



"Doesn't hold back"

Teen Vogue

"Beyond powerful"

The Huffington Post

"...will change the way you think about yourself."

Glamour

STRAIGHT/CURVE

REDEFINING BODY IMAGE

EPIX PRESENTS A STRAIGHT/CURVE JESS LEWIS SALTY FEATURES PRODUCTION A FILM BY JENNY MCQUAILE "STRAIGHT/CURVE"
ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS CHRIS HALE-SMITH MADISON SCHILL SCOTT SCHULER CO-PRODUCER EMMA FRANCIS-SNYDER SOUND RECORDIST JUDY KARP MUSIC BY GIL TALMI
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ePIX

An Epix Original Documentary



DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Ninety percent of women and young girls say they do not feel represented in the fashion industry or in media, and that the imagery they consume on a daily basis makes them feel “disgusting” and “less than”.

Straight/Curve: Redefining Body Image examines the industries and obstacles responsible for this body image crisis and showcases the dynamic leaders fighting for more diversity of size, race and age.

Human brains process images 60,000 times faster than words, according to Getty Images’ Pam Grossman. **Straight/Curve: Redefining Body Image** sets out to change the imagery we are seeing and to bolster a movement that is redefining society’s unrealistic and dangerous standards of beauty to impact society at large.

Straight/Curve is a documentary that aims to create a healthier dialogue around body “size” and image and educate people on health and representation while capturing a visual slice of life of the fashion industry. The film follows the inspirational people working tirelessly to redefine society’s current beauty standards. We expose some of the ugly truths of the fashion and media industries and ask pressing questions of brands, designers, agents, magazine editors, photographers and health experts about “size”.

According to Teen Futures Media Network, University of Washington “53% of US girls at age 13 are unhappy with their bodies and by age 17 this jumps to 78% of US girls”.



Students, magazine editors, designers, agents, models, doctors, teachers and more bring their perspectives to this conversation in ***Straight/Curve***. We examine the pernicious misconceptions around health and size, body shame, the lack of diversity in fashion and media, and the limited scope of education in fashion schools among other issues. Through this film we hope to lift the veil and open the conversation globally so women, and men, can learn to appreciate and respect their bodies and feel represented. We believe real change has to happen deep within the fashion industry and be reflected in the media in order for it to truly impact society and future generations. By representing women of all sizes, ages and ethnicities through the same beautiful aesthetic and lens, media can speak volumes for the message that you can be beautiful and accepted in any shape, size and color.

The ***Straight/Curve*** discussion guide gives teachers and parents the tools to spark a conversation with children and young adults about our current body image crisis in the United States.

It will equip students with the skills to discuss body image, diversity and representation and to question the images they see in mainstream media daily.



DISCUSSION GUIDE

TIPS FOR USE

This discussion guide can be used in Social Studies, Sociology, Media Literacy courses, health, guidance counseling, girls leadership programs and eating disorder groups, as well as any school, community or group gathering for people aged 11 years and over.

