Mental Health and Young People: Promoting a Positive and Healthy Body Image

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Thursday 8th October 2015
10:15am – 4:30pm

Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, London

Public Policy Exchange holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.
Mental Health and Young People: Promoting a Positive and Healthy Body Image

Overview

Negative body image is now the biggest single worry for millions of children and young people, with children as young as five now worrying about how they look. Research shows that one in five primary school aged girls say they have been on a diet, while 87% of girls aged 11-21 think that women are judged more on their appearance than on their ability. While poor body image disproportionately affects women, body confidence affects men too with one-third of boys having been on a diet to change their body shape.

Low body confidence is a contributory factor in poor mental wellbeing, depression, obesity, low aspirations and a range of risky behaviours including drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm, and unsafe sex. Additionally, 56% of young people who experienced bullying reported that their appearance was the focus of the behaviour.

Furthermore, figures published in February 2015 estimate that more than 725,000 people in the UK are affected by eating disorders, which have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. Alarminglly, the number of hospital admissions across the UK for teenagers with eating disorders has nearly doubled in the last three years, from 959 in 2010/11 to 1,815 in 2013/14, a rate of increase that experts say is mirrored by a larger number of cases that don’t go to hospital.

Aiming to raise awareness of the issues surrounding body image anxiety and confront the causes of body image dissatisfaction, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Body Image published their report ‘Reflections on Body Image’ in May 2012. The report instructed that it is necessary to provide young people with the tools to understand the images around them and make them more media literate as this can play a significant role in promoting body confidence.

In March this year the Government Equalities Office released its Body Confidence Progress Report 2015, which reviewed the work carried out between 2013-2015 by the Government and other partners. Measures implemented include the government funded ‘Be Real campaign’ launched in October 2014, to act as a hub to link individuals and organisations working to change attitudes and behaviour on body image.

Also in October 2014, a toolkit; ‘Taking Action on Body Image: an active citizen toolkit for those working with young people’ was developed for youth workers to help inspire young people to promote positive body image for themselves and others. Then in March 2015 a guidance document for schools was published by the PHSE Association to support teaching on body image.

This timely symposium provides an invaluable opportunity to assess the progress made in addressing negative body image among young people and consider what more can be done to achieve a coordinated approach to promote body confidence. The symposium will consider the negative long-term effects of body image dissatisfaction and how these can be prevented through early intervention in order to change behaviour and attitudes for future generations.

‘...if their own appearance is racking young people with self doubt, they need to be given the tools to overcome it. It is no use just telling teenagers they should have confidence. We need to work out how to instil it in them - whether in the classroom, or on the sports field - so they can carry it with them for the rest of their lives. By starting with young people we can institute real change in body confidence for generations to come.’

- Chairwoman, APPG on Body Image October 2014

Why Attend?

✓ Examine the national measures taken to tackle body image dissatisfaction and assess the progress made in enhancing body confidence among young people
✓ Explore the scale of the problem of appearance-based bullying and discrimination and how this can best be tackled
✓ Discuss how approaches can be tailored to vulnerable and high-risk groups at risk of eating disorders and self-harm
✓ Assess the role of teachers and schools in promoting a positive and healthy body image
✓ Consider how advertising and marketing campaigns can reflect consumer desire for authenticity and diversity

Who Should Attend?

- Mental Health Practitioners
- CAMHS Practitioners
- Commissioning Managers
- School Nurses and Health Visitors
- Directors of Children’s Services
- Families Services Officers
- Schools and Children’s Trusts
- Early Years Practitioners
- General Practitioners
- Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators
- Sexual Health Strategy Co-ordinators
- Local, Regional and National Health Services
- Health Treatment/Advisory Services
- Local Education Authorities
- Teachers and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
- Counselling Services
- Psychotherapists
- Suicide Support Services
- Suicide Bereavement Support Groups
- Suicide Liaison Officers
- Parent Support Teams
- Welfare Officers
- Health and Fitness Organisations
- Sports and Leisure Centres
- Fashion and Retail Industry
- Cosmetics, Toiletries and Perfumeries Organisations
- Media and Advertising Teams
- Social Media Teams
- Internet Safety Teams
- Child Safety Online Teams
- Child and Educational Psychologists
- Family Planning Specialists
- Child Protection Officers
- Youth Engagement Teams
- Youth Protection Officers
- Youth Engagement Teams
- Youth Workers and Youth Offending Teams
- Community Safety Teams
- Equal Opportunities Officers
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Practitioners
- Race Relations Practitioners and Race Equality Councils
- Employment Service Providers
- Employment Engagement Teams
- Health and Safety Teams
- Local Authorities and Councillors
- Central Government Departments and Agencies
- Third Sector Representatives
- Academics and Researchers

Accommodation

Through our partnership with HotelMap, we are able to offer our delegates heavily discounted hotel rates at a wide range of London hotels. To view hotel availability and rates and to book online, visit www.HotelMap.com/MSNUZ/

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Mental Health and Young People: Promoting a Positive and Healthy Body Image

Programme

09:30   Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:15   Chair's Welcome and Introduction
10:30   Panel Session One:
        Mental Health and Young People – The Next Steps in Tackling Body Image Dissatisfaction
        • Reflections on Body Image – Review the Measures Taken at a National Level and Assess the Progress Made in Tackling Body Image Dissatisfaction
        • Promoting a Healthy Body Image – Exploring What More Can Be Done to Promote Body Confidence and a Healthy Body Image Among Young People
        • Child and Adolescent Health and Well-Being – Reducing the Risk of Eating Disorders and Self-Harm, Tailoring Approaches for Vulnerable People and High-Risk Groups
        • Effective Approaches in Promoting Body Confidence; Equipping Peers With the Tools to Deal With the Social and Cultural Pressures to Conform to Unrealistic Body Ideals
        • Providing Impartial Information, Advice and Support on Body Image Anxiety and Appearance-Related Bullying and Discrimination, and Assessing the Long-Term Impact on Patients’ Psychological Well-Being

11:15   Morning Refreshments
11:30   Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One
12:30   Networking Lunch
13:30   Panel Session Two:
        Promoting Body Confidence – Developing Responsible Approaches and Early Interventions
        • Achieving a Coordinated Approach – Educating and Engaging Young People About Body Image and Promoting a More Positive Self-View
        • Sharing Best Practice on Creating a School Environment that Supports and Promotes Positive Body Image to Improve Early Intervention and Prevention
        • Increasing Awareness Amongst Youth Workers and School-Based Staff of Signs and Indicators of Body Image Anxiety and Bullying
        • Encouraging Schools to Provide an Opportunity to Learn About Body Image and Self-Esteem, Building Teaching on Body Image into a PHSE Education Programme and Providing Relevant Training for Teachers
        • Promoting the Responsible Marketing and Portrayal of Body Images in the Media and Consider Approaches for the Internet Industry to Maximise its Positive Potential to Reach out to Vulnerable Individuals

14:15   Afternoon Refreshments
14:30   Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two
15:30   Chair’s Summary and Closing Comments
15:40   Networking Reception
16:30   Close

* Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice

Event Details

Date:    Thursday 8th October 2015
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Venue:   Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, London

Forthcoming Events

Tackling Potholes and Improving Road Maintenance
29th September 2015

Child and Adolescent Health and Well-Being:
Improving Outcomes for Young Carers
30th September 2015

Marketing and Exhibition Opportunities

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