

## **Youth Select Committee 2017: Inquiry into body image.**

Body image was one of the top ten issues voted for by almost one million young people in the 2016 “Make Your Mark” ballot. Given the importance of this issue to young people, the 2017 Youth Select Committee will conduct an inquiry into this subject. Previous Youth Select Committee inquiries have covered racism and religious discrimination, mental health, votes at 16 and transport.

The Youth Select Committee is a British Youth Council initiative, supported by the House of Commons, which takes evidence in public and has its proceedings televised and recorded in Hansard. The eleven committee members are aged 14–18 and include Members of the UK Youth Parliament, Youth Councillors, a Young Mayor, reserved seats and representatives from each of the devolved nations.

The Committee invites submissions addressing the terms of reference from individuals, organisations and interested parties, including (but not restricted to) young people, those affected by body image issues, related charities, social media platforms, campaigners, schools, health professionals, politicians, and any other interested parties.

Respondents should note that it is not necessary to answer every question in the terms of reference. Submissions should clearly state who they are from, be concise (generally no more than 3000 words), contain an executive summary, and have numbered paragraphs. Submissions should be sent as Word documents to [bycyouthselect@parliament.uk](mailto:bycyouthselect@parliament.uk) by **5pm on Friday 16 June 2017**.

### **Terms of reference**

The Committee is particularly interested in submissions covering the following points:

#### **Groups affected by body image issues**

1. Are particular groups of young people particularly prone to poor body image, or less likely to be offered or seek help with poor body image? What causes these trends?
2. In relation to young men and boys, minority ethnic groups, and those who self-identify as transgender: what are the specific challenges facing young people in these groups? How effective is existing support?

3. Do existing campaigns and initiatives to promote positive body image sufficiently take into account the different challenges faced by young people with particular characteristics?

### **The internet, social media and messaging**

4. Has the growing use of social media and communications platforms amongst young people encouraged practices and attitudes that entrench poor body image? What is the link between “sexting” and body dissatisfaction?
5. Can the internet and social media be used as a tool to promote positive self-image? What examples are there of this happening?
6. Do internet companies, social media platforms or other platforms have a responsibility to tackle trends which entrench poor body image? What are they already doing in this area? What more should they be doing?
7. Does the Government have a responsibility to discourage the use of social media, the internet and communications platforms in ways which promote poor body image? What should it be doing in this regard?

## Education

8. What examples are there of schools integrating the promotion of positive body image into school subjects across the curriculum, particularly physical education? How successful have these been? How can success best be measured?
9. What examples are there of youth organisations and peer education programmes outside of schools promoting positive body image? Are there examples of programmes focusing on different groups of young people? Are they focusing on different aspects of body image? How effective are these? How should they be evaluated?

## **Health implications**

10. To what extent is dissatisfaction with body image contributing to the increase in mental health problems amongst children and young people?
11. Does the NHS have sufficient resources and expertise to manage mental health issues associated with poor body image? How have changes in education funding impacted on the ability of schools to provide in house mental health services?
12. Are schools sufficiently linked with health professionals? What more could be done in this regard?"