OVERVIEW

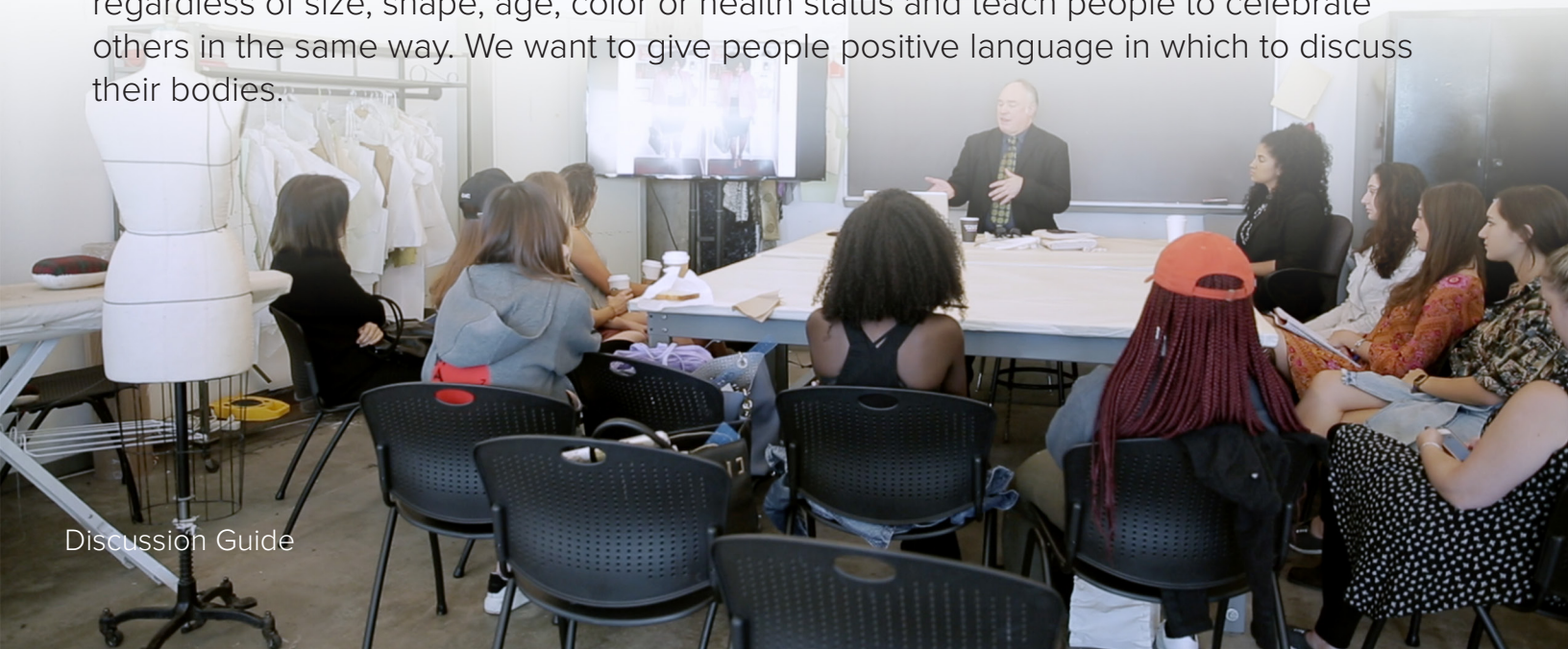
The discussion guide introduces students to concepts of body image, media literacy, social media responsibility, health, body shaming and stigma and introduces them to ways they can positively influence change. Students are encouraged to discuss body image, representation and diversity and how the imagery they are consuming daily affects their self worth.

The documentary film Straight/Curve:Redefining Body Image shows examples of how the fashion industry and media shape ideas around what it means to be considered “beautiful” and “accepted” in today’s society.

The following discussion questions and activities help students understand how, as they become young men and women, these beauty ideals can limit their potential and cause a negative and dangerous body image.

GOALS

This guide is intended to give young people an understanding of the impact the media and fashion industry have on our self image, encourage people to celebrate their bodies regardless of size, shape, age, color or health status and teach people to celebrate others in the same way. We want to give people positive language in which to discuss their bodies.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: BODY IMAGE

- ☐ What is body image?
- ☐ How is it influenced by the fashion industry and media? Give some examples.
- ☐ Where is pressure for men to look a certain way most likely to come from? And where is pressure for women to look a certain way most likely to come from?

90% of women and young girls say they do not feel represented by the fashion industry or media, and the imagery they are consuming on a daily basis makes them feel “disgusting” and “less than”. We hear some of the students in the film discussing this.

CUE: Watch first 7 minutes of the film for examples then do the below activity

ACTIVITY ONE:

Write down a list of words to describe how the fashion industry and media makes you feel about yourself.

Write down a list of words to describe how the fashion industry and media should make you feel.

Discuss the disparity between the two lists, and what can we do as individuals and as a group to change it?

ACTIVITY TWO:

Discuss how you see yourself with 2 friends, and then have your friends discuss how they see you to get a better understanding of how self image can be disconnected from reality.

REPRESENTATION

- ☐ What is representation and why is it important?
- ☐ What are the differences you see between the women or girls around you everyday at school, on the street and at home and the women or girls you see in fashion and the media? Apply the same questions for boys/men.
- ☐ What effects does representation in fashion and the media have on young girls' and boys' self image or body image?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: MEDIA LITERACY

PHOTOSHOPPING

CUE: Watch film from 41:30 -48:10 mins

Iskra Lawrence tells us in the film that she was photoshopped so heavily in a magazine once that her parents went to buy the magazine and they couldn't find her. She was so overly photoshopped that they didn't recognize their own daughter.

- ☐ What is Photoshop? And what are the pros and cons of using Photoshop to alter images?
- ☐ When does using Photoshop to alter images really become a big problem? And when is using Photoshop not an issue?
- ☐ What are the effects of altering peoples' body sizes, shape, age or skin tone?
- ☐ What kind of message does it send when we alter someone's physical appearance?

