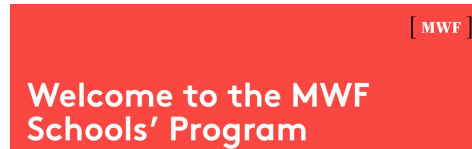




**Monday September 2, 2019**



## **DIGITAL ADDICTION - TEENAGERS IN A TECHNOLOGY AGE**

**Social networking, selfies, sexting and self-harm. The dark side of the digital age.**

**Overview:** In light of the recent [ban](#) on mobile phones in Victorian schools from 2020, coupled with the global rise of teenage digital addiction, sexting, cyberbullying and cosmetic surgery, Education Technology Startup [girledworld](#) will hold a public forum with 200+ Victorian teenagers to explore the role of mobile phones, and the effects of social media and technology on the well-being and identity development of young people.

**Event:** Thursday September 5, 2019 - Melbourne Writers Festival.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** [hello@girledworld.com](mailto:hello@girledworld.com) / [www.girledworld.com](http://www.girledworld.com)

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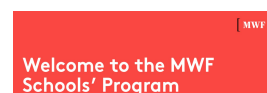
**[Melbourne Writers Festival 2019](#)**

**[MWF Schools Program 2019](#)**

**Event:** **['In Search of Selfie'](#)**

**Overview:** Cofounders of education technology startup girledworld and Authors of *You Are Not Your Face* Madeleine Grummet and Edwina Kolomanski will facilitate an open forum and teenage panel discussion exploring the role of social media and selfie culture in teenage personal narrative and identity development in a complex digital age.

**Date:** **Thursday September 5, 2019 - 2.15pm State Library Victoria**



[www.girledworld.com](http://www.girledworld.com)

**Time: 2.15pm - 3.00pm**

**Audience: 200+ pax Victorian students** (Year 8-Year 10), teachers and special guests

(Note: 150+ of student attendees are from [Westall Secondary College](#) which has 98% of enrolments from other cultures. **Contact:** (03) 9546 3233 [info@westallsc.vic.edu.au](mailto:info@westallsc.vic.edu.au))

**Venue: MWF Festival Precinct** - State Library of Victoria

## **BACKGROUND: You Are Not Your Face Project**

girledworld Global Research Project on Teenagers

(Basis for *In Search of Selfie* discussion topics at MWF2019 Forum)

In early 2020 [girledworld](#) will launch a book by teenage girls, for teenage girls called *You Are Not Your Face*.

More than 8000+ 13-19 year old girls from India, Brazil, Pakistan, China, Australia, France, Germany, Korea and the USA have contributed their raw accounts, incredible stories, life experiences, searing truths and abundant wisdom to this girledworld [global storytelling project](#), exploring the complex realities of navigating life on and offline as a teen in a technology-fuelled digital world.

This is a generation of pure digital natives - they do not know life without the internet.

Their affinity with the technologies that have brought us to the edge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution sets them apart from previous generations.

Technology has not only shaped the way they communicate, live, learn and socialise, but has also created a new set of rules, beliefs, fears and social aspirations, both on and offline, as they cultivate perfectly edited digital identities that contrast starkly with the ordinary realities of their everyday lives at home and school.

*You Are Not Your Face* captures the voices of a generation trying to work out who they are in a volatile hyper-connected world that keeps shifting around them, a world that sees young women picking up the tab for the planet, taking [action on climate change](#), facing an ageing population problem (see Australian predictions [here](#)), increasing [global](#)



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[debt](#), the birth of the fourth wave of feminism with the [#MeToo](#) and [#TimesUp](#) movements, a perpetuating global [gender pay gap](#) coupled with a changing future job market with high youth unemployment rates [FYA The New Work Reality](#), plus a wide-scale youth [disengagement with democracy](#) which is suffering a crisis of leadership, and still too few women in positions of power (females are disproportionately underrepresented globally in the top tiers of business, academia, politics and finance [WEForum](#).) To a teenage girl, the world is indeed complicated.

