

# Supporting Teachers

Tools and information to better understand  
Body Image Issues and Eating Disorders in Youth

## Fall Webinar : Part 2

**nedic**

National Eating Disorder  
Information Centre

**aneb**  
Anorexie et boulimie Québec

Photo credit: Timothy Eberly, unsplash.com



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## Goals of this webinar : Fall edition

- Physical & mental health impacts of COVID-19 pandemic
- Making school a safe space - a whole school approach
- Weight stigma manifesto
- Body image, embodiment and its impact on mental health
- Exercise & diet culture - “fitness” and “health”
- Two examples from our body image, media literacy, and self-esteem curricula
- Outlining the different services that the NEDIC & ANEB have especially for educators and students

# Physical and mental health impacts of COVID-19 in children and youth : an Ontario Study

## **A SickKids Covid-19 study :**

<https://www.sickkids.ca/en/news/archive/2021/research-covid-19-pandemic-impact-child-youth-mental-physical-health/>

- **Loss of in-person school had a significant impact on child and youth mental health** (significant depressive symptoms during the second wave of the pandemic (February-March 2021)).
- **The more time spent on-line learning, the more anxiety and depressive symptoms** were experienced.
- **Schools represent more than just academics** for children and youth. For many, school and its in-person activities form the cornerstone of their lives. (From school sports to extracurricular activities and counselling and learning supports).
- **Increase screen time because of lockdowns, meant more irritability, depression, hyperactivity, inattention and anxiety.**

# Context matters : COVID-19 and social determinants of health

## COVID-19 & SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Not everyone has been affected equally by the pandemic. The social determinants of health affect not only who gets sick (pink) but everyone in the community during this unprecedented time.

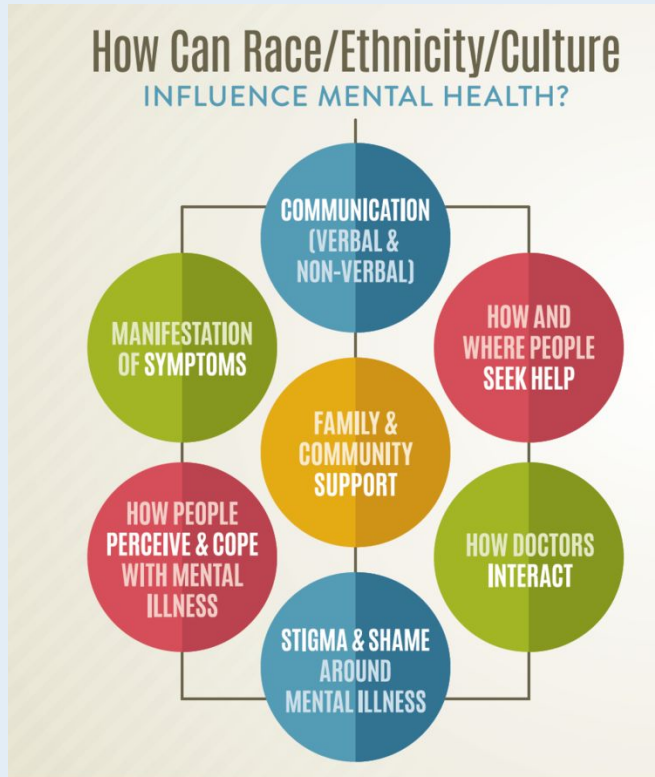
The pandemic is exacerbating the impact of these inequities, particularly for communities who are already under-resourced and experiencing barriers.



**Source:** Health Commons. (2020). COVID-19 & Social Determinants of Health. Toronto, ON: Author. Retrieved from [https://twitter.com/health\\_commons/status/1287775266530627588/photo/](https://twitter.com/health_commons/status/1287775266530627588/photo/)



## What can we consider on an individual level?



- “Our families & communities greatly contribute to our values and opinions about others. Consider them filters. It is easy for us to identify evidence that confirms the opinions we heard as kids, but the danger is when we overlook situations that dispute stereotypes about others.” – Harrison Davis, PhD, LPC
- “When a condition lacks a ‘name’, it lacks an ‘acknowledgement’; when it lacks an acknowledgment, it lacks ‘validation’; when it lacks validation, it lacks ‘care’. Help your students name things.” - Kenneth V Hardy, PhD.
- We’re fascinated with being trauma-informed, but we don’t always respond in ways that are emblematic of that. Expect your students who have experienced trauma to be distrustful, cautious, and suspicious of you. There’s a distinction between safety and comfort and we have to start with the former - until the world can be safe, create spaces to help people feel that safety. A breathing room.