ACTIVITY:

Look at the before and after photos of photoshopped images in the film and see if you can point out what's been altered.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: MEDIA LITERACY

THE “THIN, WHITE IDEAL”

Our brain processes imagery 60,000 times faster than words, according to Getty Images’ Pam Grossman in the film.

- ☐ How do you think seeing images of young, thin, white women over and over again affects how you think about yourself?
- ☐ How do these images frame how you think about others?
- ☐ How are race and skin tone typically represented in fashion and media and what are the effects of this?

ACTIVITY:

Take a magazine and cut out an image of what society tells you is beautiful or ideal. Are these images representative of you or your friends?

Then cut out an image that you think represents you, that looks like you, that makes you feel good about yourself.

Discuss: How do the images of the “ideal” beauty compare to the images that make you feel good about yourself?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: MEDIA LITERACY

WHY DIVERSITY IN IMAGERY IS SO IMPORTANT:

- ☐ What is diversity? Discuss diversity as seen in the film and the photoshoot imagery, or lack there of.
- ☐ Why is it important to hear stories from multiple perspectives?
- ☐ How would you reimagine a more diverse fashion industry and media?

ACTIVITY:

Cast your own campaign for a brand or clothing line. Print out, or screen shot photos of the models you want to use. What models would you use and why? Feel free to include all sizes, ages, races, abilities, sexual orientations/attractions and identities for the campaign.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Marketing Officer of Lane Bryant, Brian Beitler, praises social media, saying we can use it as a tool to speak out about brands, magazines, and groups who are not creating the imagery we want to see. It is a platform we did not have ten years ago and it gives us all a voice.

CUE: Watch film from 1:09:55-1:11:20

However, Philomena Kwao points out that her little sister is following people on Instagram who are altering their images and it is giving her sister a false sense of reality and a negative body image.

CUE: Watch film from 11:45-12:30

- ☐ Discuss the pros and cons of social media.
- ☐ What percentage of the social media posts on your platforms make you feel bad about yourself?
- ☐ What percentage makes you feel good about yourself?
- ☐ What do you think that ratio should be?
- ☐ What is the role of social media in your life?
- ☐ Do you think social media portrays an idealized or realistic version of one's life? Discuss social media versus reality.
- ☐ Have you ever had someone post negative comments on your social media? Have you ever posted a negative comment?
- ☐ How can we create a healthier online community?

ACTIVITY:

Ask everyone to share 3-5 body positive social media role models to follow and discuss what inspires them the most about their platform. They can be individuals, organizations, media, charities etc.

FOLLOW STRAIGHT/CURVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 /straightcurvefilm

 @StraightCurveNY

 @straightcurvefilm

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: HEALTH

- ☐ Define health. Discuss the different facets of health – physical, mental, emotional. Is any one more important than the other?
- ☐ What does health - mental, physical and emotional - entail? (cue: sleep, variety of foods, water, sunlight, activity, mindfulness etc)
- ☐ Is it important to find activities you enjoy and incorporate those into your life? How does doing this keep you healthy?
- ☐ If you found out a friend had a chronic illness how would you support them?

In the film Dr Mark Punyanita says that “having some fat is good” and Dr Bryn Austin says if we could eradicate the notion that “fat is bad” we would be way ahead in society.

CUE: Watch Film’s ‘HEALTH’ section from 22:40- 41:10mins

- ☐ Where did the idea that fat is bad come from and how did it come to be so widely accepted?
- ☐ Who does this message that fat is bad benefit? (cue: diet and weight loss industries/plastic surgeons/fashion industry)
- ☐ Why do bodies need fat and muscle?
- ☐ Can you tell if someone is healthy based on how they look?
- ☐ Have you ever felt the pressure to post a gym selfie or photo of the salad you’re about to eat to prove you lead a healthy lifestyle? How does this make you feel?
- ☐ Have you ever heard someone using a person’s health as an insult? How did you respond?
- ☐ What is obesity?
- ☐ Do plus size models promote obesity? How could imagery of diverse sized women improve the health and wellbeing of people/consumers?

ACTIVITY:

Find pictures of women and men online who may have some fat, cellulite and stretch marks that are not photoshopped out. Discuss how these images make you feel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: HEALTH

- ☐ What is BMI and how is it used?
- ☐ How did health and numbers (weight and BMI) become so linked? Should we separate these and if so how can we do that?
- ☐ How has your opinion on testing BMI changed after watching the film?

ACTIVITY:

What is the top message you would want to convey in a PSA to help spread a more accurate, helpful and inclusive message about health?

