Media & Body Image

Media play a powerful role in shaping “ideal” body image that starts young

Get real and get media literate!

What you should know about

More than 8 out of 10 12-year-old girls say they read magazines that promote the thin ideal—a majority of girls start reading these magazines at age 5

6 out of 10 teenage girls say that comparing themselves to models in the media makes them feel insecure about their bodies

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In a study of 9-14 year-olds, 48% of girls and 27% of boys admitted to doing something to look like a person they saw in the media in the past year.


Regardless of gender, young people want to look like the body images they see in the media.

Boys are influenced by a different ideal… to be “buff”

More than 4 out of 10 boys in middle school and high school tend to regularly exercise with the goal of increasing muscle mass

Boys are influenced by a different ideal— to be “buff.”

86% of respondents on teen body image site Proud2Bme say that social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter hurt their body confidence.

Proud2BeMe (2013). Overall, do social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter help or hurt your body confidence? http://proud2bme.org/


How do we counteract media’s influence on body image? MEDIA LITERACY!

More than two years after completing a media literacy program, adolescents report less concern about their weight, fewer body issues, and more body satisfaction

Media literacy can help decrease risk factors for eating disorders and increase healthy body image among different ages, from young adolescent to young adult


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