

The Butterfly Foundation presents

Let's talk...

Happy, Healthy Kids

**Raising Happy, Healthy
Kids**



Presenter: Paula Kotowicz

Outline of Tonight's Presentation

Why Fostering Positive *Self Esteem* in Children is so Important

Why Fostering Positive *Body Image* in Children is so Important

Why Modelling *Healthy Living* Behaviours to Children is so Important



The Butterfly Foundation
Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

Self Esteem: Why it is so Important?

Let's take a minute now to consider why positive Self Esteem is so important to ALL People.



The butterfly foundation
Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

What is Self Esteem?



“Self Esteem is essential for psychological survival.”

McKay, M. & Fanning, P. (2000)



Positive Self Esteem can be best described as being a protective coat of armour against negative influences.

Negative Self Esteem plays a central role to the development of poor body image, eating disorders, depression, anxiety, violence, substance abuse, high-risk behaviours and suicide.

Mann , Clemens, Herman & de Vries (2004)



The Butterfly foundation
Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

Why are we talking about Self Esteem?

If *positive* Self Esteem acts as a protective coat of armour, then it makes sense to develop our Self Esteem so that we are less vulnerable to the negative issues that bring chaos to our lives.

Naturally we are much happier, more secure and function better when our lives are mostly free of chaos, so developing positive Self Esteem is really important.

We Know That The Past Plays a Big Role in Self Esteem

So it makes sense that for our children to grow up feeling good about themselves, it starts when they're little.

We can help our children by modelling positive behaviours, which helps us as well as them.



Self Esteem and Self Worth Develops in Childhood and Adolescence

Children and Adolescents who have positive Self Esteem are generally satisfied with themselves as a person.

At the same time, they are aware of weaker qualities about themselves that they may need to work on.



How Can We Help?

Children learn through observing and listening. So it is important that we demonstrate positive Self Esteem behaviours, such as:

- *Providing a safe and appropriate environment* for you and your children - Children understand that they and you deserve to be safe and protected
- *Treating yourself and others kindly and respectfully* - Children see that you are worth being treated well and as you treat them the same way, that they must be worthy as well
- *Expecting that others will treat you respectfully* – Children see that as a natural response when you do the same
- *Ensuring that your children are protected from inappropriate and negative behaviours as much as possible* - Children understand that they are your priority and are cared for and loved. This makes them feel secure

Security for a child is really important

What Else?

Model appropriate language and behaviours

- Words such as 'stupid', 'idiot', 'dumb' are not only unhelpful but can be very hurtful and damaging to a child. Banishing these words from your home is a good place to start
- Be kind on the child but firm on the behaviour – i.e. remember that the child is separate to their behaviours. They may do something 'naughty' or 'bad' but that doesn't make them a naughty or bad person.
- Teach your child how to appropriately defend themselves from other children if they are being attacked or bullied.



More Ways We Can Help...

Help your child to be aware of their feelings (*positive and negative*) and encourage conversation. You can also suggest ways that they can help themselves feel better:

- Playing outside with friends or siblings
- If old enough, writing or keeping a diary
- Playing with a favourite toy or game
- Dancing or singing
- Drawing or painting
- Spend time with someone who makes them feel good (...it might even be a pet)
- Encourage that they focus on the **EFFORT & EXPERIENCE** rather than on the result



Characteristics of Positive Self Esteem in Adolescents and Children

- **Positive (and real) Self Confidence**
- **Good Connection to Work, School & Community**
- **Involvement in Sport, Team & Community Activities**
- **Positive Relationships**
- **Healthy Attitude & Relationship with Food**



Characteristics of Negative Self Esteem in Children and Adolescents

- Low Self Confidence
- Limited Connection to School, Work, Community – be low achievers
- Relationship Difficulties
- Limited Involvement in Sport, Team & Community Based Activities
- Disordered Eating
- Mental Health Concerns eg. Depression, Anxiety, Eating Disorders



Positive Self Esteem Is the Key to Raising Happy, Healthy Kids

- **Self Esteem is vital in helping Children to become confident, functioning and RESILIENT people**
- **People who are resilient are less likely to develop illnesses such as depression or anxiety or to suffer from poor body image or Eating Disorders**
- **People who are resilient are more likely to be content and confident in who they are**

Body Image: Why is it so Important?