Source: [Project LETS](#) via the American Psychiatric Association

Take a Whole School Approach  
creating a Safe Space

## Stigmatization and intimidation in regards to weight and appearances

- **An 'ASPQ' Study** (the Quebec Public Health Association), determined that **the first cause** of intimidation in school settings are **based on weight and appearances**.
- **59% of youth** considered that students from their school are **being teased, intimidated or bullied for being overweight**.
- **47% of youth** that were victims of bullying because of their weight, have **developed an obsession** about their weight and appearance.
- **Fat phobia (la grossophobie)** at schools, in our community and society at large plays as large part in continued harassment on weight and appearances on students and individuals who do not have bodies that conform to social norms.
- **CONSEQUENCES OF BEING BULLIED:** symptoms of depressive or anxious disorders, low self esteem, social discrimination, avoidance of athletic or extracurricular activities, diminution in academic performance, suicidal thoughts and prone to developing an eating disorder.



Manifesto created in 2021 by ASPQ- Québec Public Health Association and the Québec Weight Coalition and its partners (ANEB, etc.)

**The key purpose:**

For healthy communications in the province related to weight.

Helping to erase prejudices and stigmas related to weight and reduce fat phobia in the province.



<https://www.cqpp.qc.ca/en/>

## **Make School a Safe Place**

### **School climate plays a key role in students' mental health** (and influences other important well-being measures)

- People identifying as members of the 2SLGBTQ community experience eating disorders at up to 5x the rate of their cisgender, heterosexual peers. (Nagata, Ganson, Austin, 2020)
- LGBT students in high school are at a much higher risk of harassment and assault.
- People who do not conform to gender stereotypes often suffer from discrimination, difficult family relationships, low self-esteem, etc.
- When teachers undergo professional development training on issues related to sexual and gender identity, all students report a more positive school climate (Ioverno Bishop & Russell 2021)

