

## *Reality Matters: Extreme Measures: Teacher's Guide*

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Curriculum Focus:** Health

**Lesson Duration:** Two or three class periods

### **Program Description**

In a country obsessed with having a perfect body, the pressure starts early. Once thought to affect only adolescent girls, the desire for a beautiful body influences kids as young as seven and has moved into boys' locker rooms. This program explores the harmful consequences.

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### **Discussion Questions**

Before watching the video

- Have you ever dieted, exercised, or taken drugs to lose weight or improve your appearance? What measures have you taken because of your desire to look good or get in shape?
- Have you ever gone to extremes? Compare your experiences with those shown in the program.

After watching the video

- One-fourth of people on diets develop an eating disorder. Discuss how dieters can recognize the warning signs of a potential problem.
  - What kind of help can they get before it's too late?
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### **Lesson Plan**

#### *Student Objectives*

- Explore what is involved in body piercing, tattoos, and cosmetic surgery.
- Hypothesize why people engage in these activities.
- Research the health risks associated with these activities.

## Materials

- Paper and pencils
- Newsprint and markers
- Computer with Internet access (optional but very helpful)

## Procedures

1. Open the lesson with a discussion about current fashion trends that involve minor alterations to a part of the body. What trends are students attracted to? What trends do they think improve their appearance? List their ideas on a piece of newsprint. Their thoughts may include the following:
  - Styling hair
  - Coloring hair
  - Wearing tight pants
  - Using makeup
  - Piercing ears, lips, or eyebrows
  - Wearing black
  - Wearing fingernail and toenail polish
2. Tell students that during this lesson, they will examine two extreme fashion trends that involve altering the body and are difficult or impossible to reverse: permanent tattoos and body piercing.
3. Write each of these terms on the chalkboard or on a piece of newsprint. Discuss with the class what each one means; explanations are below.
  - Tattoos are permanent ink marks or designs, created by an electric instrument made of needles. The needles penetrate the first two layers of the skin. A professional tattoo artist must have a permit from the local health department to operate a tattoo parlor.
  - Body piercings are holes put in the ears, nose, navel, eyebrows, lips, tongue, or other parts of the body for the purpose of putting jewelry in them. Piercing must be done according to proper sanitary procedures. The area surrounding a piercing must be washed twice a day with antibacterial soap.
4. Divide students into pairs. Have each pair select one procedure above to research. After researching, each pair should answer the following questions. Related Web sites are listed after the questions.

### Questions

- (a) What is involved in the procedure? Describe how it is done.
- (b) What are the benefits of engaging in this activity?
- (c) What are the short-term health risks?



- (d) What are the long-term health risks?
- (e) Why might young people engage in this activity?
- (f) Based on what you have learned, would you engage in this activity? Give reasons to support your decision.

#### **Web Sites about tattoos and body piercing**

- <http://www.jour.unr.edu/outpost/specials/genx.tattoo1.html>
  - <http://204.202.137.111/sections/living/DailyNews/piercings991026.html>
  - [http://or.essortment.com/bodypiercingin\\_rbx.html](http://or.essortment.com/bodypiercingin_rbx.html)
  - <http://www.childrenshospitals.net/nachri/news/tattoos.html>
5. Give students up to one hour to complete their research and answer the questions. During the next class period, have the pairs give a brief oral presentation to the class. Presentations should answer all the questions above.
  6. Discuss all students' findings. Ask students why they think young people are attracted to these activities, especially when health risks are involved. If one reason is so that young people can assert themselves as individuals, ask students to think of safer alternatives. How can young people make a statement about their individuality without hurting their bodies?
  7. Conclude the lesson by discussing what the students learned about making good choices regarding their bodies. Help them understand that the key to making healthy choices is to have information they can use in their lives. The activities in this lesson pose some health risks. Ask students if learning these risks changed their ideas about these activities. Knowing what they know now, would they engage in them.

### *Assessment*

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- **3 points:** Students demonstrated strong research skills, above-average ability to answer questions accurately and sensitively, strong ability to apply what they learned to their lives, and maturity and insight in discussing sensitive topics.
- **2 points:** Students demonstrated on-grade-level research skills, average ability to answer questions accurately and sensitively, average ability to apply what they learned to their lives, and some maturity and insight in discussing sensitive topics.
- **1 point:** Students demonstrated weak research skills, below-average ability to answer questions accurately and sensitively, difficulty applying what they learned to their own lives, and difficulty discussing sensitive topics with the class..

## Vocabulary

### body piercing

*Definition:* Putting a hole for jewelry in the ears, nose, navel, eyebrow, lips, tongue, or elsewhere in the body

*Context:* You must carefully clean a body piercing twice a day with antibacterial soap.

### cosmetic surgery

*Definition:* Surgery concerned with therapeutic or cosmetic reformation of tissue

*Context:* Cosmetic surgery can correct a broken nose.

### tattoo

*Definition:* A permanent design created on the skin by an instrument with electric needles

*Context:* Before getting a tattoo, it is important to know that it will be a painful procedure and something difficult to remove in the future.

## Academic Standards

### National Academy of Sciences

The National Science Education Standards provide guidelines for teaching science as well as a coherent vision of what it means to be scientifically literate for students in grades K-12. To view the standards, visit <http://books.nap.edu>.