With a lack of visible role models, to whom, then, are teenage girls looking to shape their idea of what it means to be female? It turns out mainly online influencers like the Kardashians... (see [Giles Role Models Report 2003](#)) whose daily lives play out on social channels and set the standards for beauty, behaviour and social norms.

girledworld's *You Are Not Your Face* project, and research from leading universities, teenage focus groups, regional communities and high schools, shows that the rates of **social isolation, self-harm, depression, sexting, cyber-bullying, anxiety (GAD), digital addiction, over-sexualisation and content overload** being reported and experienced by teenage girls means they need even greater support to navigate the social media and digital-scape, maintain well-being, find a platform for their problems, and connect, hear and share their stories to make better sense of themselves as they emerge into adulthood.

Rising rates of **Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)** - a mental disorder characterized by obsessive worrying over a perceived or slight defect in appearance, increasing numbers of people undergoing cosmetic augmentation, and mental health issues have been directly correlated with social media usage, and an epidemic of anxiety about 'normality' ([ABC](#)) has fuelled an industry where young people look obsessively through heavily filtered photos of influencers on Instagram, Snapchat and Weibo, compare them with photos of themselves, then ask surgeons to surgically augment them to replicate influencer looks ([ABC](#)).

A new mental-health phenomenon known in the industry as **Snapchat dysmorphia** - where young people request procedures to resemble their Snapchat digital image - is causing significant mental health (and financial issues) amongst teenagers, as selfie-led social media culture plays an increasingly pervasive role in shaping the relationships young women have with their appearance, and its relationship to their self-worth.

Australia's smartphone penetration level currently sits at 84% — the fourth largest market globally after Norway (91%), South Korea (89%), and the Netherlands (87%) ([Deloitte](#)). It is estimated that one million Australian teens aged 14-17ABC (91%) have a mobile phone ([Roy Morgan](#)), and many are rarely offline ([ABC](#)).

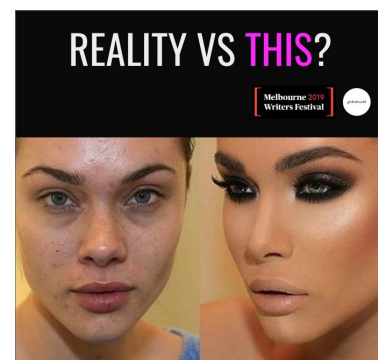
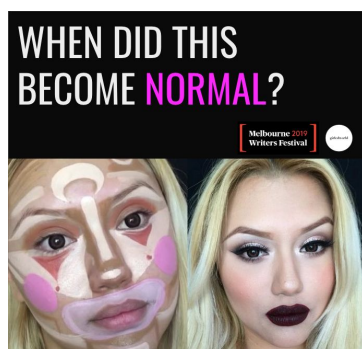
YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat are the most popular online platforms among teens, with research showing many teens are spending up to 1200 hours a year on social media ([SBS](#)) and 37% of young adults accessing social media within 15 minutes of waking up. The same percentage admitted they 'disconnected from real time' to instead trawl social media – i.e. they opted to jump on social media instead of enjoying reality.

The platform giants battling for ever-bigger slices of **'The Attention Economy'** ([Neilson](#)) face increasing scrutiny about manipulative algorithms designed to fuel user social media addiction ([Vice](#)), but there is still no clear consensus or understanding among teenagers about the negative effects social media usage is having on their everyday lives, relationships, mental health and well-being.

*You Are Not Your Face* holds a mirror to our times - these are teenage girls telling it how it is to be a girl in the world right now.

We need to listen.

Their words are inspirational, courageous, challenging, heartbreaking and reveal the complex realities of the shifting currencies of social media, the confusion of navigating life and self on and offline, and the dark side of digital usage for young people across the planet.



See girledworld [Instagram](#) for recent [#YouAreNotYourFace](#) content and website [here](#).

Welcome to the MWF  
Schools' Program

[www.girledworld.com](http://www.girledworld.com)



## **COMPANY BACKGROUND: girledworld**

[girledworld](#) was launched through the **University of Melbourne** (Melbourne Business School - Master of Entrepreneurship) in 2016 when Cofounders Madeleine Grummet and Edwina Kolomanski undertook a Masters thesis examining the problem of low STEM participation and high attrition rates of women in the current global workforce, and the role of entrepreneurship, STEM and innovation in the 21st Century economy.

