



MODEST

by Design

By Julia Woodbury

*Talk about
being dressed
for success!*

*These young
women know the
virtue of modesty.*

Modesty is the standard for LDS youth, no matter where they are. Just take a look at what young women in Utah and California have done to show how easy it is to be modest and beautiful.

While successfully planning and putting on modest fashion shows, these young women learned that beauty is in more than the cut of a dress or the style of a fabric. True beauty is in a young woman who knows that modesty is the best policy.

Choosing the Right in Rose Park

When the young women of the Rose Park Second Ward in Salt Lake City, Utah, got tired of putting up with a skimpy selection of formal dresses, they took matters—and the dresses—into their own hands. Spending an evening at a local dress shop owned by Beehive Elise Carnahan's grandmother, the young women drew the line for modesty by trying on a new line of formal dresses.

Altering for the Better

Amid the bustle of fittings and alterations, the young women learned some practical ways to make dresses modest.

“I had a cute black dress, and we added a bolero jacket that covered my back and shoulders,” said Laurel Leslie Abalos. “The jacket made the dress a beautiful, modest option. We didn’t even have to alter the gown.”

For Elise, the alterations were a little more extensive, but the result was just as rewarding. With the help and expertise of her grandmother, Elise constructed sleeves for her dress. “When you’re modest,” she said, “you can focus on what matters: how you act. I want to enter the temple one day, so I need to prepare now for that day. One of the ways I do that is by dressing modestly.”

A Night of Modest Fashion

Eager to share their new modest formals and show others how easy it is to be modest, the young women’s next step was to put on a fashion show. After a flurry of distributing flyers, making announcements, decorating, and preparing refreshments, the young women were ready to share the confidence and joy they found in being modest.

Yanyn Flores, a Mia Maid with Down syndrome, spoke through her actions at the fashion show. Her participation showed everyone how modesty is important to her.

Alyssa Reed, a Laurel, also told why participating in the show and modeling modesty was important. “Modesty shows respect for your body as a temple. You also respect the people around you, the gifts you are given, and Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.”

Mia Maid Kiko Makaya adds, “I want to set a good example to those around me by dressing modestly.”

And for Beehive Jonni Klus, modesty is a way of staying true to herself. “Modesty shows that you are happy with just being you.”

Worth the Effort

The fashion show was a packed event and a great success. Many more young women mentioned how dressing modestly helps them to be confident and focus on who they are rather than what they wear. Young Women leader Desirae Carnhahan was happy to see how the fashion show blessed their lives. “Our girls now know that modest additions are worth the extra effort,” she said.



Gift



MISS WYOMING ON MODESTY

Anna Nelson of the Rock Springs Wyoming Stake knows what it is like to be under pressure when it comes to modesty. As a competitor for the title of Miss Wyoming 2009, she stood out by standing up for her standards. By selecting an evening gown with sleeves and modestly modifying the other outfits she wore for the competition,

Anna lived her belief

that “you don’t have to be *of* the world to be successful *in* it.” Here’s what she has to say about modesty:

Why is modesty important to you? It is important to me because it is important to my Heavenly Father. There is a reason for every commandment. And that is what modesty is—a commandment.

What have you learned about modesty? One common misconception is that it’s difficult to be modest. It is difficult to find modest clothing ready-made, but it is always worth it to be modest rather than just making do with what the world gives you. There are always ways to add to an outfit to make it modest.

How do you stand up to pressure to be immodest? The most important thing to remember about modesty—any commandment really—is that Heavenly Father’s opinion is the only one that matters. I know that if I’m doing what I know to be true and I live up to His standards, then the rest will fall into place.

Do you have any advice for young women trying to be modest? Surround yourselves with people who value modesty as much as you do. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that modesty isn’t as “big” of a commandment as others. It most definitely is. Remember that modesty is a reflection of who you are meant to be and a physical representation of what you stand for. Modesty *is* beauty. It will make you happier than you can possibly imagine.



Bright Ideas in California

In the San Diego California North Stake, the stake Young Women president, Sheryl Arrington, had similar ideas for helping her young women make the modest choice.

When they heard about plans for a modest fashion show, many young women rose to the occasion. “Modesty is important to me because it is important to the Lord,” said Hyesuhn Lee, a Laurel. “I know that being modest will help me reach my goal of going to the temple.”

Not the Only One

Several other Laurels like Hyesuhn were invited to participate in the show, and the enthusiasm spread to the Mia Maids and Beehives, who offered to help as well. The show was expanded to include casual clothes, modeled by the Beehives, and Sunday best, showcased by the Mia Maids. With so much participation, Laurel Paige Mange discovered that she was in good company. “The show reminded me that I am not the only one facing the challenge of staying modest.”

Being an Example

The show took as its theme “Be Thou an Example,” and the young women truly became examples by inviting the 11-year-old girls in the stake to come see modesty in action.

Christie Richmond, a Laurel, remembered the show’s simple lesson: “We can wear beautiful gowns and clothes and look pretty and be modest at the same time. Modesty will help you feel good about yourself because you know you are doing the right thing.”

Laurel Kierston Knobloch agrees. “I feel confident and comfortable when I know I don’t have to tug and pull at my clothes.”

Towards the Temple

The girls’ confidence was increased by their participation in the show. Not only did they get to wear beautiful, modest clothes, they also learned poise and posture so they could walk confidently down the runway built for the event. Best of all, however, was the temple cutout that adorned the stage, reminding the young women about their goals to stay obedient, pure, and worthy in dress and action so they could move

towards the temple. “Modesty makes me feel closer to our Heavenly Father,” reflects Laurel Bee Xiong.

Sister Arrington agrees that modesty is a way for a young woman to grow spiritually. For her girls in California, as well as for the young women in Utah and anywhere else, when it comes to modesty, “young women are always beautiful when they follow the Lord’s principles,” she says. **NE**



MODESTY TIPS

The young women from the San Diego California North Stake and the Rose Park Second Ward in Utah contributed ideas on how to be more modest. Here are some of the things they thought up:

- Wear camisoles under your outfits. The layers will add fun texture and color.
- Have someone help you with simple alterations (like adding sleeves to a dress).
- Get some cute jackets or cardigans to wear over your outfits.
- Learn how to sew your own modest clothes.
- Buy clothes that are already modest so you won’t have to alter them later on.
- Wear modest clothes around the house. That way you won’t be tempted to be immodest elsewhere.
- Shop at vintage shops where you can find fun, modest clothes from earlier eras.

