

Promoting Positive Body Image

Everybody's Different

A positive approach to teaching about health, puberty, body image, nutrition, self-esteem and obesity prevention.

Dr Jenny O'Dea
ACER Press 2007

Overweight and body image concerns in children and adolescents are increasing. Overall body dissatisfaction in young people has increased dramatically in the last few decades, with a heightened prevalence of dieting, eating disorders, obsessive exercise and steroid abuse.

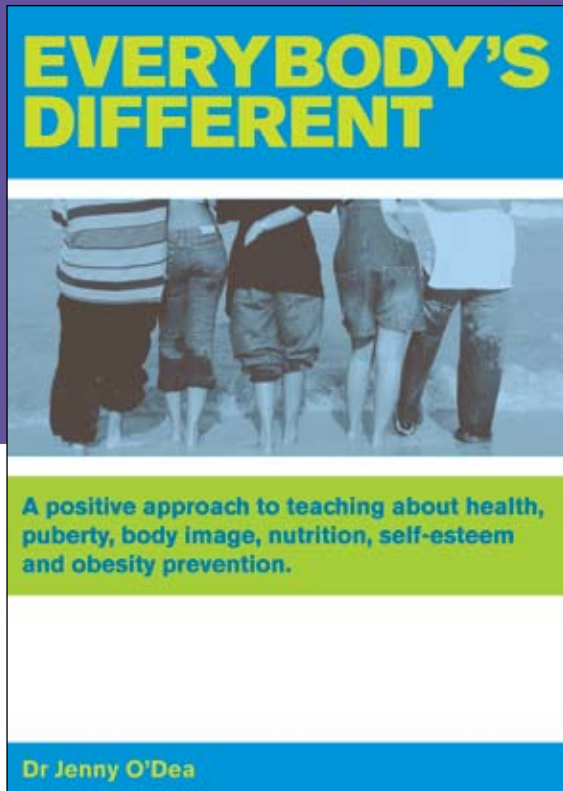
Everybody's Different details how to apply a proven self-esteem approach in schools, community settings and clinical situations to improve body image conceptions, prevent eating disorders and obesity, and foster health, nutrition and physical activity in young people. An ideal reference and resource book for anyone working with young people—particularly primary and secondary school teachers and university students—this book can also be applied in clinical and community settings.

Adopting a whole-school approach and based on 16 years of research and teacher training, this book contains:

- Case studies
- Research outcomes
- Classroom activities
- Work sheets, games and word puzzles
- Teacher training
- Community links
- Lesson plans for interactive puberty websites
- Complete, up-to-date reference lists

Everybody's Different allows teachers to apply a planned approach to issues in an informed, positive and effective manner for body-sensitive young people.

The structure of this book makes it easy to read, with thorough summaries and referencing at the end of each chapter. Furthermore, it includes recommended websites for teachers and students to visit for more information.



Chapters

- **Body image and health in children and adolescents**
The meaning of child health; research findings; age, pubertal and gender differences; self-concept and body image; theoretical frameworks that address body image.
- **Body image and eating problems among boys and girls**
Description of body image issues and eating concerns; health consequences; causes of eating disorders; problems in athletes; weight loss and weight gain issues; case studies of students with eating disorders; recommended websites.
- **Positive body image programs in schools**
Issues in body image education—links to child obesity prevention, first do no harm and risks; summary of international interventions to prevent eating disorders and improve body image; media literacy interventions; self-esteem interventions; the 'Everybody's Different' intervention; school policy, curriculum and school environment considerations.
- **Developing self-esteem**
Summary of research about self-esteem development in children and adolescents; self-esteem for the prevention of eating disorders and body image problems; description and results from the 'Everybody's Different' program; classroom self-esteem lessons, activities, games and student work sheets.
- **Media literacy for a positive body image**
Definitions; benefits for body image programs; summary of international research; media literacy lessons from 'Everybody's Different' program intervention; media literacy lessons, activities, games, interactive website activities, student work sheets, word puzzle.
- **Growth, development and puberty**
Growth in babies, toddlers, children and teenagers; Tanner puberty stages and illustrations; positive teaching approaches; interactive puberty websites; lessons, activities, games, student work sheets, word puzzle.
- **A positive approach to food and nutrition**
Factors influencing eating habits; research about eating habits; benefits of nutrition; healthy eating pyramid; nutrient requirements; food labels; vegetarian diets; fad weight loss diets; sports nutrition; teaching nutrition in a positive way; lessons, activities, 'Nutritional Pursuit' board game, student work sheets, word puzzles.

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Chapters continued

- **Weight issues and childhood obesity prevention**
Prevention of eating problems and obesity concurrently; body image improvement; definitions, measurement and limitations using the body mass index (BMI); international research data on overweight and obesity in children and adolescents; BMI and risk of Type 2 diabetes; negative and positive obesity prevention case studies from schools; promoting physical activity in a positive way; lessons and activities for teaching health in a positive way.
- **The role of teachers in body image development and prevention of obesity**
Issues in teacher education and in-service training for preventive activities; case studies of successful schools; course outline for teacher education.
- **A whole-school approach to body image and obesity**
Curriculum, school policy, school environment, community involvement.
- **Summary and conclusions**
Includes using this book in a coordinated and integrated approach.

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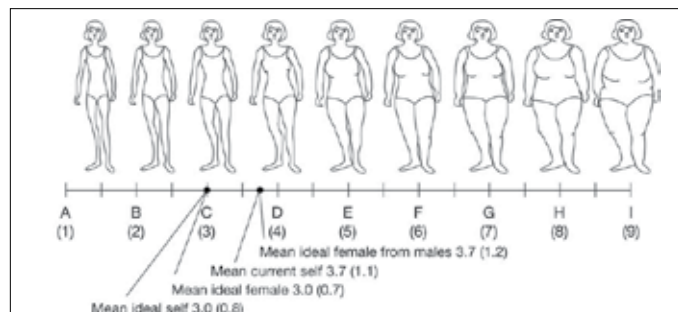


FIGURE 1.2 Body shape preferences used in research studies of young women

About the author

Dr Jenny O'Dea is a dietitian, health and nutrition education researcher and Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Sydney, Australia.

She is an Associate Editor for *Health Education Research*, has written three books on child nutrition and health, and is conducting two large longitudinal Australian Research Council studies about food habits, physical activity, sport, growth, pubertal development, body image and weight issues among children and adolescents.

Dr O'Dea has a PhD in Medicine from Sydney University, in which she focused on the prevention of body image problems and eating disorders among children and adolescents using a school-based, self-esteem approach. She has authored more than 50 scientific research publications in well-known international journals.

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