EATING DISORDERS

- ☐ What are eating disorders? How do eating disorders intersect with a negative body image?
- ☐ If you are concerned about you or a friend's body image and eating thoughts and behaviors name some resources and support that are available to help? (Cue: NEDA helpline, online screening tool, support groups)

In the film Nathalia talks about how she used to fit the “ideal” standard of beauty, but she wasn’t happy and she almost lost her life. This is an example of the harmful effects of pursuing this rigid societal ideal of beauty

CUE: Watch Film’s ‘HEALTH’ section from 19:50-22:40 mins

- ☐ Discuss some of the other potentially harmful effects of promoting the “thin ideal”

ACTIVITY:

Write a list of 5-10 things people can do to try and be strong in the face of society's unrealistic and dangerous beauty standards.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: STIGMA/BODY SHAMING

- ☐ What is body shaming? Does it happen on both ends of the spectrum: Skinny shaming and fat shaming?
- ☐ Discuss body shaming around racial and ethnic differences, age or other physical features.
- ☐ What is stigma?

Dr Judith Brisman says in the film “we define largeness as failure”

CUE: Watch Film from 33:32-38:21 mins

- ☐ Do you agree? And discuss some reasons why we, as a society, may do that?
- ☐ Have you ever looked at someone on the subway, airplane or street and judged them because of their size?

Anastasia Garcia talked about being afraid to eat in front of people as she was afraid they would judge her.

- ☐ Have you ever judged someone because of what was on their plate or how much or little they were eating?
- ☐ After seeing this movie do you think it will affect how you think about people.
- ☐ Have you ever overheard someone being publicly shamed about their body, race or age? Share a story.
- ☐ How did it make you feel? Did you intervene? Why/Why not?
- ☐ What do you think it would be like to push back on such stigmatizing comments?

ACTIVITY:

Pick out examples in the film where people were body shamed and practice responding to these negative comments. (Cue: Charli was told to lose 1.5inches in a week in Paris. Iskra discussing a stylist saying to her “what are we going to do with this fat model” Nayyara talking about being bullied for her size.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: STIGMA/BODY SHAMING

ROLE MODELS

- ☐ What are role models? And why are they important?
- ☐ Name some examples of good role models and bad role models. Discuss what makes them so.

Tess Holliday tells us in the film that she had no role models growing up and that is why she has Miss Piggy tattooed on her arm. Miss Piggy was her role model because she is sassy and funny.

- ☐ Who are your role models and why?

ACTIVITY:

Choose a character from your favorite TV show, movie or book that represents you. Discuss why.

Choose a character who you think is the total opposite to you. Why do you think this? What could you learn from this character?



DEFINITIONS/VOCABULARY RAISED IN THE FILM

This section may be used as a reference or guide if any words or ideas are raised in the film that need further clarification or definition.

Plus Size Model: Any model who is a US size 10 and above

Straight Size: Any model who is a US size 0-4

Inbetweenie: All models in between

Fat: The soft flesh on the bodies of people and animals that helps keep the body warm and is used to store energy

Visceral fat: The fat stored inside the abdominal cavity, surrounding the internal organs

Subcutaneous fat: The fat that lies directly under your skin, fat rolls and pouches. Not necessarily harmful

BMI: Body Mass Index: Measures how tall you are versus how much you weigh. Used as a measurement to define if someone is “normal weight”, “overweight” or “obese”

Obesity: a condition characterized by the excessive accumulation and storage of fat in the body

Eating Disorders: serious conditions related to persistent eating behaviors that negatively impact your health, your emotions and your ability to function in important areas of life (e.g. anorexia nervosa, bulimia, binge eating disorder)

Stigma: a strong feeling of disapproval or prejudice that most people in a society have about something

Photoshop: to alter a digital image using photo editing software

Body Positivity: Accepting your body as it is

DEFINITIONS/VOCABULARY RAISED IN THE FILM

Body Shaming: The action or practice of humiliating someone by making mocking or critical comments about their body shape or size

Representation: The images, text, or symbols used to communicate reality and to portray a particular way of being

Diversity: The inclusion of individuals from different cultures, histories, religions, race, genders, sexual orientations, nationalities, languages, financial backgrounds, abilities, etc.

