



SPEAKERS KIT

Melissa Abu-Gazaleh

Founder & CEO
Leader in boy's social education
NSW Young Australian of the Year





**We cannot always build
the future for our youth,
but we can build
our youth for the future.**

ABOUT MELISSA

Selected as NSW Young Australian of the Year, Australia's 100 Brightest Young Minds and recognised in Australia's Young & Extraordinary series, Melissa Abu-Gazaleh is passionate about delivering daring young male social education programs to combat the trends of anti-social and risk-taking behaviours.

At age 19, she realised there was something drastically wrong with how Australian young men were not engaged in the community. As a young female, Melissa was always fortunate to participate in a range of self-development and leadership programs purely because she was a young female. Yet, with young men over-represented in youth crime, alcohol-related violence and mental health statistics, Melissa became frustrated with the lack of investment in progressing young men's social and emotional welfare.

So in 2006, Melissa established the Top Blokes Foundation, a youth-led organisation that has worked with thousands of adolescent boys and young men, improving their mental health and well-being through peer mentoring and social education programs.



Powered by her favourite quote “We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future”, Melissa is not shy to speak honestly about the crisis Australia faces with its young males and how young men play a role in building their own brighter future. She is equally as passionate about youth leadership and empowering young people to define their dreams and become agents of change, not tomorrow, but today.

Melissa has previously been guest speaker at major events including the National Boy's Health Forum, Men's Health Conference in Perth, National Volunteering Conference and often speaks at various university and high school leadership events.

Melissa's bold and daring presentations have inspired and educated thousands of Australians to join the movement in building a new generation of young male Top Blokes.



KEYNOTE PRESENTATION TOPICS

Melissa is a professional speaker who has presented to over 10,000 Australians. Melissa is passionate about delivering highly engaging and interactive keynote presentations and workshops to young people, business leaders and parents.

EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING YOUNG MEN'S HEALTH

This keynote presentation highlights the current trends and gaps within young men's health. Drawing on latest research and best practice, Melissa outlines the current issues in young men's mental health and their relationship to drugs, alcohol, sex, relationships and anger management. Melissa shares effective engagement strategies and key strategies to involve young men to improve their own mental health and well-being and increase aspirations for their future. This presentation is best suited for parents, educators and employers.

PORN IN A YOUNG MAN'S WORLD

Did you know that 88% of pornographic scenes feature physical violence and aggression? Yet young males aged 12-17 years are the fastest growing group of pornography users, leading to a culture where violence in intimate relationships may be normalised. Melissa presents an insightful presentation on the key effects of a pornified culture on young males, its effects on a young males body and personal relationships with practical tips to reduce porn use for a healthier lifestyle. This presentation is suited to both young males themselves, parents, educators and service providers.

THE JOURNEY OF A YOUNG FEMALE CEO

Does a young female feel the glass ceiling effect in today's modern world? Beginning an organisation for young men at age 19, Melissa knew nothing about business. She was, however, an expert in being passionate, driven and never taking no for an answer (that's all you need to get through right?). Little did she know that her ethnic background, her gender, her high school and even the region she came from would affect how leaders in the business and media industry saw her. Being a young woman in business, Melissa shares her journey and highlights the critical elements that each business and organisation can do immediately to begin building the next generation of young women in business. This presentation is best suited for corporate events and all female audiences.



BECOMING LEADERS OF TODAY, NOT TOMORROW

Designed to boost the passion and determination of emerging leaders aged 18-30 years, this presentation is Melissa's uncensored and truthful insight into the journey of the life of a young CEO. From the lows to the highs, Melissa shares the battles and obstacles she overcame to build the Top Blokes Foundation. From not being taken seriously, to the ongoing need to demystify Gen Y stereotypes and manage other people's expectations (and so much more), Melissa will motivate the up and coming leaders to never let themselves get distracted from their mission on this Earth and to become leaders today, not tomorrow. This presentation is best suited for students at universities, high schools and youth leadership conferences.

