

Dress your age

TWEET tweet! Bird prints are flying off the shelves this summer, so feather your nest.

20s



Pink top, £22 @ River Island

30s



Navy dress, £38 @ Closet

40s



Blue and white ¾ sleeve top, £35 @ Oasis

50s



Blue bird print dress, £39 @ M&Co

60s



White bird print blouse, £55 @ Phase Eight



NAILING IT Amy and Anita under the watchful eye of Lynne at Revival Retreat

WHEN a beauty salon decided to give 12 young women a chance to experience work in the industry, they had no idea they would also be transforming lives.

Revival Retreat became the first salon in Scotland to join the Prince's Trust's Get Into Beauty programme, with the idea of giving young people training and work experience. But some of the girls who have recently graduated from the scheme got far more than the lowdown on how to give a manicure.

Having faced bullying, mental health issues and depression, the programme has given them the confidence to change their lives.

Salon owner Lynne Hetherington, who set up her own business in Glasgow with the help of a Prince's Trust grant, said: "It's been an absolute pleasure and honour to train and develop these young, inspiring ladies."

"They demonstrated real passion and commitment and any salon looking to take on an apprentice or anyone aged 16-25 looking for a start in the beauty industry should contact the Prince's Trust."

Here, we meet two young women who say they have been given a new life thanks to the Prince's Trust and Revival Retreat.

AMY WILSON

BULLIED from the age of six because of her big curls and glasses, 16-year-old Amy had almost become used to being attacked.

On one occasion a bully tried to break her foot with a chair to stop her dancing.

But nothing had prepared her for the emotional devastation of being sexually assaulted three times on separate bus journeys by a gang of teens. Amy spiralled into depression, which left her feeling suicidal.

Amy, from Glasgow, said: "Unknowingly, I had struggled with depression for years because of the bullying but the sexual assaults really were the straw that broke the camel's back.

"I was so low I stopped going to school and could hardly get out of bed some days. I was suicidal and my mum and dad were so worried.

"They said it was like they had lost their daughter because I was so withdrawn. They tried being caring, they tried being angry – but they didn't know at the time about the sexual assaults or even, to begin with, that I was depressed."

After Amy was diagnosed with



NEW LEASE OF LIFE Trainees Anita Sweeting, left, and Amy Wilson, right, with Lynne Hetherington

Beauty course gave our lives a makeover after hell at hands of bullies

Two young women tell how training through the Prince's Trust boosted their confidence after being tormented through childhood

By Samantha Booth

depression, a school counsellor proved to be a tremendous support for Amy but the teen still found she was unable to face going to school.

Thankfully, the counsellor was able to visit Amy weekly at home.

Amy said: "That was a lifeline for me. It was all I had in my week."

Eventually, a year later, Amy felt able to speak of the terrible assaults, which left her terrified of leaving the house or speaking to other teens.

After telling her parents, she made the brave move of reporting the attacks to the police.

Amy said: "It was a really horrific interview process but I am glad I did it as I felt like I could begin to draw a line under what happened."

Nonetheless, every day was a

struggle for the teen and she had a difficult time trying to put her experiences behind her.

Amy said: "I didn't feel ready to go back to school but I was told I had to change my own attitude to life or else I would never get better.

"Hate and anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die, it is pointless."

Amazingly, Amy has experienced a complete turnaround this year thanks to the Prince's Trust's Get into Beauty programme.

She says having work experience at Glasgow's Revival Retreat has given her back her life.

She said: "Just getting up and out the house was a big step and it has

made such a change to my life to be in a work environment.

"All the other girls were great and Lynne at Revival Retreat was just amazing. The experience has transformed my life."

Since starting the course, Amy has got a place at college studying beauty therapy and has found herself a boyfriend.

She said: "I feel so happy now and to think there was a point I never thought I would make it to my 15th or 16th birthdays."

ANITA SWEETING
UNTIL Anita signed up for the Get Into Beauty course, she had rarely left the house for seven years. Having experienced bullying at

primary school and then feeling like she didn't fit in at high school, the 22-year-old from Glasgow became crippled by anxiety.

But then her sister signed her up to apply for the course and things have never been the same since.

Anita said: "I was terrified when she told me but at the same time I knew I wanted to change my life."

"I wasn't happy living the way I was – sleeping all day, being up all night and never doing anything."

"I had also left school before my exams, so I felt like I had no options." Despite her terror at the prospect of leaving the house, never mind the prospect of meeting strangers, Anita bravely went to the interview.

