# SOCIAL MEDIA- THE IMPACT ON BODY IMAGE OF ADOLESCENTS

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 80% of young people use social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook (Smith & Anderson, 2018). With the recent emergence and popularity of these networking sites there has been an alarming increase in concerns associated with body image and dissatisfaction (Treneman-Evans, 2017).

Image 1. Retrieved from http://truestaris.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/pht61kqokc2qbwe.png
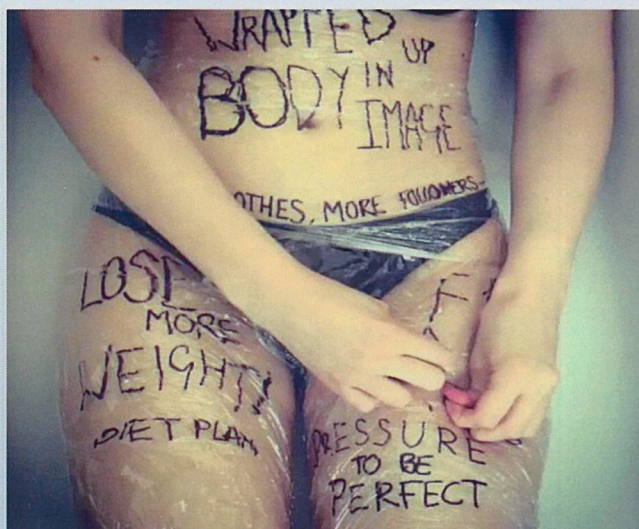
CLINICAL ISSUE

Social media feeds are full of body selfies, "clean eating" food images and an obsession with calorie counting and healthiness. It is no surprise then, that it is having an impact on the way in which adolescents view themselves and their body image (Van der Meulan et al., 2017). This poses a significant threat to healthy body perceptions

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the impact of social media on the body image of adolescents?

EVIDENCE & FINDINGS

- Social media exerts an enormous influence on the adolescent perception of an ideal body. It impacts deeply on their emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and social wellbeing, but rarely reflects the true diversity of body types in our society (Te Kete Ipurangi, 2018).

- The emergence and popularity of these social media platforms is becoming increasingly associated with body image concerns and dissatisfaction (Treneman-Evans, 2017).

- Almost 70% of young girls feel dissatisfied with their weight and 40% believe they would be happier if they were thinner (Te Kete Ipurangi, 2018).

- Negative body image has been a key feature in the diagnosis for eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia (Voelker et al., 2015).

- Pro-anorexia 'thinspiration' messages have translated to social media sites (Custers, 2015).

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is vital that all health professionals have an awareness on the impact that social media may have on the body image of our young people.

The promotion of healthy body image perception is a key factor in improving the way in which adolescents view their body image.

Providing information and education on normal and healthy body weight is essential.

It is important to build skills which set young people up for life and provide them with a network of people and support services which are effective in promoting healthy body images (Azmira et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

Positive interventions aimed at promoting a more realistic body ideal have been shown to be effective in reducing the rates of negative body image and its associated effects.

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By Vicki Long

THE PECOT MODEL

PECOT	Information relating to PECOT	Explanation
Population	The population of my question are adolescents using social media.	As a very high number of adolescents use some form of social media. Also, because this age bracket is highly susceptible to body image issues.
Exposure	Adolescents that are exposed to social media and the effect this has on their body image and well-being.	Articles that research the impact that social media has on body image of adolescents will be used.
Comparison	Adolescents that are exposed to social media.	Are adolescents aware of the impact that social media has on their body image?
Outcome	The outcome of my research will identify social media as having an impact on the body image and well-being of adolescents and what can be done to help.	If social media is having an impact and what can or is being done to help.
Time	N/A	Time is not included as a factor.

SUMMARY

As the mother of five adolescents growing up in a world of social media, this is a topic that concerns me greatly. The impact that social media is having on the body image and well-being of young people needs to be recognised and measures put in place to help promote a more realistic body image and reduce these negative effects.

I have chosen to present my literature review findings in the form of a poster as it has the ability to quickly and visually convey information and key messages about the research. It provides an overview of the work rather than an in-depth explanation and discussion (University of Edinburgh, 2016). A poster presentation is a visually appealing method to present information to a large audience in a relaxed and informal setting while enabling the presenter to interact and dialogue with colleagues (Taggart & Arslanian, 2000). It is a format that is simple and easy to read and can be displayed in public areas, allowing for wide discussion of the topic as people pass by and interpret the information (Schneider & Whitehead, 2013). It is a quick and effective way of enhancing knowledge and promoting positive change.

References

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