



## Body image among young people and its relationship with psychological and physical health

by Helena Lewis-Smith



Photo: 'lazy hours' by Md saad andalib | <https://www.flickr.com/photos/saadandalib>

**'Body image'** is a multi-dimensional construct and refers to a person's perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, in relation to their body<sup>1</sup>. This encompasses the body's functions and capabilities, in addition to its appearance.

Concerns relating to body image are prevalent around the world, with up to 61% of adolescents experiencing some degree of dissatisfaction with their body<sup>2</sup>. Young people report feeling unhappy with several aspects of their appearance, including their weight and shape, muscularity, height, skin, and teeth.

The rising global incidence of body dissatisfaction among young people constitutes a public health concern, given its consequences on psychological and physical health. With regard to psychological impacts, poor body image is a risk factor for later lower self-esteem<sup>3</sup>, depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts<sup>4</sup>, and eating pathology<sup>5</sup>, among adolescents.

With regard to physical health, research indicates that young people with body image concerns are subsequently more likely to engage in unhealthy eating (e.g., higher dieting, lower intake of fruit and vegetables) and lower levels of physical activity<sup>6</sup>, and experience weight gain<sup>7</sup>.

Research has recently elucidated the role of body dissatisfaction as a risk factor for more dangerous health behaviours among this group.

Indeed, prospective studies found that adolescents with higher levels of body dissatisfaction were

more likely to engage in smoking<sup>8</sup>, binge drinking<sup>8,9</sup>, drug use<sup>8,9</sup>, and self-harm<sup>8</sup>. Adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable when it comes to other health behaviours, with poorer body image being associated with lower use of sun protection<sup>10</sup>, sexual intercourse at a younger age<sup>11</sup>, and greater consideration of cosmetic surgery in the future<sup>12</sup>.

These findings are concerning, given that the body dissatisfaction is considered a 'normative discontent' among young people around the world. They suggest that health professionals, school teachers, and parents should be mindful of the messages they use to encourage or discourage certain health behaviours among young people. Greater benefit may come from utilising strategies that motivate and encourage this group to look after and take care of their bodies; which not only has the potential to lead to greater body satisfaction, but also reduce the likelihood of their engagement in behaviours which may be detrimental to their health in the future.

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### Editorial

Since October 2018, the topic of musculoskeletal health of young people and how to reach young people with the topic of their physical health has been running like a red thread through the work of ENETOSH.

A joint workshop with EU-OSHA took place in Bilbao in March 2019. We are building on the results of this workshop at the 23rd ENETOSH Network Meeting at A+A 2019 in Düsseldorf. Some of the contributions can be found in this newsletter. Another joint event together with EU-OSHA will follow on 26 and 28 May 2020 in Dresden. We cordially invite you to participate!

Ulrike Bollmann & Claus Dethleff

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### Imprint

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Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

## Work site visits to engage students in their education by Mitchel A. Rosen



Visiting workplaces is an important way for students to experience the way hazards are controlled. Site visits provide students with the opportunity to think about potential exposures before their visit, see workers engaged at their work place, question managers about how they control exposures and work to eliminate injuries, and reflect on the experience.

Each of these steps is essential for students to learn as part of experiential education. The New York/New Jersey Education and Research Center (funded by NIOSH) has created two programmes that bring our students to work sites so that they experience safety and health issues. The Industrial Site Visits course visits six workplaces, allowing students to see construction sites, chemical manufacturing, and other

facilities. Our Historical Perspectives Tour is a five-day trip that brings students to various workplaces to understand the impact of work on workers.

Several students have remarked that the work site visits will influence their professional practice. They said:

'I have a different perspective on how business and labour can collaborate to improve worker safety and also additional questions to ask when taking an occupational history of someone who works in manufacturing.'

'Immediately I would like to implement some of the safety practices reviewed at Goodyear, like staff recognition and relationship building. I will also be reviewing glove and PAPR use based on our stop at NIOSH to see if there are any updates needed.'

'I will take away tried and true practices



that are being implemented in real settings and not just reading from a book.'

Over 300 years ago Bernardo Ramazzini visited workplaces to observe how various types of work were performed and to discuss illnesses with workers. The site visits we provide for our students allows them to better understand how occupational and environmental exposures have occurred, so that they can work to prevent future exposures to improve workplace conditions and worker health. Bringing students on site visits allows them to see the hazards that workers face, and think about the ways in which OSH professionals can make the work experience safer.