Let's take a minute now to consider why positive Body Image is so important to ALL People.



What is Body Image?

Body Image describes the thoughts, feelings and perceptions that a person has towards their own body.



Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (2010)

Why are we talking about Body Image?

- Negative Body Image can contribute to a person feeling badly about their body and themselves
- Negative Body Image issues are directly related to the development of Eating Disorders and are significant issues in their own right.



Our Body Image Does Not Operate in Isolation

We know that our Body Image is influenced by many factors.

We also know that lots of things affect our Body Image from Childhood and Adolescence.



We Know That From Childhood through to Adulthood, Many People Influence our Body Image

Carers

Partners

Friends

Peers

**Teachers &
Coaches**

Colleagues



We Also Know That the Media Influences our Body Image

We know that the media plays a huge role in the messaging and promotion of the thin ideal, thus affecting our Body Image.



How Can We Help Our Kids to Develop Positive Body Image?

Children can learn to appreciate and like their bodies through observing and listening to the people in their lives. We can help by:

- ***NOT making negative comments*** about your own body in front of your child... Say NO to Body Bullying!
- ***NOT making negative comments about photographs/images*** of yourself or others in front of your child
- ***Focusing on appreciating what your body can do***, instead of spending energy fixated on what it looks like.
- ***Promoting a ZERO tolerance for body bullying.*** Help children learn that this is not normal and they are allowed to like their bodies!



Be Aware of the Behaviours you are Modelling

- Are you always weighing yourself?
- Are you always on a diet, or eat healthily?
- Are you active or a couch potato?
- Do you treat your body respectfully?



Understand Their World

The world your child is growing up in, may be quite different to the world you grew up in. You can understand them and their world better by:

- Making time to watch their favourite TV shows with them
- Reading the magazines that are marketed at your child (Dolly, Disney Girl, Total Girl, Just Kidding, K-Zone)
- Talk openly and honestly about puberty and body image



Understand Their World

- If not already, familiarise yourself with the online networking sites (Facebook, Bebo, MSN chat rooms)
- Mobile phones – texts, calls, photos, videos
- Spend time listening to their favourite music and watch the Music Video clips that are attached to the lyrics!



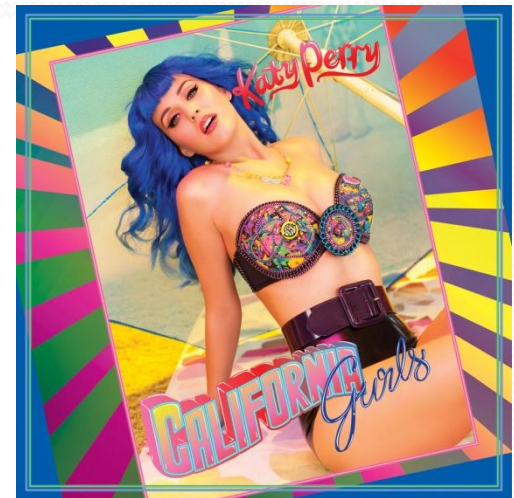
Then



Now!!!

