



Manly Daily

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NORTH SHORE

'Sister' bond a big boost

MENTORING PROGRAM BRINGS POSITIVE CHANGES FOR GIRLS

Julie Cross

KAHLI Mason's "little sister" has led a very different life to her own.

The physiotherapist who works at Royal North Shore Hospital and lives in Freshwater was brought up in a loving and stable home and has gone on to carve a successful career in healthcare.

However, her "little sister" hasn't been so fortunate.

She comes from a troubled background and has suffered mental health issues.

Ms Mason, 31, met her "little sister" for the first time a couple of months ago through a mentoring program called SISTER2sister.

The aim of the program is to pair positive role models with troubled girls and help teach them valuable skills to succeed in life.

Typically the "little sisters" have suffered neglect, abuse or bullying and are dealing with mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

"Many of the girls in the program have issues most of us have never encountered," said Ms Mason, who is mentoring a 17-year-old.

"My 'little sister' is amazing. She's beautiful, but she's also challenging."

Those wishing to be mentors are assessed for suitability before undergoing extensive training.

Once paired, the "sisters" meet monthly as a group, taking part in activities such as camping, fitness days or charity work.

The "sisters" also swap mobile numbers and keep in touch by text or phone every week.

"I hope I can teach my little sister that she can achieve her dreams if she puts her mind to it," Ms Mason said.

Ms Mason, who is not married and does not have children, said she was drawn to the program because it was a way of making a difference in the community.

Go to lifechangingexperiences.org for more details.



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Kahli Mason is a "big sister" mentor to a troubled young girl.

Picture: DYLAN ROBINSON