



Sisters Lauren, 16, and Sarah Hassall, 13, enjoy a makeover

Project aims to pamper

by Maria Lewis

LIKE something out of a fairytale, more than 200 Gold Coast girls were transformed into princesses yesterday as part of The Amira Project.

The lucky girls were treated to a day of pampering and motivational speeches before they put on their ball gowns and tiaras for the gala dinner at Legends Hotel.

The project focuses on confidence, self-esteem and 'beauty inside and out'.

Benowa State High School student Lauren Hassall was attending the event with her younger sister Sarah and said all of the girls felt 'privileged' to be part of the project.

"I love it, it's absolutely amazing and I don't think there's anyone here who doesn't enjoy it," said the 16-year-old.

"It builds our self-esteem so much and everything is a big surprise for the girls here on their first time.

"Everyone really looks forward to dressing up and when the doors open and the ballroom is decorated in flowers ... it's incredible."

The word 'Amira' means princess in Hebrew and the project has been one of the Gold Coast's leading youth events since it started six year ago.

The girls get to experience hair and make-up workshops, speaking workshops, lifestyle advice and a gala dinner with entertainment from former *Australian Idol* contestant Cosima Devito.

The Amira Project is run by Lifehouse Projects and chairwoman Ruth Knight said the day was a great way to help the girls feel good about themselves.

"Every girl is here because a local business or individual has come on board and sponsored them to attend the day," she said.

You can sponsor a princess for as little as \$50 at the website www.theamiraproject.com.