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## Learning Occupational Health by Experiencing Risks - LOcHER project by Dave Foy

So, what is LOcHER all about? Learning about Occupational Health by Experiencing Risk or LOcHER as it is known, was developed in 2015 by Dr Bob Rajan (Health & Safety Executive), John Cairns (Safety Groups UK) and Karen Hoskins (IBIS Training Solutions) in response to the question 'how do we protect the future health of young workers and vocational students?'

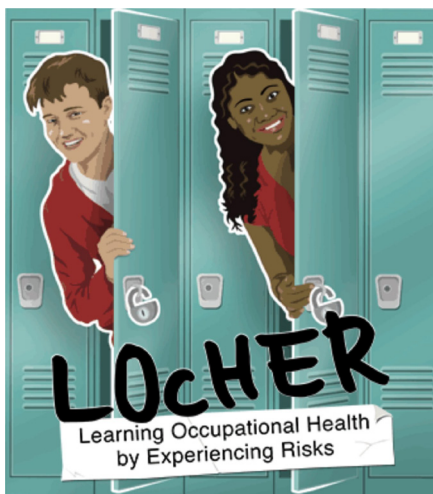
The project aims to:

- Engage young people to develop new approaches to learning about safety and health;
- Produce and share resources that can be used as peer to peer learning aids;
- Reduce instances of occupational ill health in the future by educating the younger generation.

The key to achieving these aims is the engagement of young people in schools and colleges. By embedding safe, healthy working practices and techniques at an early age and using methods that young people and their peer groups understand, the project team are hoping to see an improved knowledge base, an increase

in hazard awareness which will lead to a reduction in exposures and future ill health instances. This is a long term goal but as many occupational illnesses have a long latency period, we need to start now to reach as many young people as possible.

The project is overseen by a steering group made up of volunteers from a number of organisations. In addition to the three original contributors, the steering group



includes representatives from RoSPA, NEBOSH, Preston's College, Healthy Working Lives Scotland, IOSH, IIRSM, BSIF and others.

Members of the steering group volunteer their time to present LOcHER sessions at schools, colleges and various networking groups to share the concept with others. There is no charge for using the concept or getting involved, the engagement and sharing any produced resources are all that is required.

LOcHER is embedded into several colleges across the UK and has also been adopted by several companies for use with their own apprentices. By providing our younger generation with the freedom to research the issues in their work area, develop new approaches to reducing risk and then sharing their findings with others, we will achieve our project aims.

More information can be found on social media streams by searching #locherproject. Get in touch, get involved.

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## Education and training of future HSE professionals by Lucie Kocurkova

### Let's work together: Interactive tools for students and teachers

The approaches within education and training of HSE professionals vary across the countries. Sharing good practice examples is vital for further development and improvement of university-level education and training of HSE professionals.

Project RiskMan ([riskman.vsb.cz](http://riskman.vsb.cz)) contributes to EU initiatives addressing attractiveness of the learning process for students and enhancement of the quality in education. The main project objective is to develop relevant and high-quality competences of future HSE professionals in the area of risk management through transnational cooperation among universities, insurance institutions, enterprises and other key stakeholders active in the field of education and training.

### What do we need?

Teaching HSE should move from a traditional didactic lecture style to a more

interactive style, with practical sessions, discussions with safety professionals and other participative ways of teaching to prepare students for their future role and missions.

### How to motivate students and in the same way teachers to enjoy education on both sides?

The focus is on the selection of interactive teaching tools including safety games, summer schools for students and teachers and HSE industry trainee programmes. All the tools are embedded in the concept of a family home, which provides an excellent real-world platform for the education and training of future HSE professionals.

### Family Home Model for Teaching HSE Risk Management

The family home is a simplified model of a real company, a 'small model of the big world'. It reflects its structure, its main stakeholders, processes, etc. and provides a framework for presenting the principles and practices of HSE risk management.

The idea of the family home is based on the same assumption as a company that people want to live safely (whether at home or at work), they want to protect their health and the environment to which they belong.

But they also want to take risks because they 'profit' from them. For example, a family runs the risk of being burned while cooking a dinner; a company risks being burned while preparing food for their customers; a family prefers to drive to school/work to save time; a company needs car



transportation to effectively deliver goods to its customers. In order to meet both requirements, i.e. the protection of health, safety and environment while avoiding risks, some rules and measures should be adopted. As such HSE is the umbrella for all regulations, procedures and requirements relating to HSE risks and is a result of society's needs.