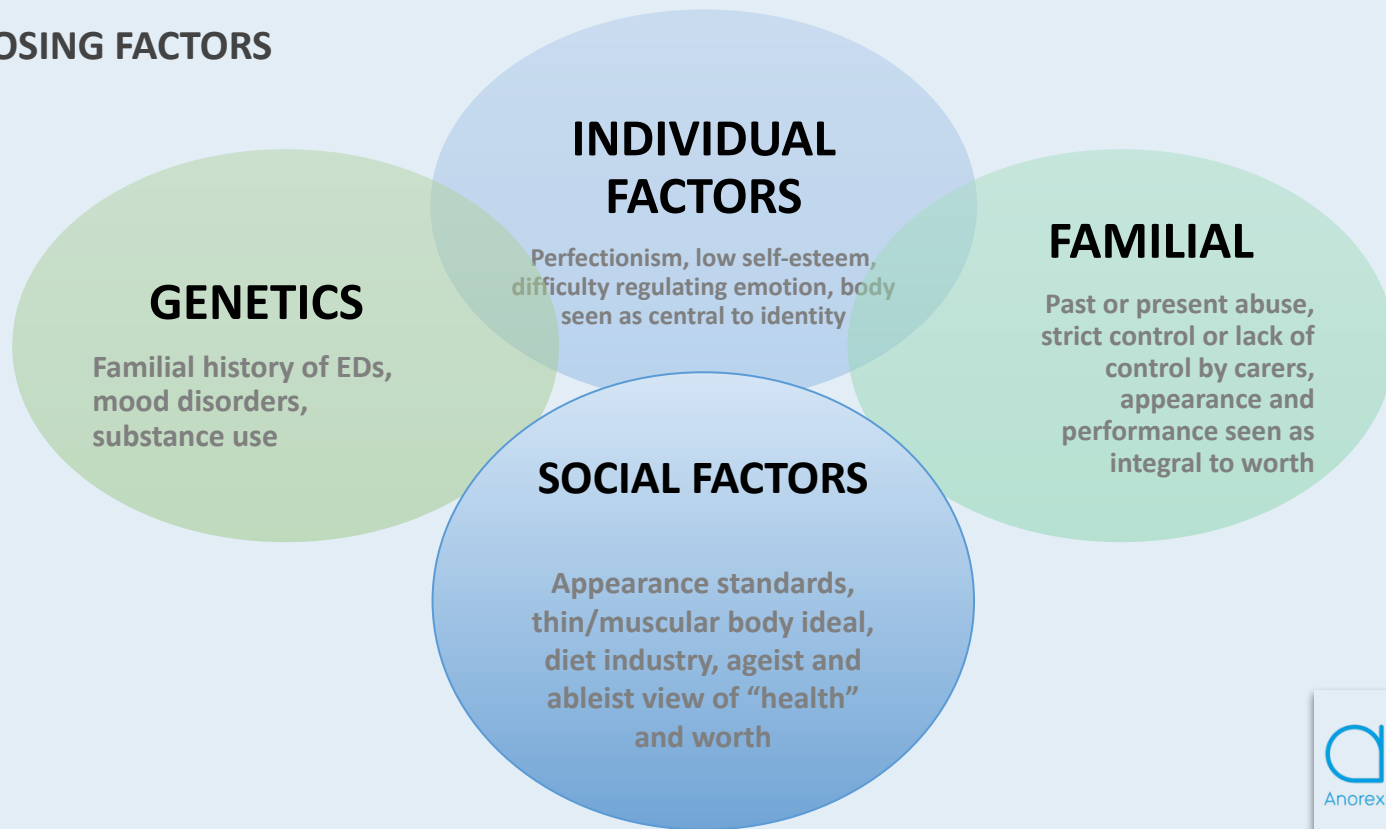
# Whole School Approach

## Body Image and Mental Wellbeing

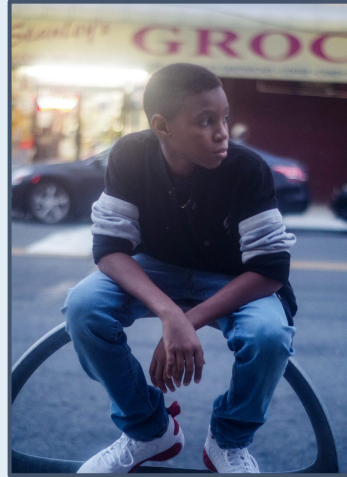
# What causes an eating disorder?

## The predisposing factors and the precipitating factors

### THE PREDISPOSING FACTORS



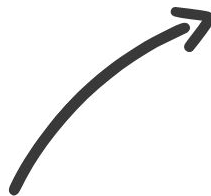
## What do Body Image Struggles Look Like?



# Body Image



"I am unhappy  
with my body."

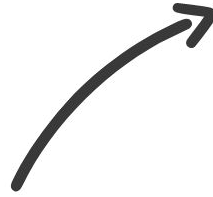


# Body Image

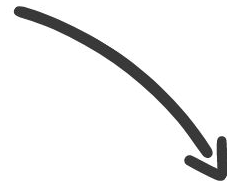
# Body Image



"I am unhappy  
with my body."



"I put up with my  
body."





# Body Image

"I am unhappy  
with my body."

"I might not love my body,  
but I respect it and take  
care of it anyway."

  
"I put up with my  
body."



"I do not feel limited  
by how I feel in my  
body, or what I think  
about it. My body is  
what allows me to  
express myself and  
go after my goals  
and passions."