Challenge the Images they See

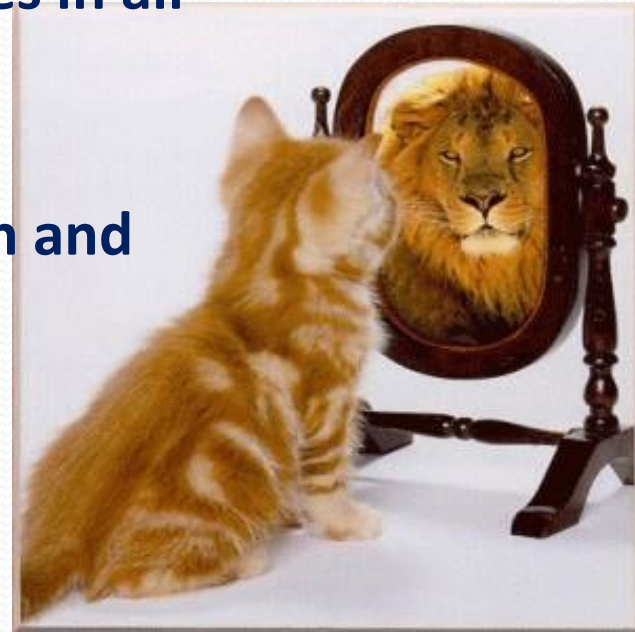
- Encourage your child to be curious and questioning of the images they see in the media
- Encourage discussion around images that may concern your child
- Don't encourage criticism towards celebrities – highlight that they are merely people like us!
- Encourage that they are critical of the way people are portrayed but not the people themselves



What Else Can we Do?

Boosting your child's body image can be done in many ways...

- **Encourage self pride over self obsession**
- **Empower them to develop their own style and individuality even if it's not to your taste**
- **Remind them that beauty and health comes in all different shapes and sizes**
- **If your child is dressing in a way that is disrespectful to their body and self, explain and helping them to understand why**



Healthy Living: Why is this so Important?

Let's take a minute now to consider why Healthy Living is so important to ALL People.



The butterfly foundation
Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

What Makes us Healthy?

Is it the number on the scale?

Is it the size of our clothes?

Is it how big or defined our muscles are?



Health comes in different shapes
and sizes & is determined by
many things (not just weight
or size)

Our Bodies are Far More Than the Way They Look...

**The human body is truly a work of art and a
masterpiece in its own right.**

**We really do our bodies an injustice by focusing
only on how we look...**



Non-Hungry Eating

We all eat when we're not hungry and that can look like any of these things:

- **Overeating**
- **Grazing**
- **Nibbling**
- **Picking**
- **Bingeing**



Kausman (2004)

Non-Hungry Eating

Over time and with constant non-hungry eating, it is understandable that we forget how feeling hungry feels.

It is also understandable that non-hungry eating means we are eating much more than we need – causing us to gain weight.



Good Food, Bad Food

FOOD IS JUST FOOD!!!

It's not Good or Bad – it's just **FOOD!**

While we need to be aware of nutrition and health, labelling food good or bad is really not helpful.



Good Food, Bad Food

Try to avoid categorising food in this way to your children.

Instead, use words such as:

Healthy food

High-fat food

Everyday food

Sometimes food



These words don't place
a moral
judgement onto foods.



Kausman (2004)

What We Can Do To Help Our Kids With Food

- If non-hungry eating is an issue, try and keep your child busy – often boredom is the cause
- Let your child decide when they're full. Their hunger will be dictated to by their growth rate at that time
- Labelling food can cause children to become judgemental around others

Tartamella, Herscher, Woolston (2004)



What Else?

- Know what your children like but keep trying new foods
- Try and ensure that your child eats breakfast
- Put food in its proper place – it helps your children to grow and stay healthy. Try not to use food as punishment or reward
- Keep to a routine – children thrive on schedules and respond well with regular mealtimes and bedtimes



As A Rough Guide, Children Need the Following



Children need breads and cereals every day for energy and nutrients



Children need vegies and fruits every day for energy, vitamins, minerals and fibre



Children need fish, meat, eggs, nuts, seeds every day for protein, vitamins, minerals and iron



Children need milk and dairy products every day for protein, vitamins, zinc and calcium

What Else is 'Normal' Eating Then for Your Child?