This lesson plan addresses the following science standards:

- Science in Personal and Social Perspectives: Personal health; Risks and benefits

### Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Language Arts – Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

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## Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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## DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

### How To Use the DVD

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

**Play Video** – This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

**Video Index** – Here the video is divided into four parts (see below), indicated by video thumbnail icons. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

**Curriculum Units** – These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

**Standards Link** – Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

**Teacher Resources** – This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

### Video Index

#### I. The Monster Within (10 min.)

Society's view of the "perfect body" is featured, and how the quest for it relates to eating disorders. The emotional impact and long-term health risks of eating disorders and extreme exercise are described.

#### II. Outside Influences (6 min.)

This segment explores problems related to the use of steroids and creatine, two common supplements used for improving physical and athletic performance. Long- and short-term side effects are explained.

#### III. Self Image (4 min.)

Cheryl Haworth, an Olympic weightlifter, tells about learning to accept her body, rather than trying to change it. She explains how being larger than average makes her feel strong and beautiful and why she is popular at school.



#### IV. To Your Health (4 min.)

What you eat determines how you look and how you feel about yourself. Fast food and poor eating habits are featured as possible precursors to eating disorders.

### Curriculum Units

#### 1. The Perfect Body

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What does the perfect body look like? Who has it?

A: Students' perceptions of a perfect body will vary, but most likely will include adjectives such as slender, built, tall, lean, and buff. Students are likely to name actors, rock stars, or models.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: How do magazines and television influence our perceptions of the perfect body?

A: Magazines and television portray attractive people who have slender bodies or athletic builds, who represent what many feel is the ideal look.

#### 2. Quest or Obsession?

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What makes a person want to lose weight?

A: (In addition to saying that being too heavy makes a person want to diet, some students may say that losing weight will make them look better.)

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What is the difference between a quest and an obsession?

A: A quest is trying to achieve a goal; an obsession is when the quest controls the person and interferes with other aspects of life.

#### 3. Eating Disorders

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: When could dieting become a problem?

A: Dieting is a problem when someone who is not overweight wants to lose weight. Some students may respond that the problem is not losing any weight at all on a diet.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What does "dancing around the black hole" mean?

A: Girls who do not yet have an eating disorder are said to be "dancing around the black hole" when they become obsessed with their calorie intake and their weight because they are at risk of developing an eating disorder.

#### 4. Body Dysmorphia

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: Why might a male have an eating disorder?

A: Answers will vary, but students may talk about some boys' desire to be buff or lean or their attempts to bulk up by eating too much.



*Post-viewing question*

Q: What is body dysmorphia?

A: Body dysmorphia is a disorder related to a person's internal perception of his or her own body image. Sufferers think that they must change parts of their bodies, even though to anyone else, nothing appears to be wrong.

## 5. Health Risks Related to Eating Disorders

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: How can losing weight cause health problems?

A: Answers will vary from students who think that losing weight is necessary for good health to those who talk about others who are too thin or who have eating disorders.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What are some of the health risks associated with eating disorders?

A: Short-term problems include dehydration and irregular or decreased menstruation; long-term risks include heart problems, weak bones, infertility, and kidney failure.

## 6. Steroids

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What can an athlete use to build muscle and improve performance?

A: While most students know about steroids, they may choose to talk only about diet supplements or bodybuilding exercises.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What health risks are associated with using steroids?

A: For girls, short-term effects are the growth of facial hair, deepening of the voice, and decreased menstruation. For both boys and girls, the long-term risks include heart disease, reproductive disorders, liver damage, and stunted growth.

## 7. Creatine

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: What diet supplements can improve athletic performance?

A: Answers will vary about legal diet supplements. You may want to involve the class in online research of supplements mentioned.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What is creatine, and what does it do?

A: Creatine is a legal diet supplement that is said to increase stamina and help build muscles. It is an amino acid naturally found in fish, chicken, and meat that is classified as a food supplement by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

## 8. Searching for Beauty

*Pre-viewing question*

Q: Who decides what is beautiful?

A: Answers will vary, but many students may say that the media defines beauty. Some may acknowledge that they define beauty themselves.



*Post-viewing question*

Q: Why are extreme exercise, body piercing, and tattoos described as abuse to the body?

A: These activities are painful and may leave permanent damage, including infection and disfigurement.

**9. Temptation***Pre-viewing question*

Q: What motivates an athlete to excel?

A: Answers will vary, but may include a scholarship to college or the popularity that comes from success.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What advice did Patrice offer about resisting the temptation to use performance enhancers?

A: She said that knowledge of the side effects of steroids, such as feeling ill, should prevent anyone from taking steroids. She also said that creatine was not formulated for a woman's body, so girls should not use it.

**10. Being Fit***Pre-viewing question*

Q: How could a person be overweight and still physically fit?

A: Answers will vary, but many students are likely to say that an overweight person is not fit. Some might qualify their answers with references to football players, weightlifters, or sumo wrestlers.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: How does Cheryl describe beauty?

A: Cheryl says that being fit is more important than looking fit because beauty is found in strength. She sees her strength as a form of beauty.

**11. Fast Food vs. Nutrition***Pre-viewing question*

Q: What are the problems with fast food?

A: Most students will know that many fast foods tend to have high fat, sugar, or sodium content.

*Post-viewing question*

Q: What is the effect of poor eating habits?

A: A person can feel stressed, unsatisfied, and tired. It is possible that poor eating habits can lead to a perception that it's necessary to go on a calorie-restricted diet.

**12. Changing Your Habits***Pre-viewing question*

Q: How would you describe a normal meal?

A: Answers will vary and may not reflect eating a balance of the food groups. Students may talk more about the social aspects of eating than the nutritional.





*Post-viewing question*

Q: How does self-esteem affect our eating habits?

A: When we have good self-esteem, we can eat the foods that our bodies need for energy while controlling our weight sensibly.

