



**Understanding  
Adolescent Body Image  
and How to Address It**

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# Objectives

Define	Define body image and the factors that contribute to its development
Describe	Describe how body image impacts other dimensions of health and well-being
Compare	Compare forms of appearance pressures and how they influence adolescent body image
Discuss	Discuss social media literacy among adolescents
Suggest	Suggest ways of addressing body image among adolescents and share examples
Identify	Identify questions you may have

# Body Image Defined

- Body image: how one perceives their body when looking in a mirror or picturing oneself in the mind and what one believes, feels, and senses in the body.
- Body image disturbance: any form of affective, cognitive, behavioral, or perceptual disturbance that is directly concerned with an aspect of physical appearance.



## Definitions continued



- **Disordered Eating:** eating disturbances that do not qualify as a clinical eating disorder due to frequency or intensity.
- Examples include dieting, calorie restriction, exclusion of certain food groups, orthorexia/clean eating, chewing and spitting.
- **Fitspiration:** commonly shortened to “fitspo,” is the broad term used to describe “fitness inspiration”. This content, such as videos, selfies, exercise and eating tips are often obtained through internet-based and social media–based platforms.



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## Your Body, Your Image

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- Who or what in your lives do you think impacts your body image?

# External factors

- Family
- Friends
- Media
- Social Media
- Culture
- Location





Cultural & Locational differences

# Internal factors



Past experiences  
(memory)



Personality type



Beliefs and  
values



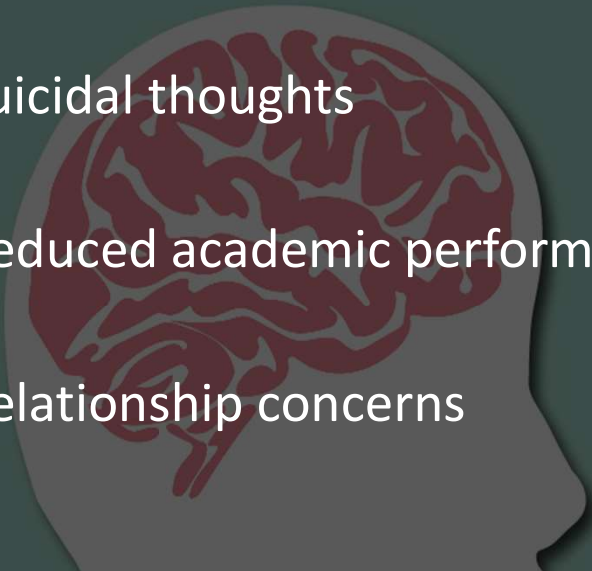
Attitude



# Body Image & Health

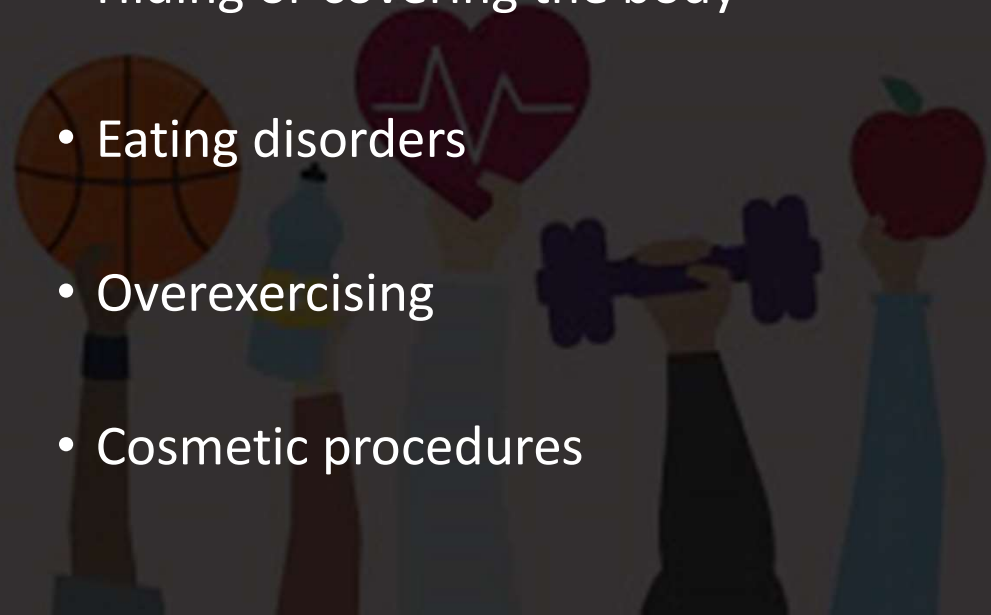
## MENTAL & SOCIAL HEALTH

- Anxiety and/or Depression
- Suicidal thoughts
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- Reduced academic performance
- Relationship concerns



## PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Hiding or covering the body
- Eating disorders
- Overexercising
- Cosmetic procedures





Not satisfied?  
You're Not alone!

- Around 70% of teenagers have reported dissatisfaction with their bodies.
- Normal to not ALWAYS like your appearance.
- It's more important how much it affects you...

# Body Image vs. Body Dysmorphia

- Not everyone with negative body image has body dysmorphia
- Poor mental health doesn't always = mental disorder
- Body image is usually the “whole picture”, body dysmorphia is usually an obsession with one specific trait, person may think they are deformed.
- Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) can be serious and lead to depression, isolation and even suicide.



Body Dysmorphic Disorder affects **1.7%** to **2.4%** of the general population — about **1 in 50 people**.

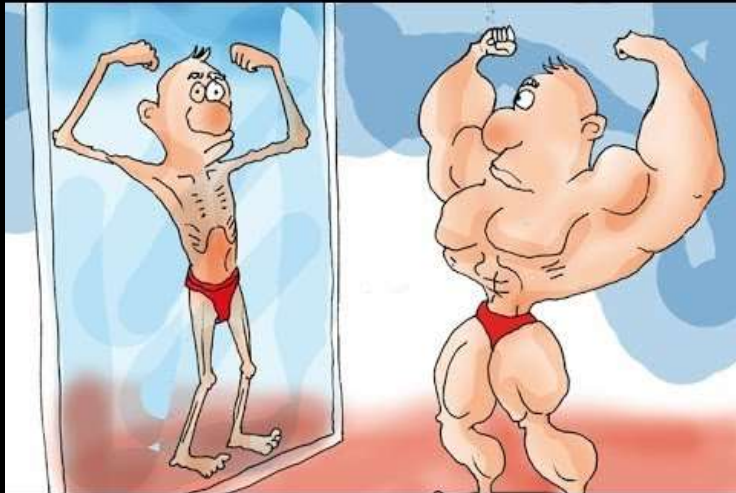
The most common features people tend to fixate about include:

- Face, such as nose, complexion, wrinkles, acne and other blemishes
- Hair, such as thinning and balding
- Skin and vein appearance (skin bleaching/tanning, varicose veins)
- Breast size
- Genitalia
- Muscle size and tone



# Muscle Dysmorphia

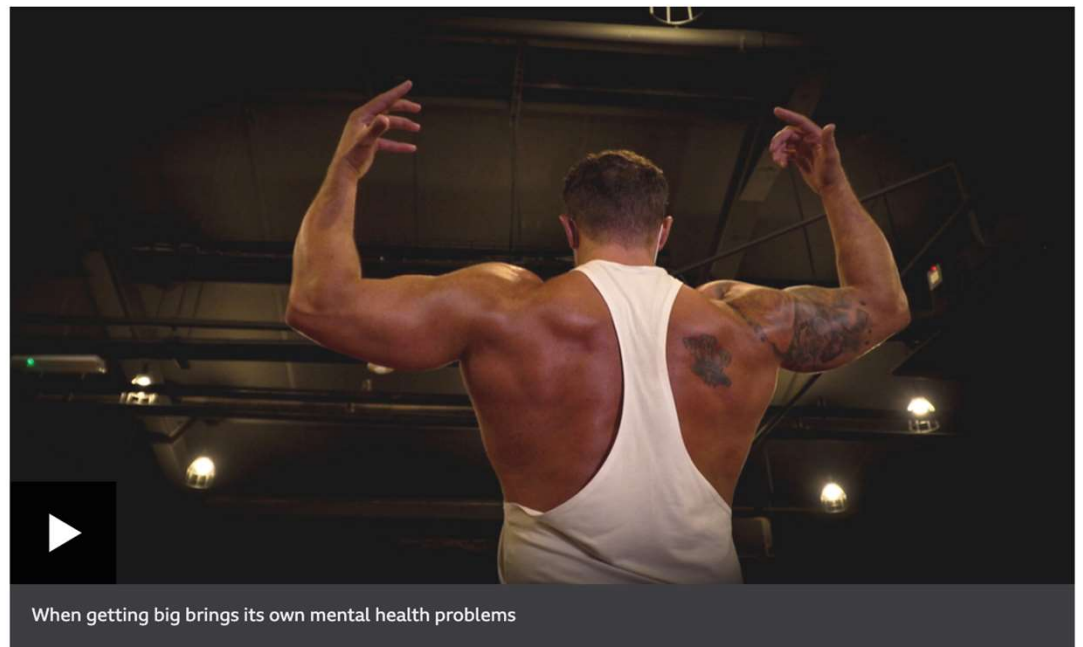
- Typically occurs in males
- Excessive lifting, steroid use, obsession with being big