It is NORMAL for children to stop eating when full



It is NORMAL for some children to be fussy eaters – keep persevering



It is NORMAL for children to go off food for short times and then be ravenous at others



It is NORMAL & HEALTHY for children to need snacks in between meals – unless they're eating out of boredom

Now, Let's Talk Activity

Activity is important for all people to feel really good both physically and psychologically.



Why Is Activity So Important For My Body?

Health & Fitness is more than a LOOK... It's a LIFE!

Some ways we benefit:

- Strong Heart & Lungs
- Healthy Joints, Bones & Muscles
- Less chance of Injury, Arthritis & Osteoporosis



Activity is Also Very Important for Children

Children need to be active as well.

Which means that being active is a wonderful thing you can do together.



Let's Look at Some Things we Can do Together

- Role model positive behaviours – kids are 6 times more likely to be active if Mum and Dad are active
- Get outside on the weekend with your children
- Walk your child to school
- Walk to do your errands
- Enroll your child in activities if you can
- With slightly older children assign weekly chores
- Keep activities fun
- Engage in play with your child
- Keep TV time to a minimum



And Keep in Mind...

- Weight gain in children is **NATURAL** during Puberty and Adolescence, so avoid commenting about their changing shape and size or the foods they are eating...
- Encourage activity for 'Health' benefits
- Look at food as Fuel & Energy for Performance

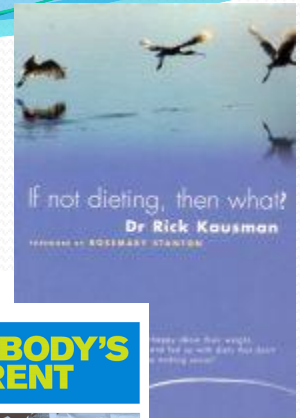
Tartamella, Herscher, Woolston (2004)



Resources

“If Not Dieting, Then What?” (2004)

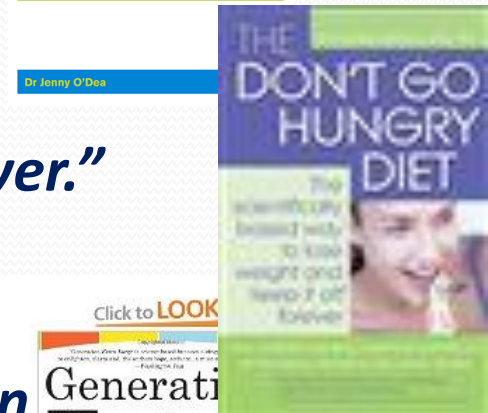
Dr. Rick Kausman



“Everybody’s Different.” (2007) Dr Jenny O’Dea



“The Don’t Go Hungry Diet - The Scientifically Based Way to Lose Weight and Keep it off Forever.” (2007) Dr. Amanda Sainsbury-Salis



“Generation Extra Large – Rescuing our Children from the Epidemic of Obesity.” (2004) Lisa Tartamella, Elaine Herscher & Chris Woolston.



References Cont'd

- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (2010) *NEDC: 'An Evidence Review'*. Canberra, Australia: Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.
- Dove Self Esteem Fund. "Dove BodyThink."
- Kausman, Dr R. (2004) *"If Not Dieting, Then What?"* Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Lim, L., Saulsman, L., & Nathan, P. (2005) *Improving Self Esteem*. Perth, WA: Centre for Clinical Interventions.
- Mann, M. Clemens, M.H. Herman, P.S. & de Vries, N.K. (2004)

References

- McKay, M. & Fanning, P. (2000) *Self Esteem – A Proven Program of Cognitive Techniques for Assessing, Improving and Maintaining your Self Esteem(3rd Edition)*. Oakland, California: Harbinger Publications.
- Sainsbury-Salis, Dr A. (2007) *“The Don’t Go Hungry Diet - The Scientifically Based Way to Lose Weight and Keep it off Forever.”* Sydney, NSW: Bantam Australia.

Thank You!



The Butterfly foundation
Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au
paula@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au
T: 1800 33 4673 (1800 ED HOPE)