# Body Image

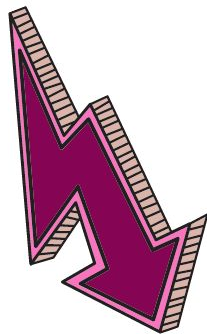
  
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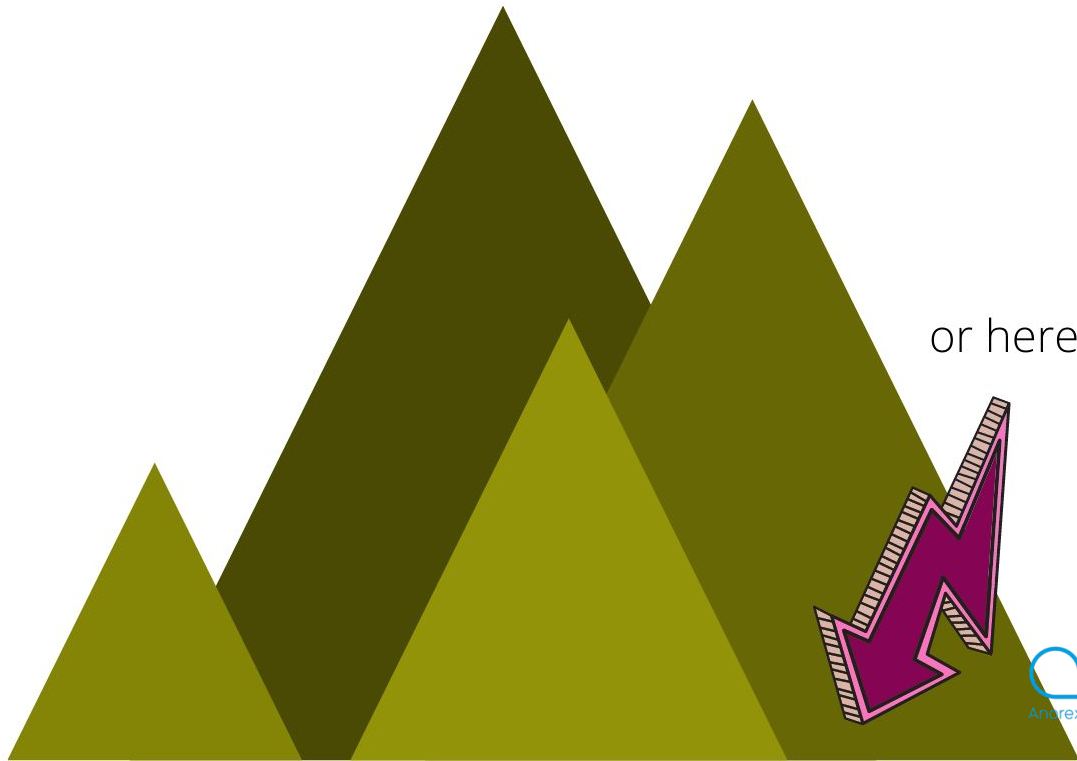
"I might not love my body,  
but I respect it and take  
care of it anyway."



  
"I put up with my  
body."

You're not stuck here....