She said: "I really have my sister to thank for it all. By signing me up, she made me make a change for myself. "Now, my life has completely

changed. I can go out and speak to people in a way I was never able to before and I finally have the confidence to apply to train to be a hairdresser, which is my dream."

The change has been so dramatic that while Anita found being with strangers traumatic at the start, by the end, she gave a speech at a party in front of 50 people.

Anita said: "I was bright red and felt sick but Lynne kept encouraging me, so I managed to give my speech."

"Everyone was crying. I had no idea I could touch people like that. Lynne, who has been extraordinary, was crying even before I started – she was that proud of me."

"Then Amy's mum said I was an inspiration. I never thought I could be an inspiration to anyone – but here I am doing that, thanks to the Prince's Trust and Lynne."

EARLY YEARS Amy, pictured here as a toddler, was bullied at school because of her big curls



TRANSFORMATION Beauty therapist Amy at her Get into Beauty graduation, with her boyfriend

GET INTO THE PROGRAMME

THE Prince's Trust's Get Into programme was launched in 2005 when 17 young people from Glasgow took part in Get Into Cooking.

In 2007, the Wood Family Trust started funding the programme, which enabled the trust to develop the scheme across Scotland.

Since then, about 2000 young people have taken part in the programme and it has grown to include more than 50 Get Into courses in sectors including cooking, hospitality, the motor trade, engineering, retail, health and social care, security, facilities management, IT, oil and gas, logistics, construction and rural skills.

In the last financial year, 650 came through the programme, with 73 per cent having "positive outcomes" and 54 per cent went on to find a job in the last quarter.

This coming financial year, the trust is on target to run more than 70 courses and reach in excess of 900 young people in Scotland.

Prince's Trust Scotland director Allan Watt said: "We are delighted to help young people Get into Beauty with a fantastic package of training and work experience."

"Thanks to our work with Revival Retreat salon, we have been able to give even more young people across Glasgow the chance to reach their full potential."

"Our Get Into programme brings together employers and we offer courses in everything from cooking to security."

"We would love to hear from any young person who wants to find out what opportunities we can offer to help them get a job, an education or start their own business."

Get into courses are supported by a variety of partners and organisations with support in Scotland from the Wood Family Trust. Find out more at www.princes-trust.org.uk/Scotland

Annie Brown

THIS week a child rape victim spoke of how fear of dishonour is keeping sexual crime hidden in Scotland's Asian communities.

Her attacker, taxi driver Mohammed Ashraf, 53, had been convinced that she would be too ashamed of the violation to report him.

But this girl refused to allow her silence to shield Ashraf and, in a moving letter, she emphasised the need to break the taboo, surrounding sexual crime in her community.

The girl who is now 15, was raped when she was only 14, yet there are members in her close-knit community who believe this child must have "corrupted" the "respected" Ashraf.

The whispering campaign that has ensued against her has compounded her pain but, in the midst of her anguish, she has also found courage.

Ashraf thought he had shamed her but, using only her eloquence, she has shamed him.

This dignified girl is not driven by revenge but a desire to disarm men like Ashraf who use honour to attack with impunity.

I hope that her words will galvanise men and women who are no longer willing to tolerate sexual assault.

The vast majority of people in this girl's community support her but there is still a minority in the older generation, who remain locked in the belief that a rape victim is a temptress.

Sexual assault is no more common among the Asian than the wider community but this is a culture rooted in patriarchy.

Rape and other domestic and sexual assault are widespread in Pakistan and India but there are few prosecutions and women who come forward are often stigmatised.

Indian politician Mulayam Singh Yadav sparked outrage last month after he claimed that women who have sex outside marriage

'This dignified girl was driven by a desire to disarm men like Ashraf who use honour to attack with impunity'



should be hanged and that men who committed rape should be forgiven their "mistakes".

"Boys will be boys," as he put it.

Female Indian politician Asha Mirje claimed that rapes take place because of a woman's clothes, her behaviour and her presence at "inappropriate places". If that sounds familiar, it should.

There are plenty of people in the UK who still think a rape victim is culpable because her clothes were too sexy or she was drunk.

At the lowest point in their lives, victims are left feeling they won't be believed.

That same fear protected predators such as Stuart Hall and Max Clifford. Those men thought they were invincible, just like Ashraf.

For those of us who respect other cultures and who relish their diversity, there is a reluctance to speak out.

We are anxious not to be perceived as intolerant or racist but, by refusing to rock the boat, we are being complicit in protecting men like Ashraf.

Only when the lone voice of Ashraf's young victim becomes many will it be too loud to ignore.