Their research on the current skills gap in the global workforce revealed a key insight: current approaches to addressing skills, knowledge, diversity and gender deficits in the Australian leadership, STEM, entrepreneurship and innovation domains needed to be accelerated for Australia's economic future survival.

girledworld was the solution, and the education technology startup has to date engaged with 30,000+ students and 180+ Australian schools and universities, leading industries, Silicon Valley tech startups and outstanding female business mentors across the world to give female students the real-world industry knowledge, 21st Century enterprise skills and career mentors they need to help them thrive in the future of work and step up to be the leaders of tomorrow.

girledworld's mission is to close the gender gap, build workforce diversity, increase capacity and skills in the next generation of women, and engage with federal / state governments, global technology companies and key education stakeholders to deliver high-outcome, 21st learning and workplace mentorship to 1000's of teenage girls so they are educated, skilled and equipped to navigate their future careers.

Our high-impact work has seen us rise to national prominence and scale to 100's of schools, enabling access to a network of female role models, national work experience programs (in partnership with Virgin Australia, UniSuper, ABC), immersive workshops in STEM, leadership and exponential technology, and student-led Design Thinking innovation sprints with Microsoft, Atlassian, NSW Parliament, Women For Election Australia, Airbnb, Zoos Victoria and many others.



Our World of Work Summit series - [University of Melbourne](#) 2017 / [RMIT](#) 2018 / [University of Sydney](#) / [Victorian State Government](#) Regional Innovation Summits Geelong 2019 / Bendigo 2020, have enabled our total reach to industry, educators, parents and students to exceed 60,000, and in 2019 we will scale our impact with the beta launch of a ground-breaking global careers education platform, bringing the world of work and 21st Century micro-credentials to students, fuelling them for the future of work.

For more on **girledworld** please visit website [here](#).

See recent media [here](#).

Download company overview [here](#).

## **BACKGROUND: girledworld Cofounders**

### **MADELEINE GRUMMET - COFOUNDER + CEO**

[LinkedIn](#) or see [www.madeleinegrummet.com](http://www.madeleinegrummet.com)

Mads wears a few hats. Cofounder + CEO girledworld, VC Investor, Design Thinking and Innovation Expert, Keynote Speaker and recently Innovation Ecosystem Lead inside Telstra's Chief Technology Office, Mads spent a decade working in senior editorial print and online roles across media, journalism and PR (Herald Sun, Channel Nine, ACP, News Corp, Murdoch Magazines, L'Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival) before founding Do Re Me Creative - a strategic communications agency which delivered experiential events, brand campaigns and educational workshops to 1000's of students and corporates. Madeleine has a University of Melbourne Master of Entrepreneurship (Melbourne Business School - First Class Hons), VC Catalyst Investment Qualification, Stanford d-school IDEO Design Thinking Certification and holds multiple board, advisory and ambassadorial positions including Advisory Council NewCo, Director Cool Australia Education, and startup mentor across APAC. Madeleine has four daughters.

### **EDWINA KOLOMANSKI - COFOUNDER + COO**

[LinkedIn](#) or see <http://www.girledworld.com/edwinakolomanski>

Across her (almost) first decade in the workforce, Edwina has gained stacks of professional experience including at Telstra in Change Management across large IT, Digital and Ways of Working Transformation projects, the Victorian State Government in PR and Strategic



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Communications and within the Commercial divisions of the AFL and Tennis Australia. A life-long learner, Edwina was awarded the Bertalli Scholarship for Entrepreneurs, has a University of Melbourne Bachelor of Media & Communications and Master of Entrepreneurship (First Class Hons), studied Liberal Arts and Premedical studies as an International Scholar at Columbia University's Barnard College, and is currently studying a Juris Doctor at Monash University. Edwina was recently awarded a university-wide Monash Global Discovery Innovation scholarship to New York in 2018.

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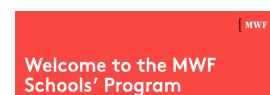
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