LIFE IS LIKE A CHEESEBURGER

A topic close to Melissa's heart, this highly interactive presentation is Melissa's signature high school keynote. Using the ingredients of a cheeseburger to describe situations that young people will face in their teenage lives, Melissa challenges the audience of 12-16 year olds to build self-awareness, aspirations for the future and take their first steps to setting and achieving their goals. This presentation is specially crafted to keep the attention and engagement of the audience for a minimum of 45 minutes. Please note, non-lovers of cheeseburgers may find this presentation disturbing.



WORKSHOP TOPICS

Melissa has over 10 years of facilitation and workshop experience. Her style of using humour, multimedia and interactive activities during her workshops ensure that participants are reaching the required outcomes. She has extensive experience presenting half day, full day and 2-day workshops to high school students, university students and work-places.

BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR YOUNG MEN

This interactive workshop will offer practical steps for attendees to develop a unique strategy to engage at-risk and disadvantaged young males within their communities. This workshop will also help attendees to understand the challenges that young males face in health, education and general community setting. Melissa will ensure that this workshop is customised to directly address the real-time barriers that stand in the way of service providers and parents with their young men.



7 STEPS FOR BECOMING YOUNG LEADERS TODAY

This workshop is best suited for high school and university students who are aspiring leaders or in a first-time leadership role. Incorporating 7 of the most effective steps Melissa used in her journey to becoming a leader, this workshop will give participants 7 practical strategies to define their leadership style, increase their leadership capacity and boost their confidence. Participants can be expected to leave with an action plan ready to implement.

THE REALITIES OF BEING A YOUTH CHANGE-AGENT

Being a young leader has its perks, but definitely has its challenges. And Melissa has experienced enough challenges to know how hard leadership is. This workshop is best suited for aspiring youth leaders who already have experience in leadership but want to take it to the next level. Melissa will assist participants to understand their own leadership journeys, their desired destinations and develop strategies to overcome the challenges that stand in the way.

PUBLIC SPEAKING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Public speaking. Yuck. But public speaking is also an essential skill in communicating your vision and message to others. Having now spoken to over 7,000 across her speaking career, Melissa has dedicated hours to building her confidence and speaking skills. In this highly interactive workshop, Melissa will help young people build confidence, design daring and bold presentations as well as give practical tips and actions to becoming a confident and memorable speaker.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT MELISSA



“Melissa is a regular speaker at our 2-day leadership camp for 14-17 year olds. She has a great personality that the students readily warm to. Her sessions are filled with laughter and fun. Her topic "My Life is Like a Cheeseburger" is far from trivial and challenges the students to consider the role of themselves and those around them. We receive a lot of comments from parents after the camp which refer directly to Melissa's presentation. Additionally, the students rating of Melissa on a feedback sheet is consistently 10 out of 10.

I am extremely pleased and honoured that she finds the time to join us.”

Brian – Camp Coordinator – RYPEN

“After attending a Top Blokes Foundation seminar on increasing young people's leadership capacity in modern Australia, I now feel empowered to communicate better with my youngmale students and help them to develop positive attitudes and behaviours that give themthe best chance at success in all areas of their lives.”

Paul, Teacher

“Young, vibrant, captivating and bold. Melissa has your complete attention from start to finish and will even have you asking for an encore. You will never forget her - get ready to be challenged.”

Sana, Hays Recruitment

“Melissa is a truly inspirational speaker. Her integrity and passion shines through when she speaks, and her story stays with you long after she has finished. After hearing Melissa speak, I was compelled to keep working hard in my life.”

Sally, Human and Hope Association

“Melissa is a one of the most powerful presenters I've ever seen. Her story shows that being young is not an excuse. I'm now more focused on what I want to achieve in life.”