## Body dysmorphia: 'Bigorexia leading to depression' in gym-goers

By Gemma Dunstan  
BBC Wales News

🕒 5 November 2020



When getting big brings its own mental health problems

**Body dysmorphia in some young, muscular men is causing them to see themselves as small, leading to depression and steroid abuse, an expert has said.**

"Bigorexia" - the opposite of anorexia - sees people strive to be bigger.

# Billie Eilish on her struggles with dysmorphia and depression

At the peak of it, the singer "couldn't look in the mirror at all"

 by CATRIONA HARVEY-JENNER  AUG 13, 2019



## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

### Lana Condor didn't know she was battling body dysmorphia: Why it's so hard to spot

Jenna Ryu USA TODAY

Published 9:36 a.m. ET Feb. 18, 2021 | Updated 9:49 a.m. ET Feb. 18, 2021



Lana Condor and Noah Centineo reflect on 'To All the Boys' success

Condor, Centineo reflect on 'To All the Boys' success AP

Body Dysmorphia in the media

# How is Body Dysmorphic Disorder diagnosed?



Can be difficult to identify since it's a mental disorder.

Like depression, people can hide it.

## Symptoms

- Engaging in behaviors aimed at fixing or hiding the perceived flaw that are *difficult to control*, such as frequently checking the mirror, grooming, cutting or skin picking
- Attempting to hide perceived flaws with styling, makeup or clothes
- Frequently seeking reassurance about your appearance from others
- Avoiding social situations
- Seeking cosmetic procedures with little satisfaction

A photograph of a person sitting at a wooden table. They are wearing a white top and are holding a silver fork over a white plate. On the plate is a single cherry tomato. To the left of the plate is a clear glass filled with water. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a dining area.

## Eating our Emotions

- Disordered eating vs. Eating disorder
- More people will struggle with disordered eating

