Body Positive Week: Program development, implementation, and evaluation

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Background

- Eating disorders (ED) happen most in college\(^1\)
- The rate of eating disorders among college students has risen to 10-20\% of women and 4-10\% of men\(^2\)
- Body dissatisfaction, thin-ideal internalization, and low self esteem all contribute to development of ED\(^3,4\)
- Seattle Pacific University (SPU) students are dealing with these same issues and care deeply about how to build a healthy body image, how to love the whole you, and strategies for self-care\(^5\)

Methods

- Led by Student Counseling Center staff dietitian and therapists, the Body Positive Student Committee designed a week of activities using the Be Body Positive model
- The Be Body Positive model has been shown to increase resilience against eating and body image problems\(^6\)
- Body Positive Week activities were designed to engage student’s in thinking about body image, the true relationship between weight and health, mindful eating, and total-self self care

Objectives

The Body Positive Student Committee designed a week of activities to help SPU students:

- Become informed about the facts about weight, diet, and health
- Engage in sustainable and balanced healthy behaviors
- Develop a healthy and happy relationship with food, body, and exercise
- Develop a positive sense of self no matter what their weight and size
- Pursue health and happiness stemming from self-compassion and self-love

Findings

- 85 students participated in the week’s activities and completed a survey
- The response was extremely positive. Students told us:
  - “I love this entire thing. This message (these facts, data) is what needs to be spread!”
  - “This made me feel good about myself.”

Sources

2. Saviteer, Collegiate Survey Project, 2013

“Body Positive Week should be ALL the time!”

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\(^1\) Hudson, Biol Psychiatry, 2007
\(^2\) Saviteer, Collegiate Survey Project, 2013
\(^3\) Dakanalis, Eur. Eat. Disorders Rev., 2016
\(^4\) Stice, Psychological Bulletin, 2002
\(^5\) Student assessment surveya May 21, 2015.
\(^6\) http://thebodypositive.org/about-us.html