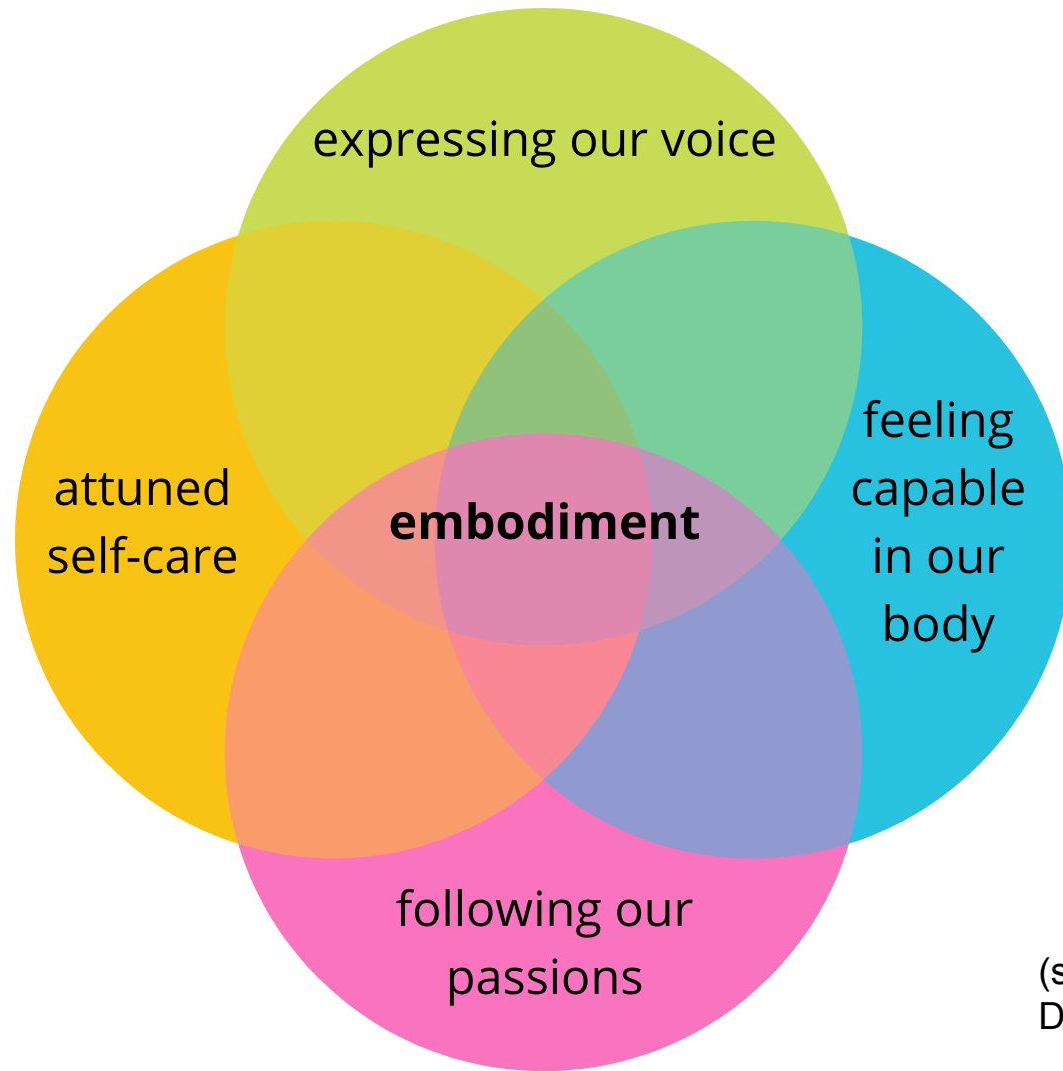




or here....

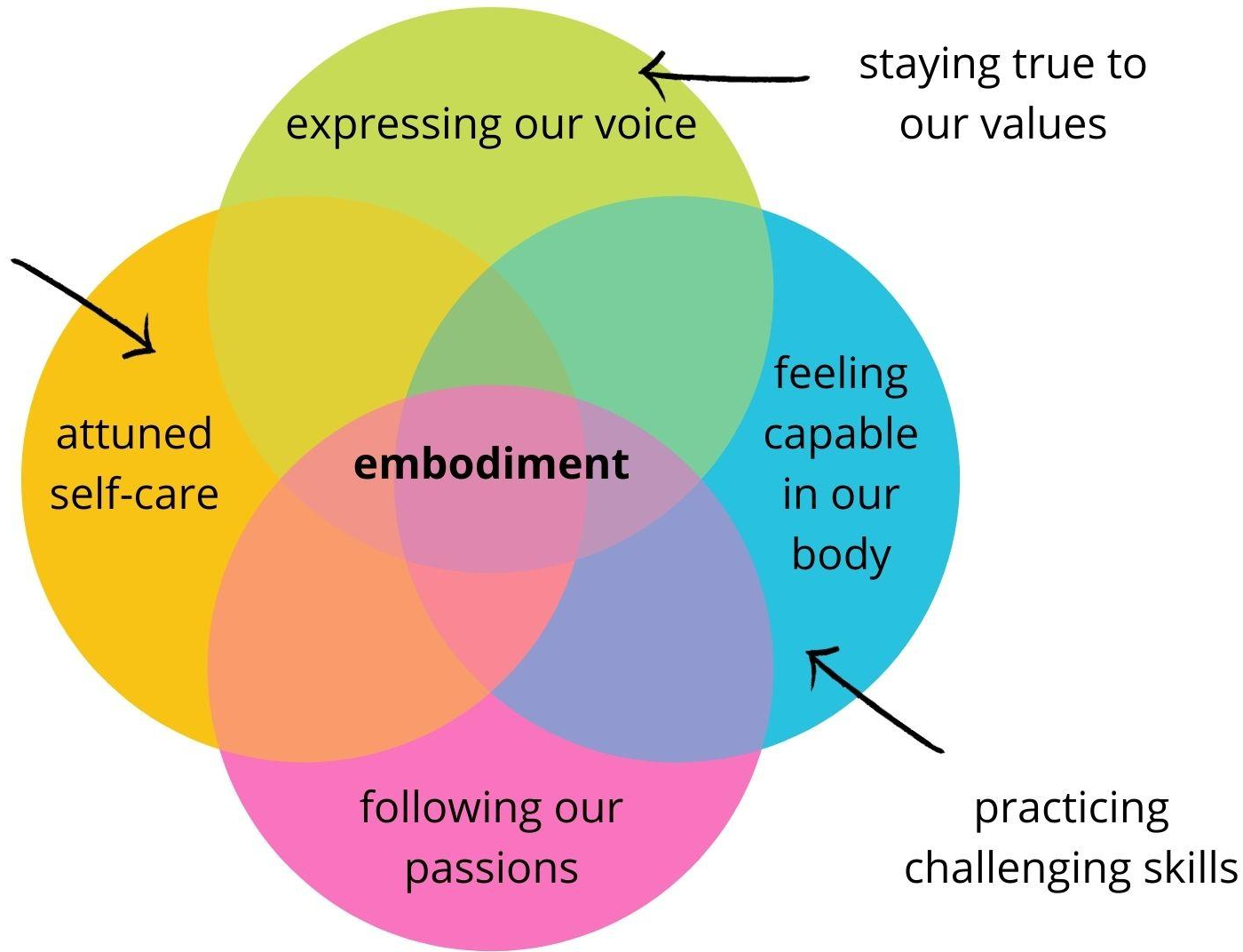
And it's almost certain you won't stay in one place.