The RiskMan approach benefits from the fact that students are on board. Students, i.e. future HSE professionals, are working together with teachers and trainers to develop, test and evaluate the interactive tools. We believe that communicating HSE risk management can be not only effective, but also entertaining.

The first concepts and tools developed within the RiskMan project were shared at the RiskMan workshop in the frame of the 10th International Conference on the Prevention of Accidents at Work – WOS 2019 in Vienna. There we enjoyed the atmosphere of interactive, collaborative teaching together with the WOS participants.

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## Educational Landscapes in Motion by Katharina Musialek

The initiative 'Educational Landscapes in Motion' (translated: 'Bildungslandschaften in Bewegung') was established in 2016 by a cooperation between the Vienna University of Technology and the Prevention Department of the Austrian Workers Compensation Board (AUVA).



The needs of schools are constantly changing due to new developments. Current trends such as the implementation of digitalisation or the need for cooperative learning and critical thinking have a great influence on everyday school life. This leads to challenges in creating a safe and healthy educational environment. It is becoming increasingly difficult to meet future educa-

tional needs as well as safety and health requirements. For this reason, a small interdisciplinary group has come together to answer questions such as:

What do educational institutions still need today?

- Does the current level of education correspond to these ideas?
- What will the education look like in 5-10-20 years?
- How can we create safe and healthy educational spaces for the future?

In order to answer these difficult questions, an open kick-off event was organised. Many experts from the fields of prevention, education, architecture, spatial planning, sociology and many other fields came. In a joint discourse, relevant research fields were identified and new projects initiated. The discussions led to a first working paper, which formed the basis for the next steps of the initiative.

The combination of research, practice and teaching was an important cornerstone. This resulted in the following activities:

- Open events entitled 'Educational Landscapes in Motion' take place regularly to ensure that the community and

key stakeholders are not only informed but also able to participate.

- Since 2017 a special course has taken place at the Vienna University of Technology which sensitises students to new educational spaces and strives for a combination of pedagogy and architecture / spatial planning.
- For example, an old school was re-designed together with architecture students, teachers and pupils to support open learning and diverse learning methods. This new school will open in October 2019. Another project identifies educational opportunities outside the school building in order to open schools and recognise and exploit the potential of the environment (outside the school building).
- In addition, there is already a first publication describing the positions and the current state of research.

Please find further information at:

[www.bildungslandschaften.at](http://www.bildungslandschaften.at)

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## Training Advisory Council by Prof Amani Waheed

The ultimate goal in our lives is to live in health, peace and safety. This could be achieved through the will of nations and the support of governments and policy makers, especially in today's advanced innovations and technologies.

Some 198 countries have signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); each country is working to achieve its goals by the end of 2030. The African Union's Agenda 2063 is linked to the SDGs. This gives the opportunity to work through a well organised foundation within the African Occupational Safety and Health (OSH): OSHAfrica. OSHAfrica will bridge the gap between African countries and bring them together in line with international standards.

In this context, the OSHAfrica Board of Trustees has appointed a Training Advisory Board (TAC) to promote education and competence in occupational safety and health in African countries.

TAC consists of five members from Africa and two international members with extensive experience in training and capacity

building in OSH. TAC will offer a high quality and internationally recognised certification course in OSH that meets the African background and needs.



The course is aimed at all those working in the field of OSH, including occupational physicians, family doctors, nurses, inspectors, hygienists, ergonomists, engineers and safety staff seeking certificates. OSHAfrica will conduct two training courses to meet the requirements for these categories.

The OSHAfrica Competence Framework consists of several modules and covers two levels of qualification. The courses are offered as blended learning. The first two modules are risk assessment and OSH management systems. Both modules will be tested in a pilot study at an African academic institute.

TAC hopes to integrate OSH in Africa into a platform of high quality and sustainable, fruitful outcomes that meets the needs of all African countries and places OSHAfrica in the global context.

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### New Members

**Centre for Labour Studies -  
University of Malta**

Malta | [www.um.edu.mt/clsc](http://www.um.edu.mt/clsc)

**Institute For Occupational Medicine  
And Occupational Safety (IAA)**

Germany | [www.i-a-a.de](http://www.i-a-a.de)

**Foundation LDOH - Learning and  
Developing of Occupational Health**

The Netherlands | [ldoh.net/](http://ldoh.net/)