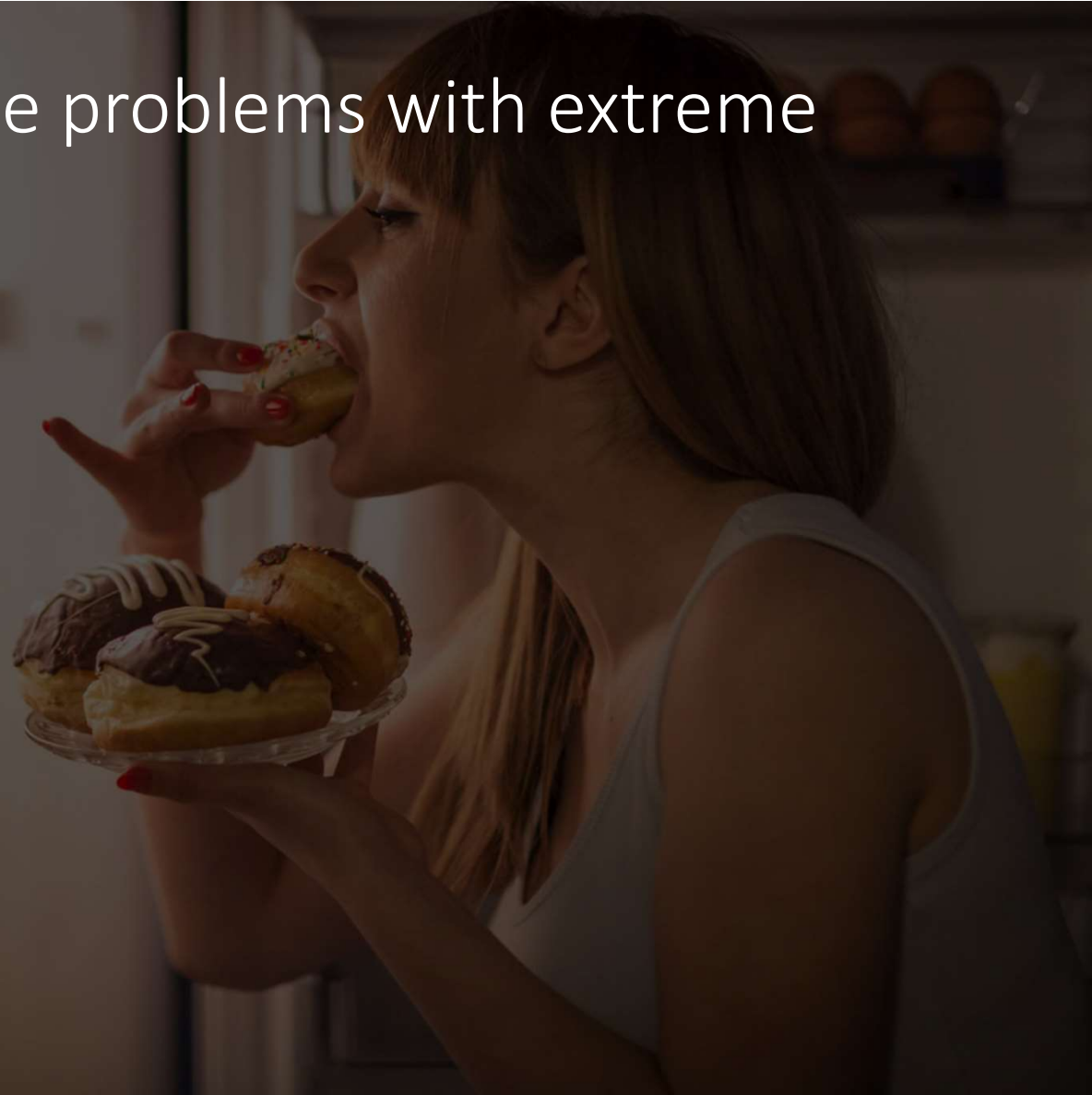
### Examples of disordered eating:

- Yo-yo dieting
- Constant feelings of guilt or shame associated with eating
- Feeling out of control when eating
- Eating to cope with negative emotions
- Extreme restriction of calories or certain food groups
- Obsessive food monitoring



# What might be some problems with extreme dieting?

- Obsessive
- Interferes with social life
- Malnourished
- Low energy
- Poor performance
- Mood swings - hangry!
- Time consuming
- Expensive
- Messes up metabolism
- Weight issues



# Addicted to distractions

- Disordered eating → Negative relationship with food → Eating Disorder
- Addictions: usually trying to cope with or escape from something else in their lives.
- What are some life stressors that could lead to disordered eating?
  - Brain chemistry
  - Pressure to fit in or gain acceptance
  - Bullying
  - Desire to have “control”
  - Athletics
  - Traumatic event





Appearance  
pressure starts  
from a young age

- 81% of 10-year-old girls are more afraid of being fat than losing their parents or getting cancer.
- Even young children can pick up on the fact that our society may treat more attractive people better.