(see the work of  
Dr. Niva Piran)

adequate  
sleep



Ex: Explore the influence of different societies and cultures on body image and healthy lifestyles in History and Geography

Ex: Discuss diet and exercise in Biology

Ex: Integrate body image awareness and media literacy education into studies of English and The Arts

Integrate body image work into the curriculum every year in an age appropriate manner

**POLICY**

**COMMUNITY**

**CURRICULA**

Include a statement in the school mission about providing a body-inclusive school environment that celebrates diversity (including size diversity!)

Ensure no weighing, measuring, or anthropometric assessment of students in any context

Make available up-to-date information about how parents can support their child to develop a positive body image and healthy relationship with food

Present talks and info nights for parents about ED issues





Believing that only  
small and/or "fit"  
bodies can be healthy



Being told you  
need to exercise



Exercising as  
punishment



Feeling guilty if  
you don't exercise

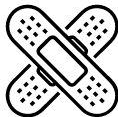
Worrying about  
what you look like  
while you exercise



# EXERCISE & DIET CULTURE



Thinking some types  
of exercise are  
"better" than others



Ignoring body  
cues like fatigue  
and injury in order  
to exercise

Complimenting  
exercise habits



Associating your  
worth with how  
you look



Exercising to  
compensate for  
eating

# Exercise and Movement in Diet Culture

- **The Diet Industry is a \$71B USD industry\*.**
- Diet culture tells us that we need to move our bodies in certain ways and a certain amount to be healthy.
- In diet culture “healthy” and “small” are often used interchangeably.
- As a result, physical activity is seen as a way to make our bodies smaller and therefore (supposedly) healthier.
- **But being in a smaller body does not make a person healthier, and being in a larger body does not make a person less healthy.**
- **Movement is full of so many positives that have nothing to do with weight or appearance.**

# An Embodied Approach to Movement

## Recommendation

Take numbers out of talk about movement

Expose students to many types of movement activities

Encourage students to reflect on their relationship to movement

Take morality out of talk about movement

## Example: What to do

"What a lovely day to go outside for a walk!"

During DPA, give students several options for activities, ask for their suggestions

Ask students how different types of movement feel in their bodies

"It sounds like hiking with your family was time well-spent this weekend!"

## Example: What not to do

"How many steps did you take yesterday?"

"Playing frisbee isn't really exercise!"

"It doesn't matter if you don't like soccer-baseball; we're all playing it because its healthy."

"You went on a hike this weekend? That's really healthy, good for you!"

## Curriculum tools: body image, media literacy, self-esteem

- How the **NEDIC** and **ANEB Québec** can help youth and teachers through our services and our programs designed in partnership with Dove's self-esteem program. (made for grades 4 to 8/secondaire 2 in Québec) - An inclusive program designed in 2008 with an adaptation in 2016, created by two educators Heather Thompson and Helen Vlachoyannacos -Toronto District School Board

<https://nedic.ca/beyond-images/>

<https://anebquebec.com/services/au-dela-de-limage>

<https://audeladelimage.ca>



## Beyond Images & *Au-delà de l'image* : 1st example

**Grade 4, lesson 5: Blogging for Friendship and Self-Esteem** (teachers' guides, videos, activity guides for students and evaluation forms) : a slideshow that can be transformed into a blog. In this lesson, students will investigate self-esteem quotes and sayings and add a quote and a picture of their choice to a class slide show. They will choose a topic from the lessons studied to write a rap/chant/poem that celebrates their positive self-esteem and their learning. These pieces will be posted with the slides or on their own in posts on the class *Friendship and Self-Esteem* blog.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TN93j8XZB8U> (French and English)

- In link with Canadian Provinces' schools' curriculums:
  - 1- Communication skills: Alberta, Atlantic Provinces, British-Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, Saskatchewan
  - 2- Health: Alberta, British-Columbia, Manitoba and Prince-Edward Island

## Beyond Images & *Au-delà de l'image* : 2nd example

**Grade 7, lesson 3: Capturing the True Ideals In and Around Us** (teachers' guides, videos, activity guides for students and evaluation forms) : This unit focuses on the big idea of empowering students to redefine appearance ideals, allowing students the opportunity to reflect on the theme of beauty, and having them build a counter-narrative to the portrayal of appearance ideals in the world around them. In this third lesson, students create:

