

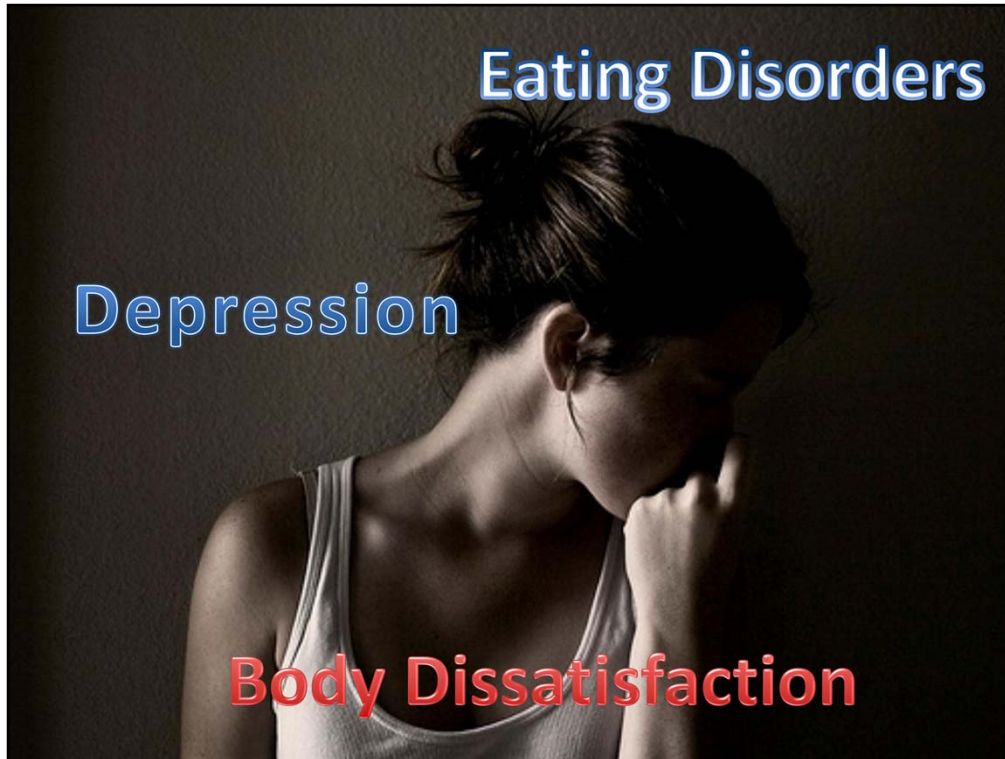


Today we will be talking about the influence of social media use on female adolescent body image. For the past two years I have been studying this topic and have recently finished collecting data from female students here at XYZ High about their social media use and how they feel it is influenced their body image. We are going to start with some background research that led me to the conclusion that body image, specifically body dissatisfaction, is a problem among adolescent girls and we need to be doing more to help.

Media images have constructed women's societal roles and a physical image to fit these roles



* Advertisements, both on television and in print, have constructed women's societal roles and a physical image to fit those roles. Messages about how to look, how to act, and, essentially, who to be, are everywhere. Examples include the * housewife image of the 1920s that gave way to Rosie the Riveter of World War II, who, in turn, gave permission for women to work in male-dominated fields. Once the war ended, * the media presented women as meek and mild housewives; since then, portrayals of women have continued to vary based on the needs of society. Even in the 21st century, research found advertisements are still largely stereotypical in their portrayal of women, pressuring women not only to be mothers and keepers of the house, but also career-driven and—not to be forgotten—* thin and beautiful.



These media messages have not gone unnoticed: Women know their sex object status and they are going to great lengths trying to mirror these often unattainable portrayals of what women should be. * Research has connected media images to * eating disorders, * depression, and * body dissatisfaction in women, both young and old.



Because of the detrimental effects of media images on adolescent girls, many schools have begun adding media literacy courses to their curriculum. Since then, there has been research showing that girls media images may not have the impact on body image as was seen in years past. So, these media literacy courses may be working.

Nevertheless, according to the National Eating Disorders Association, * the United States still has high rates of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders among adolescent girls . Therefore, although young girls understand the unattainable nature of media images, the comparisons have not stopped.

The study I conducted is based on the social comparison theory which holds that people are constantly choosing targets with which to compare themselves.

It is the position of this researcher that adolescent girls may now be choosing peers, as opposed to media images, as comparison targets.



