to try that??

**KathyBu:** Yes! The kids who need it most are at-risk!

**LesleyF:** my point exactly...

**SusanR** agrees with Kathy

**JaneGst2:** Good!

**LesleyF:** so we'll go with that, OK, BJ?

**BJ** nods...I'll post to the Alt/Correctional ed group about it

**LesleyF:** Something like Being Good can be Baaddd?

**KathyBu:** Cool!