

Body Image and Mental Health

Overview

- What do we mean by body image?
- What can cause a negative body image?
- The impact a negative body image can have on mental health
- How to promote a positive body image
- Resources to support mental health
- Looking after yourself

What do we mean by body image?

Body image is how you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind. It encompasses what you believe about your own appearance, how you feel about your body, including your height, shape and weight.

Statistics

- One in five adults (20%) felt shame, just over one third (34%) felt down or low, and 19% felt disgusted because of their body image in the last year.
- Among teenagers, 37% felt upset, and 31% felt ashamed in relation to their body image.
- Just over one third of adults said they had ever felt anxious (34%) or depressed (35%) because of their body image, and one in eight (13%) experienced suicidal thoughts or feelings because of concerns about their body image.

Statistics

- Just over one in five adults (21%) said images used in advertising had caused them to worry about their body image.
- Just over one in five adults (22%) and 40% of teenagers said images on social media caused them to worry about their body image.

What can cause a negative body image?

- Puberty
- Menopause
- Mass media
- Low self esteem
- Relationships
- Family/friends
- Criticism
- Bullying

The impact a negative body image can have on mental health

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Low self esteem
- Self harm behaviours
(*unsafe sex, steroid use, substance abuse, cosmetic surgery*)
- Low aspirations
- Loneliness/isolation

Promoting a positive body image

- Be kind to yourself
- Spring clean your apps on your smart phone
- Set realistic and achievable goals
- Accept that perfection is an unrealistic goal
- Identify your strengths and be confident in yourself

- Introduce a positive way of thinking
- Keep fit and healthy, find the best way that works for you to stay active
- Build healthy support networks
- Celebrate the small stuff
- If you see an advert in a magazine, on TV or online showing an unhealthy body image as aspirational, you can complain to the Advertising Standards Authority

Looking after yourself

Things I can do

.....by myself

.....with others

People I can talk to.....