

PR WEEK

June 5, 2000

PR PLAY OF THE WEEK

Site looks at self-mutilation issue

By Aimee Grove

Just because a Web site hasn't gone live doesn't mean that it can't start revving up the PR engine. VOXXY, an online entertainment and information network for adolescent girls set to launch in the fall, obviously learned this lesson some time ago – and earned a PR Play of the Week nod in the process.

Vying for eyeballs with dozens of on- and offline competitors, VOXXY rode the coattails of *Secret Cutting*, a USA Network movie about self-mutilation which aired last Tuesday. Going against the movie's sensationalistic bent,

VOXXY put up a satellite Web site and masterminded same-night live chats with celebrities (Garbage lead vocalist Shirley Manson and *Prozac Nation* author Elizabeth Wurtzel) who candidly discussed their struggles with self-mutilation.

To be fair, the "Voxxyresents" Webcast was not all about promotion. The event featured talks by actual experts on cutting, while the site included links to assistance and information resources.

"We knew that USA was airing a movie about cutting, but it was a small glimpse," explained VOXXY co-founder and *Girl Power* author Hillary Carlip. "We wanted to provide a service by giving girls a chance to speak out, ask questions and find out where to get help."

Jocelyn Weiss of LaForce &

Location: <http://www.voxxyresents.com/voxy/>

ONE NIGHT ONLY May 30, 2000

All times are Pacific Standard Time.
Chat rooms will be open from 8PM - Midnight

Live chats with:

- 6:00-7:00: Dr. Wendy Leder and Karen Conterio, founders of SAFE (Self Abuse Finally Ends) Alternatives
- 7:00-7:30: Shirley Manson from Garbage
- 7:30-8:00: Elizabeth Wurtzel, author of Prozac Nation
- 8:00-8:30: Jane Dory, Creator of the Cutting World Web Site & Blog
- 8:30-9:00: Hilde Schlosser, Board member of Befrienders International
- 9:00-9:30: Yardley Smith, actress and voice of Lisa Simpson
- 9:30-10:00: Christina Beck, filmmaker ("Slice," a feature film about self-injury)

VOXXY: Voxxy, the interactive network, will launch this summer. Click here for more information.

Voxxy presents a night devoted to the issues of self-injury/cutting

Sharp...the site provided a safe space for its target audience of teen girls

Stevens, VOXXY's PR agency of record, stressed that the event wasn't simply about generating media coverage: "It was more of a grass-roots effort, utilizing thousands of teens to get the word out."

Nevertheless, the Webcast garnered several mentions: *The New York Post*, *US Weekly* and *USA Today*.

● Nominations for PR Play of the Week should be sent to news@prweekus.com