Girls in this study, and girls in my classes, have admitted to comparing themselves to other girls in the school hallway. Some girls say they cannot stop; that this comparison is almost an addiction. Furthermore, these students refer to social media sites, namely Facebook, as a prime venue for making these comparisons.



Social Media:

Social Comparison Hot Spot!

Female students confess to looking at pictures and profiles thinking: She is my age, why do I not look like her? For some teen girls, social media is simply a place to connect with old friends and possibly make new friends; however, for others, it may also fuel the fire of body dissatisfaction.

Given the effects of body dissatisfaction, including eating disorders and depression, more research needs to consider the influence of social media



The majority of students at NT are from * affluent families who stress the importance of education, competition, and high achievement. * Historically, this pressure has produced some of the top students in the nation. Unfortunately, it has also produced a * student body dealing with depression and eating disorders.

Students deal with stress by logging on to social media sites looking for approval and support from other people. Unfortunately, research has found links between Internet use and depression in adolescent girls. Furthermore, research has connected body dissatisfaction to depression and eating disorders



Much research has examined the influence on girls of media- including television, movies, and magazines; however, social media has come into the lives of young women, and research on its influence to girls is less conclusive.

At XYZ High, social media is readily available through cell phone applications and laptop accessibility. * 75% of American teens have a cell phone and, with affluence, this number rises to 87%. As technology has advanced, cell phones have become more than just a phone. At school, students are now using their phones to access the Internet, to look up articles for research papers, and connect online to their class assignments. They are also using them to stay connected to friends via their favorite social media site.

Because of these technological advances, XYZ High changed its cell phone policy to allow the use of cell phones during school. The only restrictions include talking on cell phones in non designated areas and using cell phones in the classroom, unless the teacher gives his or her permission.

For most students in the nation, school hours are a time away from social media distractions; however, for XYZ High students, social media sites are just a click away, and pictures of peers are becoming the new influence on body dissatisfaction, depression, and eating disorders tendencies.

Why Does Any of this Matter?

**INCREASE IN
SOCIAL COMPARISON**

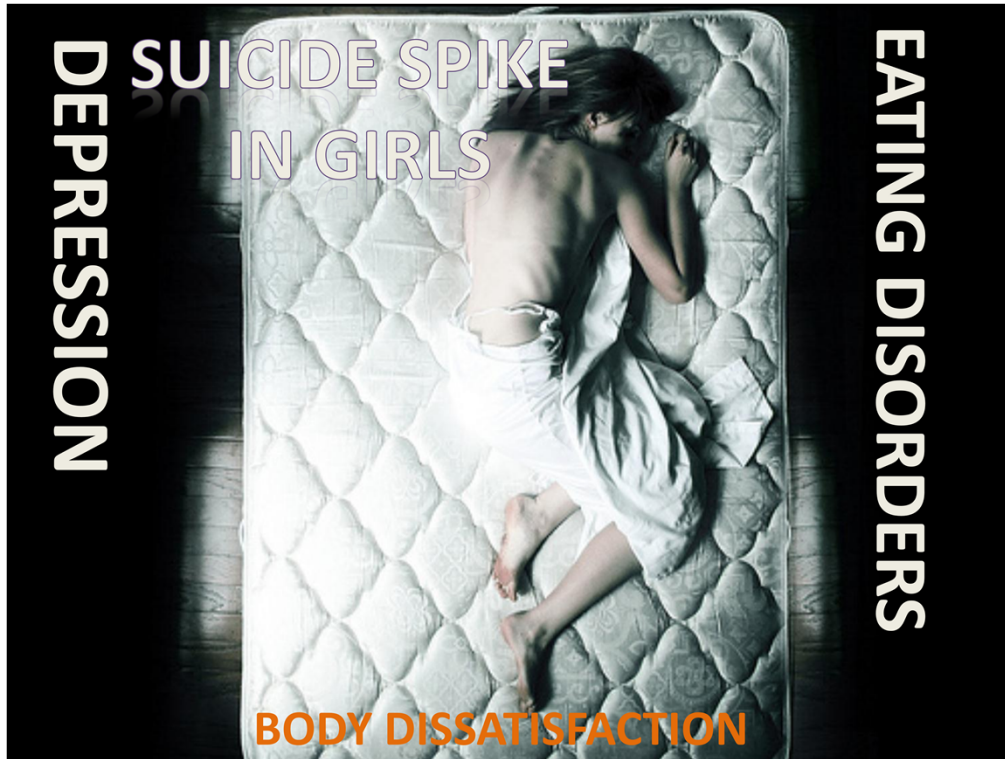
Increase in Body Dissatisfaction

It matters because social media may be contributing to an increase in social comparison and consequently an increase in body dissatisfaction. Not in an attempt to bore you but in an attempt to intrigue you, the next few slides will highlight some prevalent research that connects body dissatisfaction with other detrimental affects.



