



**THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **The Cybersmile Foundation Publish Body Beautiful 2023 Report on World Mental Health Day**

**Shocking report into body image reveals that 40% of respondents said social media has made them want to permanently change their body through surgery.**

- **51%** of respondents said that social media makes them feel insecure about their own body
- **50%** of respondents said that social media makes them feel that they hate their own body
- **47%** of respondents said they feel pressure to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos
- **23%** of respondents indicated that they have been encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people they don't know on social media
- **40%** of respondents said social media makes them want to permanently change their body through surgery
- **20%** of respondents indicated that social media has a negative impact on their relationship with food
- **55%** of respondents said social media makes them feel they need to lose or gain weight
- **15%** of respondents said social media negatively affects their exercise habits
- **33%** of respondents said the way they feel about their body negatively impacts their mental health
- **56%** of respondents said they feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves on social media

**LONDON, UK, October 10, 2023** - The Cybersmile Foundation has announced the launch of *Body Beautiful 2023* - a national report exploring the impact of social media on the body image of its users across the UK.

The *Body Beautiful 2023* study asked 2000 participants a series of questions relating to body image and the impact that social media is having on their relationship with their bodies. Important areas such as self-image, mental health, eating habits were all explored as part of the research project.

Dr. Deborah Gilboa from the Cybersmile Advisory Panel, said: “Half of the respondents say that social media makes them hate their own bodies. The strong association between self-disgust and depression and anxiety makes this data especially concerning. Just spending time scrolling on social media could put these young users at higher risk for new or exacerbated mental illness.”

Findings from *Body Beautiful 2023* will be utilized to ensure that Cybersmile continues providing the most useful and effective advice, education and support to those in need.

To mark the publication of *Body Beautiful 2023*, Cybersmile have also launched an interactive educational module using the findings from the research to educate internet users about the impact social media and online life can have on their wellbeing. The development of the module was carried out following a number of recent Cybersmile studies across the US and UK including their *Comparison Culture*, *Digital Wellbeing* and *Body Beautiful* reports.

Cybersmile’s ongoing commitment to better understand the relationship between humans and technology is supported by an international advisory panel - a team of world-renowned experts in key areas including research, internet safety, mental health, wellbeing, equity, gaming, sports, parenting and youth development.

Melisa Raouf, Miss England Bareface Winner ‘22, said: “In a world full of seemingly perfect images, it's easy to feel the pressure. Yet, Cybersmile’s research findings firmly remind us to embrace our unique beauty and extend kindness to ourselves. Together, we're on a mission to redefine beauty on our own terms, illuminating the fact that it radiates most brilliantly when we embody our true selves. And remember, accepting who we are is crucial, because there will never be another you. That's your superpower, and that's what makes you truly special.”

Regional data gathered as part of the study offers valuable insights and comparisons for major cities across the UK including Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Sheffield and Southampton.

The research was conducted by Censuswide across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland with 2,000 general respondents who are social media users between 29.09.2023 - 02.10.2023. Censuswide abide by and employ members of the Market Research Society which is based on the ESOMAR principles and are members of The British Polling Council.

Insights from the report include:

### **1. How often, if ever, has social media made you feel insecure about your own body?**

- 11% of respondents said they feel insecure about their own body every time they use it
- 14% of respondents said they feel insecure about their own body most times that they use it
- 26% of respondents said they feel insecure about their own body sometimes when they use it
- 37% of respondents said they never feel insecure about their body on social media
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure about their body on social media

### **2. How often, if ever, has social media made you feel that you hate your own body?**

- 10% of respondents said social media made them feel like they hate their own body every time they use it
- 16% of respondents said social media made them feel like they hate their own body most times that they use it
- 24% of respondents said social media made them feel like they hate their own body sometimes when they use it
- 47% of respondents said social media never made them feel like they hate their own body
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure that social media has made them feel that they hate their own body

### **3. How often, if ever, have you felt pressured to use filters or tools to edit your appearance on social media images or videos?**