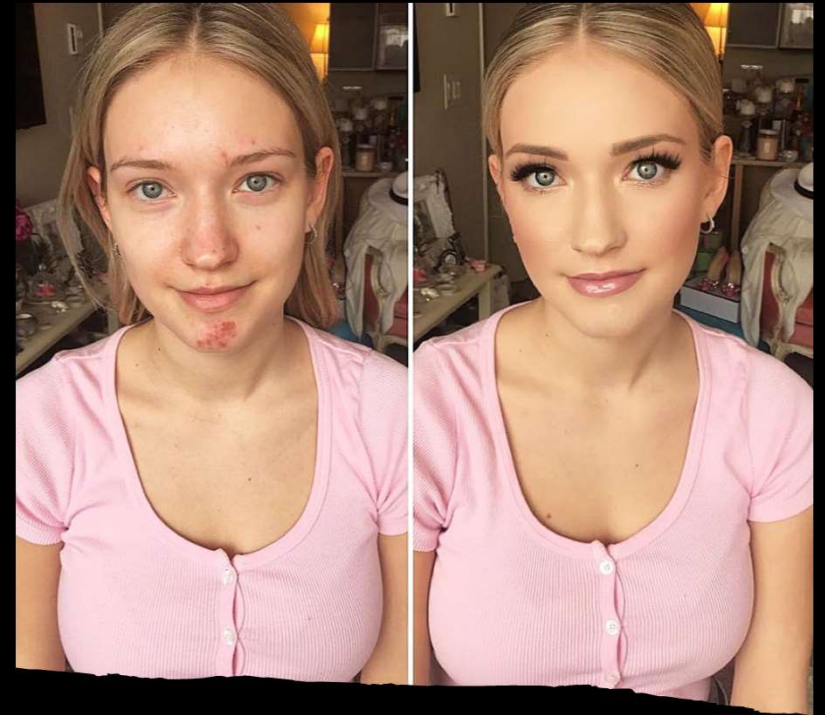
## Role Models?

- **Appearance Ideals:** what our society or culture tells us is the ideal way to look at a certain moment in time.
- What's popular has changed over time!

## Under (appearance) Pressure

- What or who do you think creates the most appearance pressure for teenagers?
- Social media has the biggest influence on teenagers' body image.





What would you say are some problems with comparing ourselves?

- We compare ourselves to images that aren't even "real"
- Unrealistic standards
- Plastic surgery
- Always dissatisfied with some aspect of self

Social media images are often unrealistic, and most of the time they have been carefully created and retouched.

## Comparisons



Filtered and “flawless”: the *Instagram Face*  
Unrealistic social media images are positively reinforced by “likes”

# The Staged “Selfie”

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selfie (sei-fee) n. (informal)

a photograph that one has taken of oneself.



# Social Media Literacy

What are two positive aspects about social media and what are two negative aspects of social media?



<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Stay connected with family and friends	Focus more on virtual relationships than in-person ones
Meet new people	Catfishing; made up profiles
Learn new information; stay up with news	Lots of potentially false information
Form of entertainment	Can be addictive or overused
Source of positive support	Source of bullying or hurtful comments

# Bringing up Body Image

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Culture has changed rapidly with the development of social media.

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Bombarded with filtered images daily.

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Comparisons not only to others, but to a modified version of self.

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Recognize adolescents as “experts” ask them to explain their experiences.