Depression in girls is a common finding in current research. Research has studied the relationship between high school students, depression, guilt and shame finding girls had higher scores of guilt and shame; therefore, having higher scores for depression.. Findings supported other research which also found higher rates of depression in girls versus boys when depression, exam anxiety, and social support among senior high school students was studied. Based on these findings, the high numbers of girls with depression warrants further consideration.

Further examination of high school girls and depression needs to take place due to the various detrimental health effects related to depression. A longitudinal study researching whether adolescent depression impacted health outcomes in adulthood, added to prior research, concluding that adolescent depression does have an effect on objectively-rated and self-rated health outcomes, resulting in high medical costs and work impairment. Again echoing the recommendation of other research to further investigate adolescent depression.



Although few studies have explored the theory of depression as a moderator between body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, there have been studies which have investigated this relationship and proven it exists. Specifically, one study investigated how depression mediates relationships between body dissatisfaction, drive for thinness and bulimic symptoms in adolescent girls and boys. and found depression had a significant, direct effect on body dissatisfaction and eating disorders symptoms in girls. Furthermore, findings suggested that body dissatisfaction and bulimia may be more evident in girls with depressive symptoms and, therefore, illustrates the need to further study the various effects body dissatisfaction may have on adolescent girls.

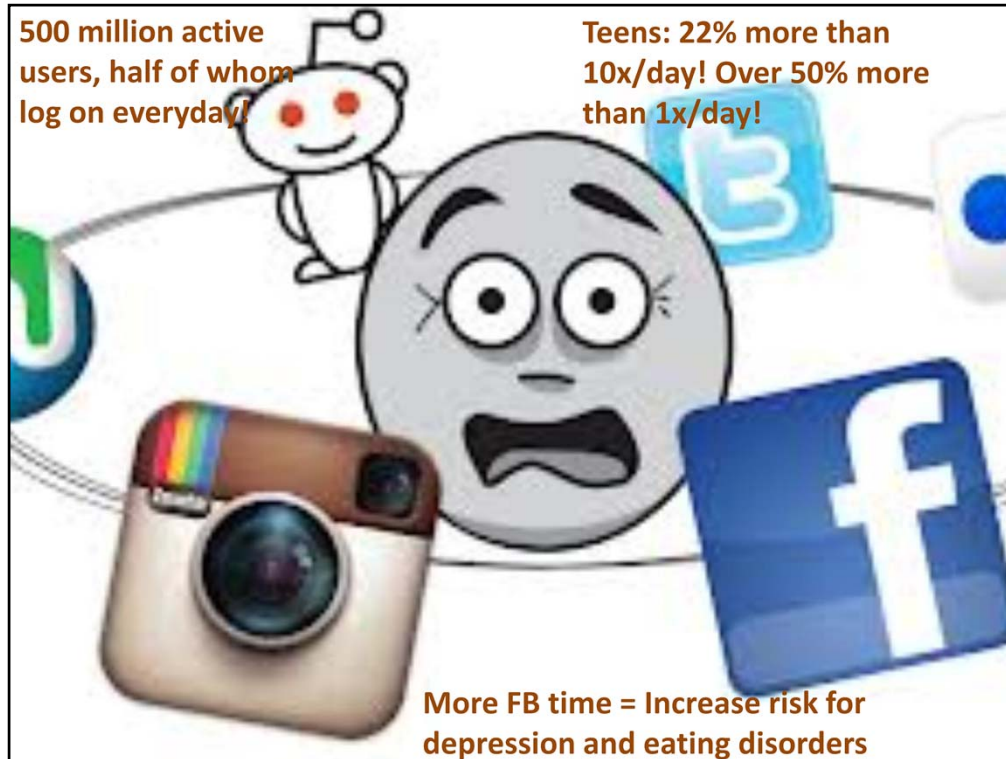
*The connection between depression, eating disorders, and body dissatisfaction has also been suggested to lead to suicide ideation in adolescents. In response to a reported spike in adolescent girl suicides, one study looking at the connection between body dissatisfaction, eating disorders, and suicide risk. Hypothesizing that the correlation between depression, eating disorders, and body dissatisfaction would contribute to suicide ideation. Final data showed that body dissatisfaction did, in fact, contribute to depression; furthermore, eating disorders contributed to both depression and suicide ideation. Given body dissatisfaction is a variable in both depression and eating disorder tendencies, body dissatisfaction research must continue in order to find a solution that protects adolescent girls from its detrimental effects.