- 11% of respondents said they feel pressured to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos every time they use it
- 16% of respondents said they feel pressured to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos most times they use it
- 20% of respondents said they feel pressured to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos sometimes when they use it
- 51% of respondents said they never feel pressured to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure that they feel pressure to use filters or tools to edit their appearance on social media images or videos

**4. Have you ever been encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people that you don't know on social media?**

- 7% of respondents said they have been encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people that they don't know on social media a lot of times
- 16% of respondents said they have been encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people that they don't know on social media sometimes
- 16% of respondents said they were not really being encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people that they don't know on social media
- 59% of respondents said they were not being encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people that they don't know on social media
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure they were being encouraged to have cosmetic surgery by people they don't know on social media

**5. How often, if ever, has social media made you want to permanently change your body through surgery?**

- 8% of respondents said social media made them want to permanently change their body through surgery every time they use it
- 12% of respondents said social media made them want to permanently change their body through surgery most times that they use it
- 19% of respondents said social media made them want to permanently change their body through surgery sometimes when they use it
- 58% of respondents said social media never made them want to permanently change their body through surgery

- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure that social media made them want to permanently change their body through surgery

#### **6. Does social media positively or negatively, if at all, affect your relationship with food?**

- 7% of respondents said social media very positively affects their relationship with food
- 12% of respondents said social media somewhat positively affects their relationship with food
- 24% of respondents said social media neither positively nor negatively affects their relationship with food
- 15% of respondents said social media somewhat negatively affects their relationship with food
- 5% of respondents said social media very negatively affects their relationship with food
- 36% of respondents said social media had no impact on their relationship with food
- 1% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure if social media affects their relationship with food

#### **7. How often, if ever, has social media made you feel the need to lose or gain weight?**

- 11% of respondents said social media made them feel the need to lose or gain weight every time they use it
- 17% of respondents said social media made them feel the need to lose or gain weight most times they use it
- 27% of respondents said social media made them feel the need to lose or gain weight sometimes when they use it
- 43% of respondents said social media never made them feel the need to lose or gain weight
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure if social media made them feel the need to lose or gain weight

#### **8. Does social media positively or negatively affect your exercise habits?**

- 7% of respondents said social media very positively affects their exercise habits
- 16% of respondents said social media somewhat positively affects their exercise habits
- 21% of respondents said social media neither positively nor negatively affects their exercise habits

- 11% of respondents said social media somewhat negatively affects their exercise habits
- 4% of respondents said social media very negatively affects their exercise habits
- 39% of respondents said social media has no impact on their exercise habits
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure if social media impacts their exercise habits

**9. Does the way you feel about your body negatively or positively affect your mental health?**

- 6% of respondents said the way they feel about their body very positively affects their mental health
- 11% of respondents said the way they feel about their body somewhat positively affects their mental health
- 17% of respondents said the way they feel about their body neither positively nor negatively affects their mental health
- 22% of respondents said the way they feel about their body somewhat negatively affects their mental health
- 11% of respondents said the way they feel about their body very negatively affects their mental health
- 31% of respondents said the way they feel about their body has no impact on their mental health
- 2% of respondents said they prefer not to say or are unsure if they way they feel about their body affects their mental health

**10. How often, if ever, have you felt too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of yourself on social media?**

- 14% of respondents said they feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves on social media every time they use it
- 18% of respondents said they feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves on social media most times they use it
- 24% of respondents said they feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves on social media sometimes when they use it
- 41% of respondents said social media never made them feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves

- 3% of respondents said they prefer not to say or unsure if social media made them feel too anxious to share unedited or untouched photos of themselves

## **ABOUT THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION**

The Cybersmile Foundation is a multi-award-winning nonprofit organization committed to digital wellbeing and tackling all forms of bullying and abuse online. We work to promote kindness, diversity and inclusion by building a safer, more positive digital community. Through education, research, awareness campaigns and the promotion of positive digital citizenship we reduce incidents of cyberbullying and through our professional help and support services we empower those affected and their families to regain control of their lives.

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The Cybersmile Foundation is an international nonprofit organization registered as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization in the U.S. and as a registered charity in the U.K. (No. 1147576)