Inclusivity: An intention or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized

Role Model: A person who serves as an example, whose behavior is followed by others

Game Changer: An event, idea, person or procedure that affects a significant shift in the current manner of doing or thinking about something

Sexual Orientation: A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted

Self Esteem: The way individuals think and feel about themselves and their abilities

Body Image: An emotional, intellectual or idealized image of what one's body is – or should look like. It is sometimes misconceived, and influenced heavily by the fashion industry, media and society. Negative body image can lead to illness, under performance and low self esteem

Stereotype: A widely held and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing

Advertising: A form of communication used to persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to take some action with respect to products, ideas, or services and often intended to sell something

Media: The main means of mass communication of information, including television, magazines, books, movies, music and the Internet

WHAT CAN YOU DO? AT HOME EXERCISES/CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

- ☐ Print our “I Want To See...” Flyer and tell us what YOU want to see more of in the fashion industry, media and advertising. Use this flyer to send a message to a brand/ company/media publication and tell them how to better represent YOU. FOR EXAMPLE: “I Want To See Victoria’s Secret using models of different sizes” or “I Want To See more black athletes in Vogue” etc.. And Tag them In your post like this “Hey @Victoriassecret, I want to see your ads with models of different sizes. @straightcurvefilm #Iwanttoseecampaign #straightcurve
- ☐ Write a letter to your younger self and talk about your body image and self image.
- ☐ Write a letter to a young girl or boy who is struggling with her/his personal body image and has self doubt about the way she/he looks. Detail the costs of pursuing the thin ideal and offer some alternatives to help her or him to develop a better body image.
- ☐ Stand in front of the mirror and list 10 positive things you like. They can be physical or otherwise.
- ☐ Make a pact with a friend to not compliment each other on anything related to each other’s bodies. Strike “you look skinny” as a compliment from your vocabulary. Make a list of compliments that have nothing to do with appearance for each other.
- ☐ Take our PLEDGE to write a social media post or letter to a magazine, clothing brand or company who you believe promotes an unrealistic body image and doesn’t use diverse people in their pages or their ads. Tell them what you don’t like about their business model and suggest positive ways they can change and be more representative and inclusive. Send the letter in the mail or via email or post the comment. Do NOT shame or troll. The purpose of this exercise is to make a recommendation on what you would like to see more of in the magazine/clothing line etc. NOT to focus on the negative.
- ☐ Choose a brand/magazine/clothing line/person/organization you want to celebrate on social media for their great work in the body positive space and diversity and tweet at them/comment on their Instagram or Facebook page and tell them why they are making a difference in your lives.
- ☐ Believe that your voice, either solo or amplified by a group, MATTERS.
- ☐ Report your progress on any action you take. We want to hear from you! Use the #straightcurvefilm and tag us on our social channels.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? SPREAD THE WORD

SCREENINGS

Host a screening at your school or in your community for family members and friends. Contact straightcurvescreenings@gmail.com to start organizing a screening today!

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

We love to hear feedback on how students/people respond to the film, discussion topics and activities. If you have any thoughts on how to improve this guide we would love to hear them, and send any other activities you've known to be successful in this area.

Your insight is invaluable. Thank You.

Please email straightcurveeducation@gmail.com



ADDITIONAL CONSULTANCY PROVIDED BY:

The National Eating Disorders Association

The Body Project's Kristen Snow

Bustle

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health professor Dr. S. Bryn Austin

Clinical Advisor: Ilene Fishman

Impact Producer: Kimberly Dilts (Film Ignite)

Impact Producer: Elisabeth Hower

Ro*co Films



OTHER RESOURCES

National Eating Disorders Association: <http://www.neda.org>

If you or someone you love is struggling with eating and/or body image concerns, please reach out to the National Eating Disorders Helpline at 800-931-2237 or www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/helplinechat. The Helpline is open 9am-9pm ET Monday-Thursday and 9am-5pm ET Friday.

NEDA online forums ([nationaleatingdisorders.org/ forum](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org/forum))
screening tool ([nationaleatingdisorders.org/ screening-tool](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org/screening-tool)),
NEDA toolkits ([nationaleatingdisorders.org/ toolkits](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org/toolkits))
Help finding treatment options (including online treatment options) at
[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/find-treatment/treatment- and-support-groups](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/find-treatment/treatment-and-support-groups)

Girl Gaze: <http://www.girlgaze.tv>

Girl Up: <https://girlup.org>

I Am That Girl: <http://www.iamthatgirl.com>

Bustle: www.bustle.com

NAMLE: <https://namle.net>

Harvard School of Public Health: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu>

The Model Alliance: <http://modelalliance.org>

Beauty Redefined: <https://beautyredefined.org>

Movemeant Foundation: <http://movemeantfoundation.org>

Media Smarts: <http://mediasmarts.ca>

Geena Davis Institute: <https://seejane.org>

Women You Should Know: <http://womenyoushouldknow.com>

Dove Self Esteem Project: <http://selfesteem.dove.us>

Stylelikeu: <http://stylelikeu.com>