

Body image & Self-Esteem: What's the connection?

7.NPA.3 - Analyze the relationship of nutrition, fitness, and healthy weight management to the prevention of diseases such as diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and eating disorders.



Clarifying Objective

7.NPA.3.2 - Attribute a positive body image to healthy self-esteem and the avoidance of risky eating behaviors.

Statement of Objectives:

- *Today we will talk about body image and what influences our perception of our bodies. By the end of class, you should have a realistic perspective of your body and hopefully you will become an advocate for realistic body image among your friends. You will understand trends in media related to body image and be able to recognize positive and negative examples in print and video. You will understand that a healthy weight does not mean that a person looks like the very thin model shown in many ads. You will know the relationship between weight control, eating habits, and activity level.*

Compliment Activity

- Giving them the opportunity to practice giving compliments.
- Provide each student with a sheet of paper and a piece of masking tape.
- Papers should be taped to each student's back.
- As music plays, students should walk around the class.
- When the music stops, students should pair up with a nearby student.

Remove their papers and answer the following questions:

- 1. As you read the compliments, how do they make you feel?**
- 2. Are any of the compliments about your appearance? How many of the five?**
- 3. Why do you think that so many compliments focused on your looks?**
- 4. What are some other positive qualities people noted during this exercise?**

Body Image is...

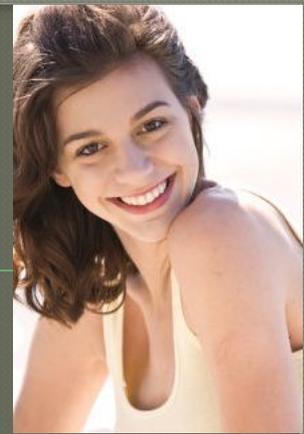
- a. How you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind.
- b. What you believe about your own appearance (including your memories, assumptions, and generalizations).
- c. How you feel about your body, including your height, shape, and weight.
- d. How you sense and control your body as you move. How you feel in your body, not just about your body.

Negative Body Image is...

- a. A distorted perception of your shape--you perceive parts of your body unlike they really are.
- b. You are convinced that only other people are attractive and that your body size or shape is a sign of personal failure.
- c. You feel ashamed, self-conscious, and anxious about your body.
- d. You feel uncomfortable and awkward in your body.



Positive Body Image is...



- A clear, true perception of your shape--you see the various parts of your body as they really are.
- You celebrate and appreciate your natural body shape and you understand that a person's physical appearance says very little about their character and value as a person.
- You feel proud and accepting of your unique body and refuse to spend an unreasonable amount of time worrying about food, weight, and calories.
- You feel comfortable and confident in your body.

Source: National Eating Disorders Association
www.NationalEatingDisorders.org

What Influences Your Perception?

- a. Parents
- b. Peers
- c. Role Models
- d. Media



● By the way, if Barbie were life size:

- She would stand 7 ft 2 inches and have a neck twice the length of humans.
- Her measurements would be: 39-23-33.
- She would have to walk on all fours in order to move.

Body Image Impacts Your Self Esteem



- Self esteem: how you perceive yourself; what you consider your self-worth
- How are the two related?
 - Our culture often tells us our appearance is our most important quality.
 - Media often depicts unachievable standards of attractiveness for males and females.

Can you change a negative body image?

Sure you can!

- a. The first thing to do is recognize that your body is your own, no matter what shape, size, or color it comes in.
- b. Next, identify which aspects of your appearance you can realistically change and which you can't. Everyone has things about themselves that they can't change and need to accept — like their height, or their shoe size.
- c. If there are things about yourself that you want to change and can (such as how fit you are), do this by making goals for yourself.
- d. When you hear negative comments coming from within yourself, tell yourself to stop. Try building your self-esteem by giving yourself three compliments every day.

Media and Body Image

- What types of products use physical qualities within their advertising? (words like beautiful, thin, strong or images that emphasize unrealistic body shapes and sizes)
- Just about all of them!
- For example:

What words would you use to sell a computer?

- Did anyone write down thin or powerful?
- Why do you think these words were used to sell this product?