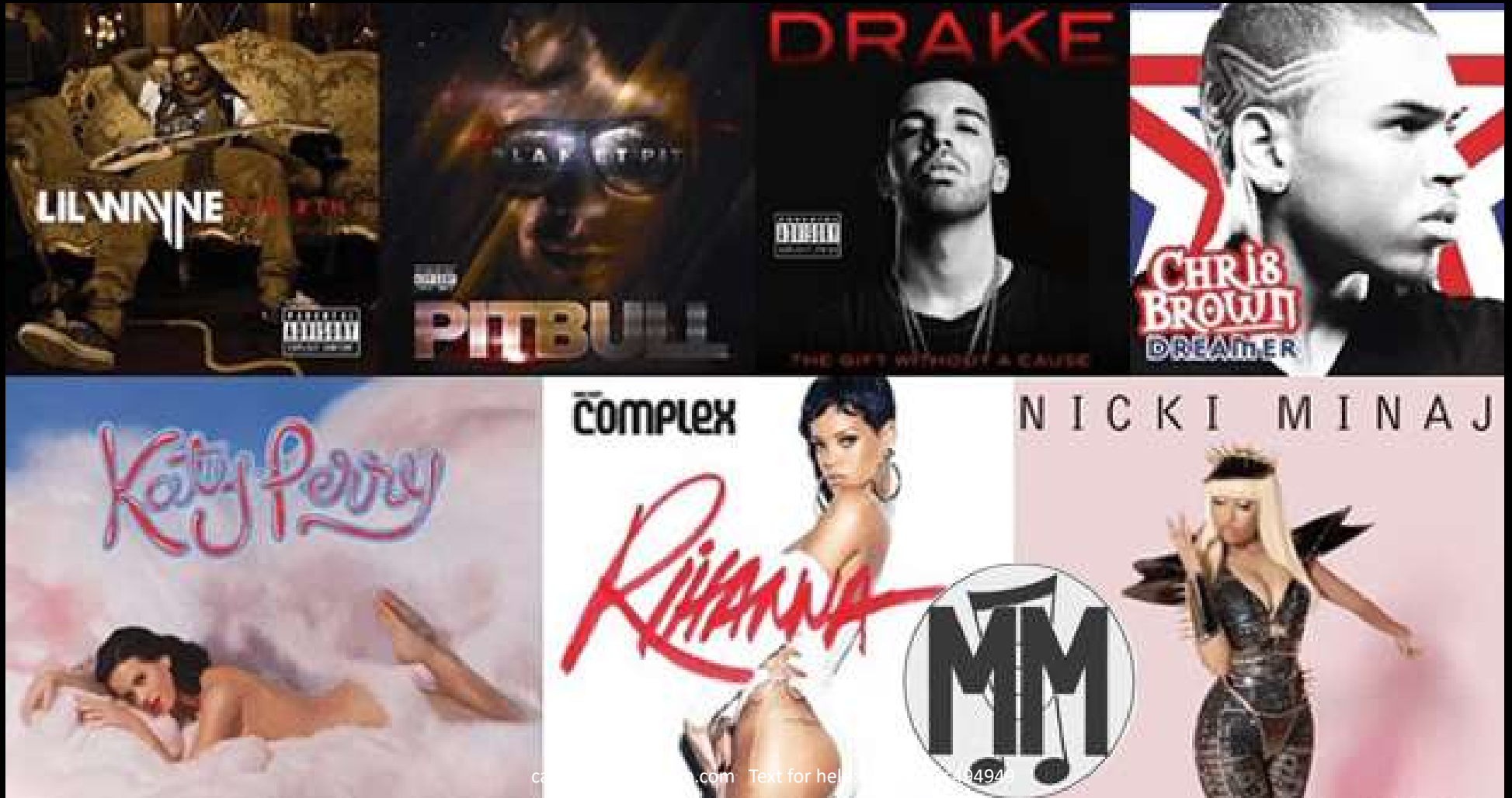


## Image = Character?

- Our society tends to make judgements about character based on someone's physical traits.
- What are some things that contribute to physical appearance that we can't control?



# Music: album covers, videos, lyrics





## Your Expert Opinion

Pair Share:

- Which social media platform do you think is the most positive for teenagers?
  - Why do you think that platform is positive?
- Which social media platform do you think is the most negative for teenagers?
  - Why do you think that platform is negative?

Social media platform examples: Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok

# Body Image Resources

- [Dove](#) : Confident Me workshops
  - Resources for teachers & educators aimed at 11- to 14-year-olds
- [Beyond Images](#): self-esteem and body image curriculum
  - Developed by the National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC)
  - Lesson plans for grades 4th through 8th
- [Teach Body Image](#): Canadian based resources for grades K-8<sup>th</sup> grade
- [Media Smart](#): Digital media literacy on a variety of health-related topics
  - Select by grade and topic (K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

# Respect YOU program

- 13 high schools invited to participate in the study, seven ( $n = 7$ ) agreed
- Pre-survey administered before intervention; post-survey upon completion of the intervention
- Utilized the Social Cognitive Theory
  - Expectations
  - Self-Efficacy
  - Reinforcement
- Used concepts from a comprehensive literature review on adolescent body image programming. Updated and modified to include pop culture references.

# INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS

Indiana Academic Standards	<i>Respect YOU</i> curriculum	Social Cognitive Theory Construct
12.1.2 Cite evidence that demonstrates the interrelationships of emotional, intellectual, physical, and social health across the lifespan.	Convey how body image impacts other areas of health such as mental, social and health behaviors.	Reciprocal determinism
12.2.3 Evaluate the effect of media on health behaviors.	Media literacy education, discuss how influential social media is on body image.	Reciprocal determinism
12.2.4 Analyze how peers can influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.	How do peers influence our body image and related health behaviors?	Reinforcement, observational learning
12.2.5 Analyze how culture supports and challenges health beliefs, practices and behaviors.	Discuss cultural differences related to body image. How has culture changed over time and impacted the social ideal?	Reciprocal determinism
12.2.7 Analyze how the perceptions of norms influence healthy and unhealthy behaviors.	Ask students where image ideals come from, what might be some pros/cons with them?	Observational learning
12.3.1 Evaluate the validity of health information, products and services.	What results do we expect from using certain body altering products? Do they really work?	Expectations
12.5.1 Identify personal health decisions and analyze related internal and external influences.	Are you making health decisions that make you feel good and is healthy for you? Who or what influences those decisions?	Self-efficacy

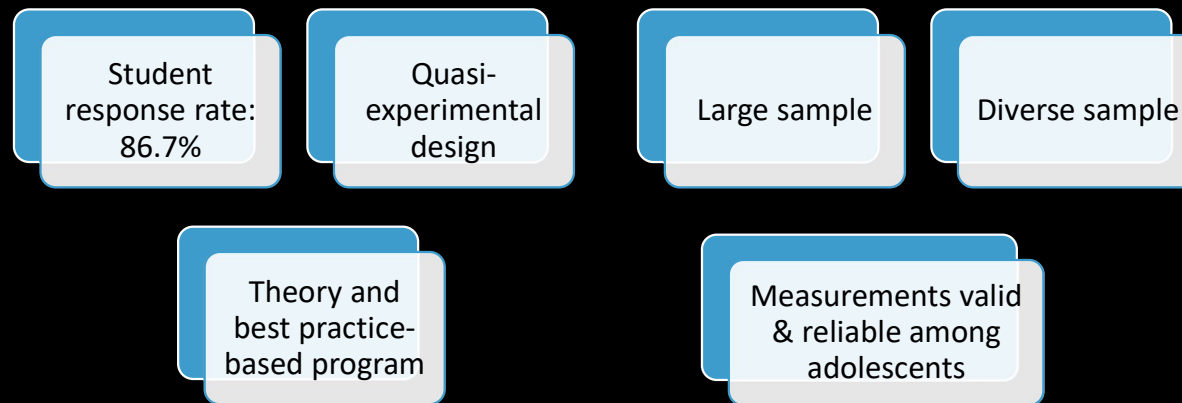


# Results: Measured Outcomes

**Table 2. Measured Outcomes: Intervention Group (n = 348) & Control Group (n = 96)**

Scale	Pre-intervention: intervention	Pre-intervention: control	Post-intervention: intervention	Post-intervention: control	Difference in scores: intervention	Difference in scores: control	P-value: intervention	P-value: control
<b>Eating Expectancy Inventory (EEI) (Range 18-126 points)</b>	65.70 IQR = 0.00	58.93 IQR = 0.00	56.83 IQR = 10.00	57.09 IQR = 0.00	-8.87 points 7.04%	-1.83 points 1.45%	<.001	.96
<b>Adolescent Body Image Satisfaction Scale (ABISS) (Range 16-112 points)</b>	65.49 IQR = 0.00	69.37 IQR = 0.00	76.24 IQR = 13.00	68.15 IQR = 0.00	10.75 points 9.60%	1.23 points 1.07%	<.001	.47
<b>Self-Efficacy (Range 8-56 points)</b>	23.75 IQR = 0.00	25.03 IQR = 0.00	29.30 IQR = 7.00	25.12 IQR = 0.00	5.55 points 9.91%	-0.09 points 0.16%	<.001	.17
<b>Knowledge (Range 0-6 points)</b>	3.46 IQR = 0.00	4.28 IQR = 0.00	5.89 IQR = 2.00	4.40 IQR = 0.00	2.43 points 40.44%	0.12 points 2.00%	<.001	.01

# Results Summary



- There were significant positive results for all four outcome measures among the intervention group
- The greatest change existed in knowledge, followed by self-efficacy, body image satisfaction level, and eating expectancies
- No significant change in outcomes among the control group

## Contact Information

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- QUESTIONS?



# Sources

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