Research has attempted to find the reasons why women develop eating disorders; however, conclusions vary. * One camp stressed the impact of internalizing the thin ideal presented by media outlets such as television, movies, and magazines. For instance, one research study found media exposure of the thin ideal does, in fact, influence eating disorder behavior. Specifically, exposure to an increased amount of media related to significantly higher scores on measurements of bulimic and anorexic behaviors.

*A vast majority of body dissatisfaction research is now pointing the proverbial finger at social comparisons. Researching the factors leading to eating disorder behaviors, one study selected depression, body dissatisfaction, self-esteem, and social comparison as variables that may or may not influence eating behaviors. Results suggested that more so than depression, individuals who had a high rating of social comparison tendencies had a greater disposition for disordered eating behavior. Other such research has concluded that direct social comparison contributes to high levels of body dissatisfaction..

Research can't be ignored; social comparison influences body dissatisfaction!



There are many popular social media sites being used by teens; however, this study will focus on Facebook.

Founded in 2004, Facebook facilitates the sharing of information between friends, family, and coworkers. *According to Facebook, there are more than 500 million active users, half of whom log on every day. *Specifically for adolescents, 22% log on more than ten times a day and over 50% of adolescents log on more than once a day.

*Research has found the more time teens spend on Facebook, the higher their risk for developing depression and eating disorder symptoms..This was the first large-scale body of evidence to show a statistically strong link between excessive Internet use and depression.

GAP in research

- “Facebook depression” regards TIME on SMS
- Merge research on media and social media and their influence on depression and eating disorders
- Regardless of time spent on the social media site, may have adverse influence

- From the research, “Facebook depression” regards adolescents spending so much time online that it may be interfering with their lives. * The gap in research involves merging the research on media and social media sites and their influence on depression and eating disorders, especially in an affluent population already prone to depression and eating disorders. * This researcher posits that social media sites create a space for constant social comparison and, regardless of time spent on the social media site, adversely impacts body image.
- For my study I interviewed 15 girls, soph-senior year, and also had them journal their time on SMS. There are hundreds of research articles dealing with social media and topics of body image. I have chosen just a few to highlight my results and to guide a discussion.



With social media's growing popularity, research has begun to question what can be learned from such behavior. While on social media sites, teens are sharing an increasing number of photographs on their pages. * Facebook, reported that over 250 million photos are uploaded every day with an additional 14 million videos every week. Research focused on this type of media sharing and how it relates to self-worth.

The authors examined self-worth for its effect on self-esteem; and presumed self-worth may partly explain behavior on social networking sites. Analysis of survey data showed a strong relationship between self-worth and the amount of photographs shared on one's site. They * found women shared more photographs and had lower scores of self-worth; thus, these results gave strength to the hypothesis that * women stress the importance of appearance and use social networking sites as a platform to compete with others through photo sharing.

*Additionally, the ability to filter one's profile page seemed to enhance self-esteem.

*Participants spend time choosing which side of themselves to show on their social media pages, and are even able to photoshop pictures of themselves; therefore, participant self-esteem is enhanced when they look at their page. It was even high then when women viewed themselves through a mirror image. Unfortunately, most participants report looking at other people's pages more than their own and this inhibits the enhancement of self-esteem one would see when looking at their own page.

Even though I know people Photoshop their profile picture, I still compare myself to them and always feel I fall short.

"Finding a new profile picture can be so stressful for me because it really is a competition; you want to get more "likes" than all your friends, and it's hard to choose a photo that will do so. In the end, I found no photo I looked good enough in."

Picture Posting Anxiety

I look at how many "Likes" different pictures get and I compare them to my own. It's a competition, if I don't get as many likes as the next girl I think it is because they are prettier or skinnier than I am.

What do YOU say?

Do you feel SMS are a site for competition? Do you find your self comparing to others even if you know their pics are altered?