The new iMac. You can't be too thin. Or too powerful.





August 13, 2007

Mr. Steve Jobs
 Chief Executive Officer
 Apple Inc.
 1 Infinite Loop
 Cupertino, CA 95014
 FAX: 408-974-2483

Dear Mr. Jobs:

On behalf of the board of directors of the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) and its many thousands of members, I am asking you to withdraw your new ad campaign for the iMac. The culture of thin, which you proudly promote in your advertising, is deadly.

"You can't be too thin" may sound cute, clever and even truthful when referring to laptops; it is neither cute, clever nor truthful, however, when referring to a person's body, which is how the adage is most often used. While the culture of thin in itself does not cause eating disorders, it is a huge trigger for many of the more than 10 million women and one million men who suffer from anorexia, bulimia and binge eating disorder as well as for those who are at risk.

Anorexia has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. Young women between the ages of 15-24 (your iMac target audience, I presume) with anorexia are twelve times higher than the death rate of ALL other causes of death. Anorexia also has the highest premature fatality rate of any mental illness. People who strive to be thin often end up dead. Those who recover live with compromised health.

If 80% of American women say they are dissatisfied with their appearance, would it not make sense to promote a healthy body (computer or human) image, not one that idealizes thinness at all costs? Yes, Apple sells computers and your new advertising is designed to sell laptops, nothing more, nothing less. But in the image conscious world in which we live, it is up to your master marketers and culture creators to be mindful of how your messaging impacts the world beyond your product line.

The National Eating Disorders Association is dedicated to generating public awareness of the deadliness of eating disorders in an effort to prevent the illness and find a cure. We work tirelessly to help individuals and their families access quality care. We feel a huge obligation to take action when we see advertising such as yours that makes light of a subject we can't help but take seriously.

Attached is a letter from Robbie Munn, a board member who echoes the sentiments expressed here. Although it was faxed directly to you last week, I enclose it in case you have yet to receive it. I am also sending a copy of this letter and the attached to Lee Clow, chairman, TBWA in New York.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. We sincerely hope that you take our strong beliefs to heart by developing new advertising for the iMac and supporting the NEDA programs that help to save lives.

Sincerely yours,

Lynn S. Grefe
 Chief Executive Officer

● A letter responding
 to the Mac ad from
 the National Eating
 Disorder
 Association

Responding to Bad Ads:

- When you see a Bad Ad, you can do something about it!
- Bring your friends' attention to the ad and find out what they think.
- Don't buy the product.
- Write a letter to the manufacturer.