Emma, Student, University of NSW

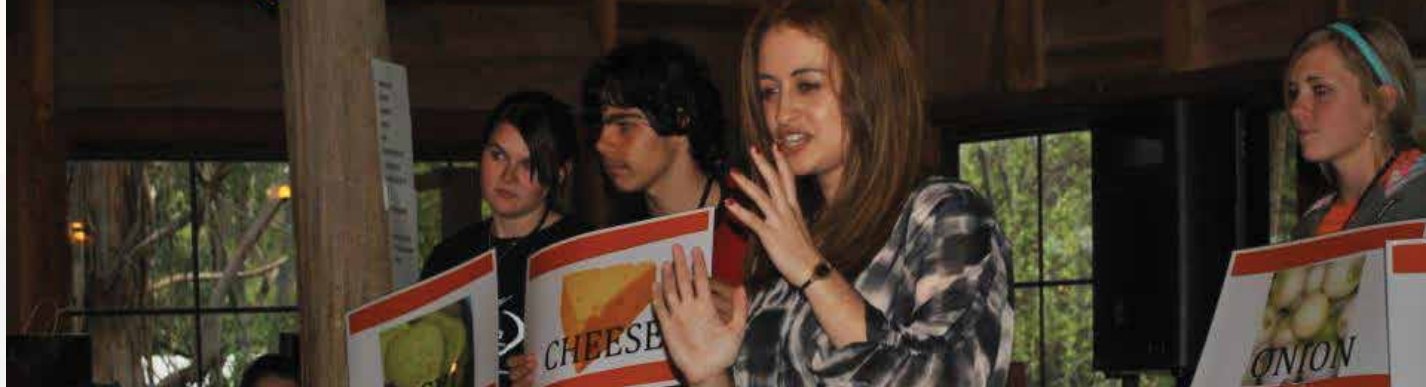
“I've always wanted to make a difference, but never did anything about it. Melissa showed us how to achieve our life goals from that moment. It was a turning point for me.”

Chris, Student, University of Wollongong

“Melissa's talks are engaging from the minute you walk in until you leave. She's not afraid to challenge your thoughts and show you how to live a purposeful life.”

Carly, Student Leadership Programs Coorindator





PAST CLIENTS

Melissa presents to workplaces and businesses who have young male clients and employees, parents and educators of young males and aspiring young leaders. Melissa has spoken to thousands of people across Australia and is passionate about young men's health. If you have an audience where Melissa can share her message, please contact her.

SHE HAS ALSO BEEN FEATURED ON

Channel 9 news
ABC Radio
Win Television
Prime 7
Australian Institute of Management
NSW Business Chamber

SOME OF THE MANY CLIENTS PRESENTED FOR

Telstra Country Wide
Bunnings Warehouse
Regional Development Australia
Women and Leadership Australia
Australian Men's Health Forum
NSW Men's Health Forum
Volunteering Australia
University of Wollongong
University of Western Sydney
University of NSW
University of Technology Sydney
TAFE NSW
Inspire Women's Conference
Rotaract Sydney
Rotary Youth Program for Enrichment
Rotary Youth Leadership Award
Wests Illawarra

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE BOOKING?

To ensure we can commit to meeting your event needs, please consider the following key issues:

- Objectives and outcomes of having Melissa present
- What you want the audience to feel as a result of the presentation
- Length of presentation required
- Date and time that you require Melissa
- Approximate size of audience
- Multimedia available
- Your proximity to Sydney, NSW and the travel requirements
- Other presenters at your event
- Are there any companion events that you would like Melissa to attend e.g. a conference dinner?

HOW SOON MUST I BOOK LEADING UP TO OUR EVENT?

A minimum of four weeks is required to ensure that Melissa's presentation is as relevant and meaningful as possible. Inside the four weeks, she may still be able to commit to the event, however there may be less flexibility in developing a customised presentation for your audience. This can be discussed in your initial consultation with Melissa.

WHAT IS THE FEE TO HAVE MELISSA SPEAK?

100% of fees generated from speaking engagements are donated directly to the Top Blokes Foundation. Fees vary depending on the speaking requirements including length of engagement, style of delivery (speech or workshop) and geographic location of the event. For a customised quote, please contact Top Blokes Foundation.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Please contact the Top Blokes Foundation office to organise an initial consultation with Melissa, who will discuss your event needs. This is essential to enable Melissa to create a lasting impact on your audience.



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