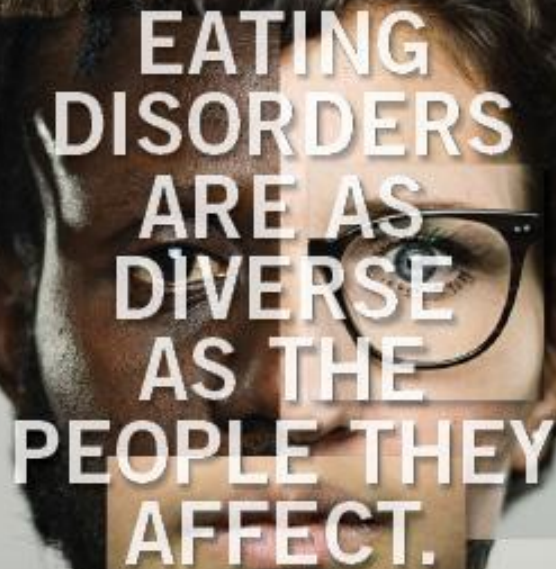
- *A photo essay of images that capture and appreciate beauty in the world around us*
- *Reflect on being a responsible media consumer and creator*
- *Note that there is more to our value than just appearance*
  - In link with Canadian Provinces' schools' curriculums:

Language Arts & Visual Arts

## Evidence-based program delivery

1. Program shouldn't include information about eating disorders
  - a. Reach out if you notice EDs; we have separate professional development presentations for this
  - b. Instead, we target relevant risk factors like body image, media literacy, over-exercise, nutrition messaging
2. The presenter is extremely important
  - a. Your own attitudes and behaviours towards food, weight, and shape can be broadcast to your students
3. Experiential, applied lessons; preferably for multiple sessions
4. Weaved into multiple curriculum topics (HPE, languages, social studies)





EATING  
DISORDERS  
ARE AS  
DIVERSE  
AS THE  
PEOPLE THEY  
AFFECT.

**nedic**

National Eating Disorder Information Centre

[www.nedic.ca](http://www.nedic.ca)

This devastating illness strikes all types of people in different ways, often secretly – sometimes fatally. But talking saves lives.

Call 1-866-NEDIC-20 or 416-340-4156 for support and information.

**nedic**

National Eating Disorder  
Information Centre

It's not our bodies  
that need changing.  
It's our attitudes.™

Online chat:

[www.nedic.ca](http://www.nedic.ca)

CHAT HOURS (EST):

9:00am to 9:00pm (M-Th)

9:00am – 5:00pm (F)

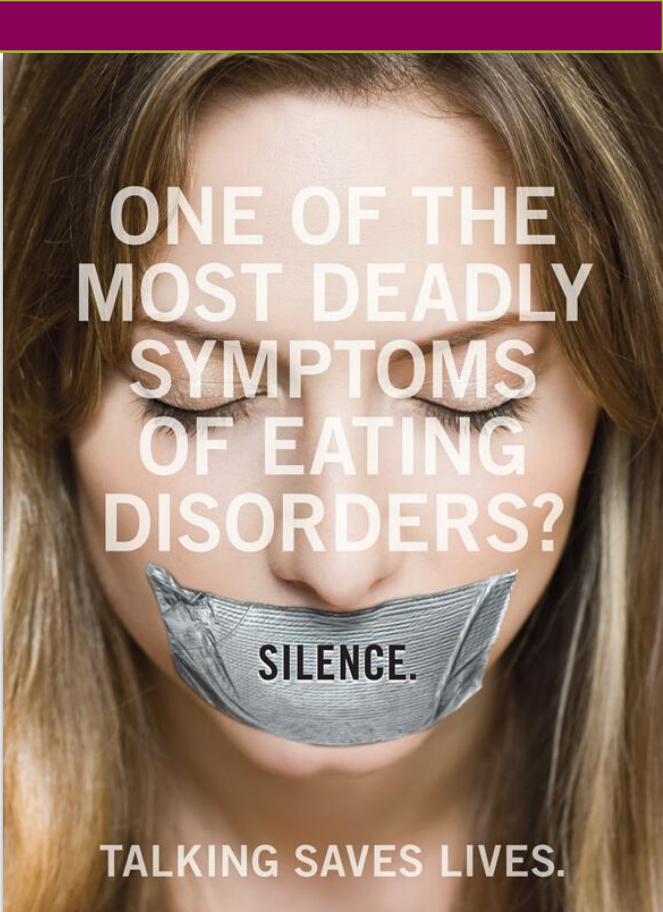
Call anonymously:

1-866-633-4220

PHONE HOURS (EST):

11:00am to 7:00pm (M-Th)

11:00am – 5:00pm (F)



ONE OF THE  
MOST DEADLY  
SYMPTOMS  
OF EATING  
DISORDERS?

