

National Report Reveals The High Price Of Low Self-Esteem

(NAPSA)—Self-esteem has become a national crisis in this country. The majority of girls (seven in 10) feel they do not measure up in some way, including their looks, performance in school, and relationships. Most disturbing is that girls with low self-esteem are engaging in harmful and destructive behavior that can leave a lasting imprint on their lives. These new findings come from *Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem*, conducted with girls between 8 and 17 and commissioned by the Dove® Self-Esteem Fund. The new report confirms the importance of healthy self-esteem and the dangerous consequences that can arise when hang-ups about looks, academics and popularity erode a girl's sense of self-worth and self-acceptance.

Destructive Behaviors

When girls feel badly about themselves, they are turning to destructive behaviors. Girls with low self-esteem are three times more likely to participate in dangerous behaviors when feeling insecure. Research shows that 75 percent of girls with low self-esteem reported engaging in negative and potentially harmful activities, such as disordered eating, cutting, bullying, smoking or drinking, when feeling badly about themselves—compared with 25 percent of girls with high

How To Make A Difference

Help every girl feel great about her own real beauty. Take action and help make a difference:

- Question beauty stereotypes
- Contact the Boys & Girls Clubs of America or Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. to find out about mentoring opportunities in your community
- Try not to criticize your own looks, especially in front of your daughter
- Tell a girl in your life why she is beautiful
- Go to campaignforrealbeauty.com to download free self-esteem-building tools for girls, moms and mentors.



self-esteem. Girls are also craving better communication with adult figures as they struggle with challenges in their lives. The top wish among girls is for their parents to communicate better with them, including more frequent and more open conversations, as well as discussions about what is happening in their life.

“Low self-esteem among girls and young women has reached a crisis level,” said self-esteem expert Jess Weiner, a best-selling author and the global ambassador for the Dove Self-Esteem Fund. “The good news is that if parents and other role models are willing to create a steady conversation of encouragement, honesty and openness it can definitely help girls gain confidence and reach their full potential.”

Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem was commissioned by the Dove Self-Esteem Fund as

part of its commitment to help girls build self-esteem and a healthy body image. The Fund was developed more than four years ago as part of the Campaign for Real Beauty to inspire and educate girls and young women about a wider definition of beauty, with a goal of reaching 5 million girls globally by 2010 with self-esteem programming.

How To Get Involved

There are a number of different ways to get involved and make a difference. Individuals can volunteer with organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America or the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and download free resources for leading their own self-esteem workshops for the girls in their communities. Facilitator training guides are available on the Dove Web site, as are powerful and engaging self-esteem-building tools for girls, moms and mentors. To learn more, visit campaignforrealbeauty.com.