Theme 1: Influence of perceived body image on daily activities

"walking around the halls you are comparing all the time."

"in dance it's a pretty constant thing on your mind"

"seeing pictures of girls in my grade in cute clothes, makes me want to go buy things like them, but I never feel like I can pull them off because of my body type. Makes me wish I had a body more like theirs"

I had interest in joining the swim or rowing team but I won't because I don't like being seen in a swim suit.

The Negative

Theme 1: Influence of perceived body image on daily activities

"I don't think how you look should affect what you are doing."

Senior
Students

"I stay active in sport all year to keep that feeling of confidence I have during season"

"the unspoken rule is to be thin but I find confidence in my athleticism which helps me accept myself being a bigger person."

"Overall I have a good body image so overall I am comfortable with myself"

Athletes

The Positive



Most research is done on high school or older aged women, therefore, one set of researchers decided to investigate exposure of 3-6 years olds to media . Data analysis showed that media exposure did not affect body dissatisfaction of preadolescent girls. Additionally, there was no significant change in body image ratings

At 3-6 years old, this research found the majority of girls “believed they could be a princess regardless of their weight and age”. What changes this mindset? And how can this confidence continue to be fostered in adolescent girls?

In Middle school, you really start to notice other people in relation to yourself, you begin to compare yourself to others

When I got to high school I started realizing how many girls had eating disorders and were trying to get achieve society's message of thin is better.... I started wondering if I should be thinking like that too.

Theme 2: Perceived body image change with age

My freshmen year for sure. Since you are with so many new people, you see how everyone judges you based on your looks alone; and people can be harsh

When did it change for YOU?

“When I was little I didn’t care, but when you get older I feel girls care a little more about it. And when you start being more exposed, like I never watched like E News or whatever when I was little, but now, watching that, you see that there is more attention drawn to it.”

“Recognition is so important. You need to step back and be happy with the fact that I am not going to be that skinny. It limits them on how they view themselves and hinders them from going after what they want.”



Researchers tested whether a daughter's eating attitudes and behaviors and body image would be directly related to that of the mother. The authors argued that when the mother internalizes the thin ideal, she may pressure her daughter to fit the societal mold. And, conversely, that mothers may also prove as a protector for her daughter by discussing media images and devaluing the thin ideal.

Analysis of these self-reported measures found mother and daughter levels were the same regardless of the variable. Specifically, daughters who reported eating disorder behaviors and body dissatisfaction reported feeling pressured about weight by their mothers. Furthermore, daughters reported greater body dissatisfaction if their mothers had given them negative feedback about their weight.

Another study's results revealed that * girls, when compared to boys, show a strong connection between body image and appearance-related social pressure. Parent encouragement was seen as a pivotal variable in regards to adolescent body dissatisfaction. Even when parents were attempting to be encouraging, their child often heard those messages as pressure to change their body. * Encouraging remarks by parents were more crucial factor in body dissatisfaction than parent teasing. In conclusion, the researchers found that over the one year period, * if the parent lessened pressure on their daughter to lose weight, body dissatisfaction scores significantly improved.

Other research has *showed that the more appearance-focused the family was, the more concerns the daughter had about her body; moreover, * comments about weight made by parents intending to be encouraging also negatively influenced body dissatisfaction and

eating disorders. Additionally, data showed * comments made by the mother, as opposed to the father, were a stronger predictor of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders in the daughter.

I see a lot of moms putting a lot of pressures on their daughters to look a certain way. I have a friends whose mom is like this and I feel so bad for her

Do you see this family pressure?

Is it affecting us?

“there is that expectation on the NS of perfection and parents press that on their kids whether purposefully or not”

My sister would call me fatty growing up and I never realized how much it affected me until now

Theme 4: NS Expectations

What about our environment, The NorthShore?!

A few of them mentioned knowing friends from other states who “had never known anyone dealing with body issues like we do here.”

“in the NS there is a perfect body type,”



*Media Literacy: Majority of research shows that this works in helping students understand the unattainable reality of where media images come from; however, if activities within lessons have students focusing on media image s research has shown this can be counterproductive actually increasing body awareness.

*Sex Ed: We have comprehensive sex ed sophomore year here; but many schools do not. Researchers suggest sex ed discussions help students with body dissatisfaction and delaying sexual activities

*Extra Curricular Activity: Getting involved in something that you enjoy gives you confidence and will help protect against body dissatisfaction; furthermore, the time spent on this activity will take away from the time you would spend online, reading magazines, or watching TV.

