



Middle School Guidance Officer

Children As Young as 8 Years Old Are Battling With Poor Body Image



Startling new research has found that Aussie kids as young as eight are suffering from poor body image, and the consequences could be catastrophic.

A study released by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute has discovered a link between hormone levels and body satisfaction in prepubescent children for the first time. "What we've learnt is that prepubescent children as young as eight and nine are vulnerable to poor body image and the dissatisfaction appears to be linked to hormone levels associated with the onset of puberty," lead author Dr Elizabeth Hughes said.

The higher the hormones, the unhappier the children

"Basically, the higher the level of hormones, the unhappier the children were with their body size." More than 1100 eight and nine year-old boys and girls from Melbourne were involved in the study, which analysed their hormones and assessed body image perceptions. Body dissatisfaction was measured using a tool that displayed silhouettes of different physical shapes, ranging from very thin to very obese. Dr Hughes said the findings highlight the need for community and school-based education programs about healthy body image before the onset of puberty.

Kids Matter is an Australian not-for-profit group that provides information resources to parents and schools about a range of issues affecting children. It warns that negative body image puts young people at "an increased risk for developing unhealthy attitudes to eating and issues with dieting, as well as low mood".

– Shannon Molloy, News.com.au

Read more: [Children as young as 8 years old are battling with poor body image](#)

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