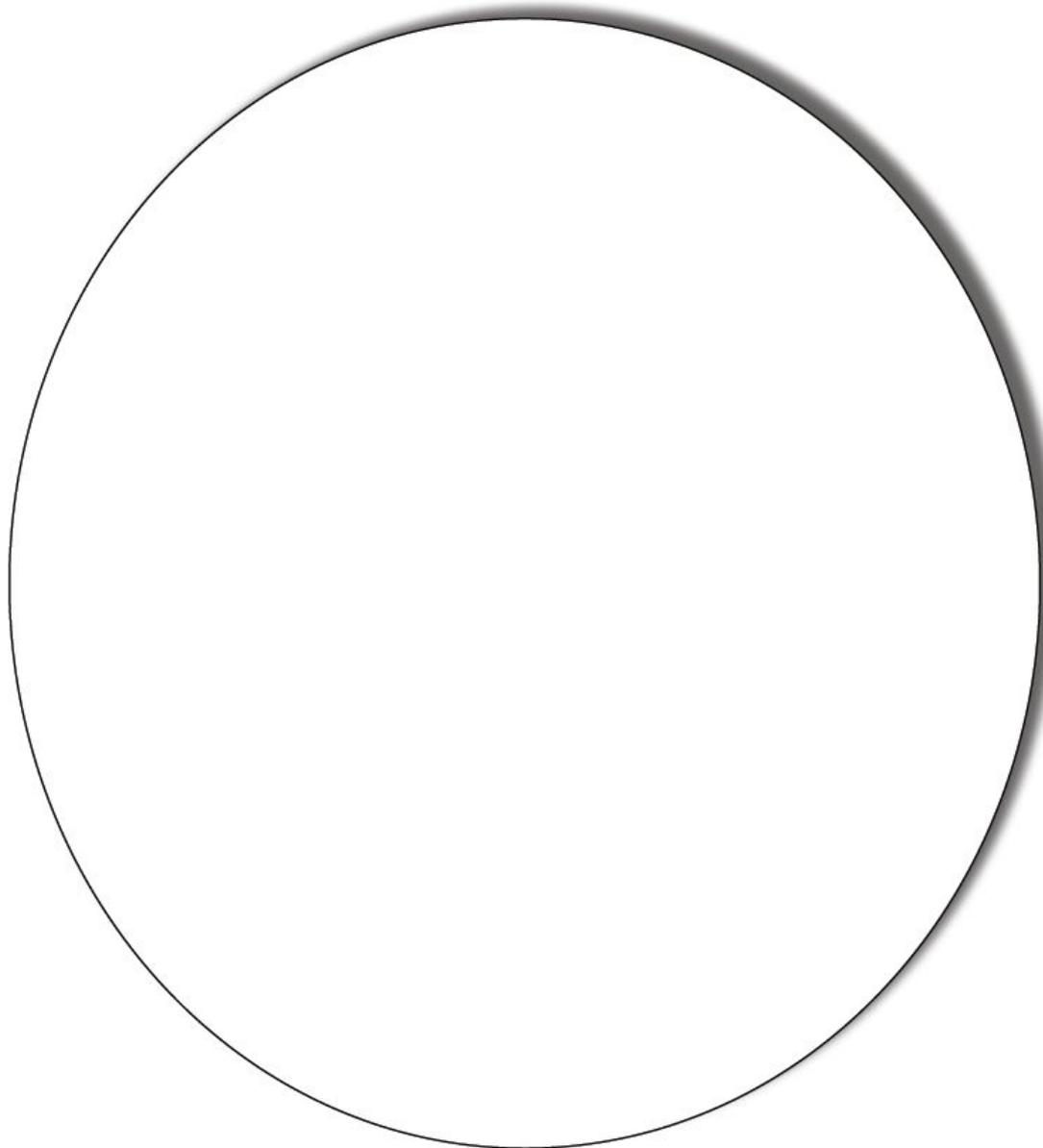
Also, be an advocate for others...

- What is an advocate?
 - Someone who is supportive of others
- When giving compliments, focus on intrinsic (internal) qualities, rather than extrinsic (external) qualities.
- Don't participate in bullying; stand up for the person or both walk away.
- Show respect for the differences in others.

Self-Esteem Bubble

- *This bubble is invisible but protective and keeps out negative influences on your self-esteem. Fill it full of qualities that you value in yourself and people or things that enhance how you feel about yourself. The more you pour into your bubble, the easier it will be to keep out negative influences on your self-esteem and promote a positive body image. You can use the words listed on the board, or you can come up with your own words. You can also decorate your bubble with images that reflect who you are.*

Self-Esteem Bubble



Independent Practice:

- Distribute Letter Responding to Bad Ads (Appendix 2).
- Ask students to find a print advertisement that they believe promotes an unhealthy view of the body.
- Fill in the blanks on the sample letter and complete the short paragraph on being an advocate for healthy self-esteem and positive body image.

Letter Responding to Bad Ads

_____ (Name)
_____ (Address)

_____ (Date)

Dear Sir/Madam of _____ (Product):

I am writing to comment on your advertisement for _____ in _____ (magazine, newspaper). I believe the use of _____ (the words or images) that you have used to sell your product are _____ (what is the impact for the consumer).

I believe that you could better sell your product by using _____ (a person or technique) that promotes a positive body image for your customers. I think it is important to advocate for people to have a healthy self-esteem and your ad may contribute to a negative body image.

Sincerely,

_____ (Signature)

Additional Comments:

Closure:

- *Today we focused on distinguishing between a positive body image and a negative body image and the importance of a healthy self-esteem. Remembering that you have control of how people impact your self esteem is a valuable tool to appreciate yourself for all of your unique characteristics.*