SILENCE.

TALKING SAVES LIVES.

**nedic**

National Eating Disorder Information Centre

[www.nedic.ca](http://www.nedic.ca)

If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, call  
1-866-633-4220 (416-340-4156 in Toronto)  
for support and understanding.





## NEDIC has free resources for educators!

Our sessions aim to build capacity for educators and coaches, focusing on:

- Practical strategies for talking about food, weight, and shape in the classroom
- Tips for embedding conversations into existing curriculum
- Strategies for supporting students coming forward with concerns

We like to take an evidence-informed **whole-school approach** in K-12 settings, meaning a conversation about school policies with admin, a workshop with students, an educational session for staff, and a parent evening for those at home.

Learn more and book us here: <https://nedic.ca/community-education/>

# ANEB QUÉBEC

## For all ages

**Help and reference phone line** 514 630-0907 (Montréal) or 1 800 630-0907 (elsewhere, no fee)  
open everyday from 8:00 am to 3:00 am

**Texting** 1 800 630-0907 (Monday to Friday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm)\*

**Chat service** via [anebados.com](https://anebados.com) (Monday to Friday from 4:00 pm to midnight and weekends from 12:00 to 9:00 pm)\*

**e-mail:** [info@anebados.com](mailto:info@anebados.com) (youth) or [info@anebquebec.com](mailto:info@anebquebec.com) (adults)

## For people ages 17 and over (via the [anebquebec.com](https://anebquebec.com) website)

**Open support groups** (for people suffering from EDs and their loved ones)

**Closed support groups** (for people suffering from EDs and their loved ones)

**Group chat** via [anebquebec.com](https://anebquebec.com)

**Help Forum** via [anebquebec.com](https://anebquebec.com)

**Other:** Blogs, FB, Instagram, Twitter, yearly events



\* The chat and texting services have been open to everyone since the beginning of the Pandemic in March 2020.

# ANEB services in Education and Prevention

conferences, kiosks, training and more

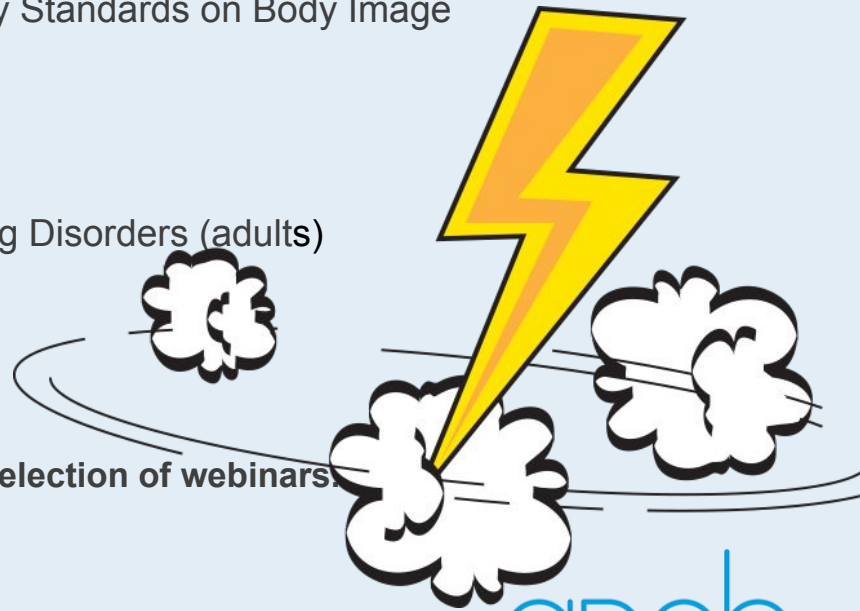
**3 conferences are available for schools from grade 5 to grade 9 (*secondaire 1-3*) and adults:**

- 1- Getting Past the Filters: Unpacking the Impact of Beauty Standards on Body Image (*secondaire 1-3*)
- 2- Self-Esteem and Body Image (grades 5, 6, 7 & 8)
- 3- Beyond Appearances Conference: Understanding Eating Disorders (adults)

<https://anebquebec.com/en/services/conferences>

**KIOSKS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOLS OR EVENTS**

**Professional Training Sessions are available as well as a selection of webinars.**



THANK YOU - MERCI !