*No Appearance related comments: Although we often have the best of intentions when we give someone an appearance compliment, it often brings women’s attention to their bodies and heightens body objectification and often dissatisfaction. Let’s compliment each other on other qualities such as our intelligence, humor, or kindness.

* Dress Code: we don’t have a dress code here at XYZ High. This may be a problem given that research has shown when women feel objectified, they feel that people are looking at their bodies, they silence themselves. This could hinder the female students here in their abilities to become engaged in their classes if they are dressed in a way that is inviting others to look at them.

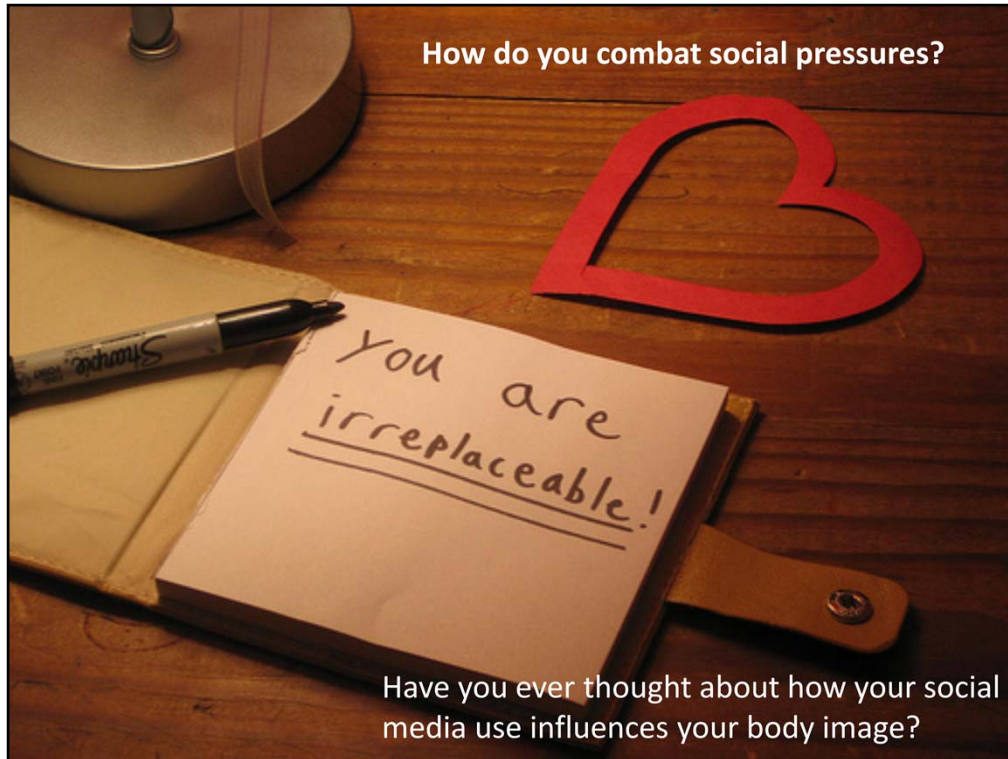
*Rel. Authenticity: Students who reported the ability to be authentic in their relationships

showed a great increase in self-esteem and body satisfaction through their adolescent years. This means they were able to speak their minds freely with their partners, they did not have to censor their real selves. Additionally, they found this was of greater influence to self-esteem than authenticity within peer relationships.

*Use SMS less: A few students in this study reported knowing that when they used SMS they would participate in social comparison and negative talk with themselves. To combat this, they have chosen to use SMS only for communication with classmates and out of town friends. In doing this, they have helped themselves improve their body image and feel free from the addiction many have with checking notifications and comparing themselves to other people's pictures.

*Parent Ed: There may need to be parent education surrounding this topic for a couple of reasons. First, it has been shown that the risk for internet addiction drastically decreases in students whose parents enforce rules and regulations in terms of internet use. In regards to body image, mothers have a lot of influence on their daughters. We have already gone over this research, but mothers need to understand the power of their words over their daughters perceived body image.

*Peer Culture: teens who are involved in a peer group that often talks about dieting, participate in social comparison, and that stresses the importance of appearance will have peers suffering from body dissatisfaction, depression, and eating disorder symptoms. Change the culture of your peer group and change your outlook on your body image!



How do you combat social pressures?

Have you ever thought about how your social media use influences your body image?

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