

Modest models

By Patti Smith | psmith@secc.org

Once Audrey Millard gets dressed for the day, she doesn't want to think about what she's wearing for the rest of it.

So, instead of matching her favorite stylish sweater with a lower-cut cami, she wears a T-shirt underneath.

"It looks nice, and it's modest," she said. "The world and culture tell you it's OK to show a bit of skin."

But it isn't OK with Audrey, 14, and her sister Sarah, 17, who are two of 40 local teen girls participating in a Pure Fashion show this weekend. Pure Fashion, an international faith-based program that teaches beauty from the inside out, works with local leaders and pastors to promote modesty and preserve purity.

Through workshops, a weekend retreat and various events, girls learn the value of a first impression and about drawing attention to their inner beauty—not just to what people see on the outside.

The program came to Louisville in 2007. It's held annually in 24 U.S. cities as well as in nine other countries including Italy, Mexico and Belgium.

"Real models are role models," said Kathy Fehder, Louisville director, quoting Pure Fashion's motto.

The program follows guidelines for modest attire that include wearing pants that fit but are not skintight and shirts that are not low-cut, (more than four fingers below the collar bone). The participants recently chose three outfits they will model this weekend, and Sarah hopes they will show girls that they can look cute and be modest at the same time.

Rita Millard has set standards for her daughters for modest dress, but she said it helps to have other adults telling them the same thing she has been teaching them at home.

Being a part of Pure Fashion has helped Sarah understand her mom's rules and remember that when people look at her, they are seeing an example of how God would want her to dress.

"You can wear everything and just have fun with making your own style instead of somebody else's," Sarah said.

Audrey knows girls who wear revealing clothing, and she said that they tell her they do so to attract attention from boys.

"They feel very insecure and want attention from guys—like that will complete them and solve all their problems," she said.

But Audrey doesn't feel pressured to show off her figure by wearing low-cut tops, short skirts and tight clothing.

"If you dress like that, it can lead guys because guys are visual, and they won't respect you," she said.

Instead, she's careful not to attract attention to her physical appearance. She enjoys the look of layering her clothing so she can mix and match with bright colors and be modest.



JENN DUNCAN/THE SOUTHEAST OUTLOOK
Audrey Millard, left, and Sarah Millard are two of 40 local teens participating in a Pure Fashion show this weekend.

"It's nice to look nice all the time, but your inner beauty will outshine your outer beauty," she said.