Society: Eating Away at Us
Societal Influences on Teen Mental Health

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Abstract

Societal standards seen in the media influence how young adults see themselves. Our presentation to high school students informed them of the alterations of models and products. A survey of our audience determined the effectiveness of our presentation. Based on the results of our surveys, we analyzed the impact our presentation had on our audience and improved it. We can decrease the prevalence of mental health problems in teens caused by unrealistic societal standards.

Background

People buy advertised products to achieve the same appearance, social acceptance, or happiness as the models using the products in the ad. The comparisons viewers make between themselves and models that are often underweight and edited to appear ideally "beautiful" create body image dissatisfaction and eventually mental health problems, like eating disorders.

Goals

- To educate young adults on the techniques used in the marketing and promotion of commercial products
- To increase public awareness of mental health problems from body image dissatisfaction
- To decrease the prevalence of those mental health problems
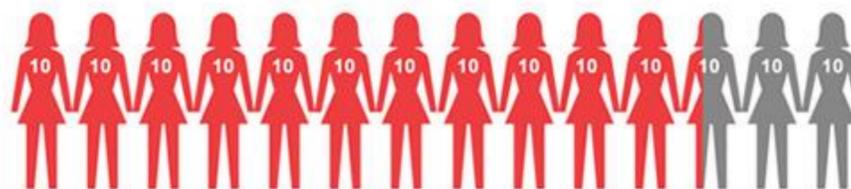
Body Image Statistics

80% of women say that the images of women on television and in movies, fashion magazines, and advertising make them feel insecure.
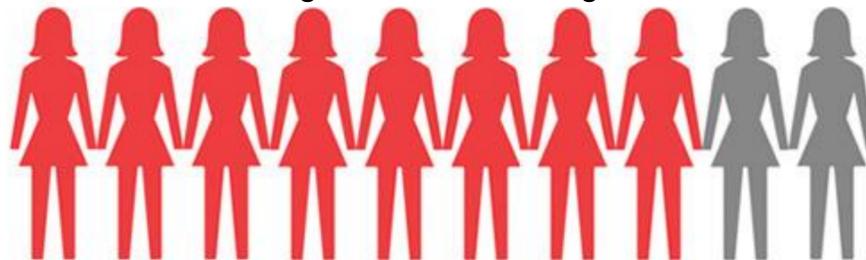
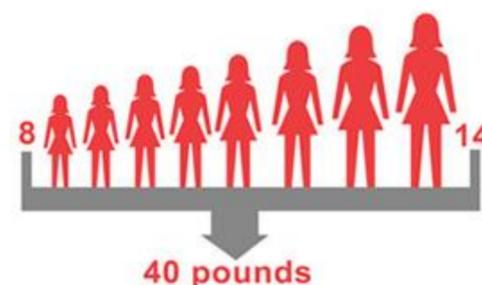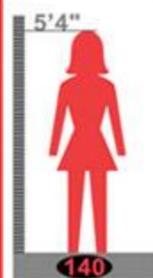**42%** of girls first through third grades want to be thinner.
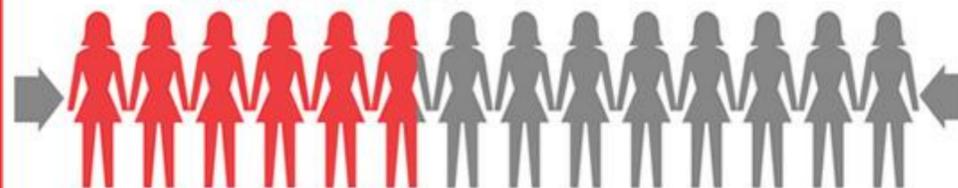
81% of 10 year olds are afraid of being fat.

Most fashion models are thinner than **98%** of American women.

More than **50%** of teenage girls are, or want to diet. **3%** of these teens will become anorexic or bulimic.

5'4" — American woman — 140

5'11" — American model — 117

8 — 14 — 40 pounds

www.findyourtruebeauty.com/statistics

Methods

Presentation
- Statistics
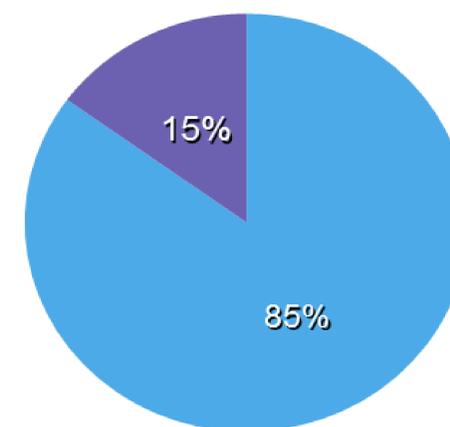- Comparisons of reality versus ideals
- Videos

Survey
- Part I: (pre-presentation) audience experience with mental health issues
- Part II: (post-presentation) impact
- Analysis and alterations

Pamphlet
- Key facts
- Helpful resources
- Link to the second part of the survey

Conclusions

15%

85%

- 85% women surveyed have experienced body image insecurities
- 96% believe media portrayals negatively impact self esteem
- 79% were affected positively by our presentation and 86% recognize the issue

References

http://visual.ly/body-image-statistics

http://www.boredpanda.com/realistic-disney-princess-waistlines-loryn-brantz/