

Girls spend two hours getting ready and boys drink protein shakes to look good for school in Peebles.

Thursday 4 April, 2013

A group of 16 and 17 year-old Fixers in Peebles are on a mission to persuade younger pupils at their school not to obsess about their looks.

The students at Peebles High conducted a survey of 14 and 15-year-olds which revealed that body image concerns are more prevalent amongst girls, with some taking up to two hours to get ready each morning for school.

However, it showed that boys are not immune to the pressure to look good with some as young as 13 drinking protein shakes, and hitting the gym, in an attempt to bulk up like their celebrity heroes.

Working with Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, the group wants to persuade their younger peers that happiness comes from much more than what you see in the mirror.

"Our message is about getting people to be comfortable in being themselves and not trying to be what everyone wants them to be," said Fixer Sam Matthews, 16.

A report about the group's Fixers campaign will feature on ITV News Lookaround on Tuesday, April 9, from 6pm.

"We want to say to young boys that you can be happy with who you are and your own image without having to be physically large and muscly," added Isaac Pringle, 17.

Heather Allen, 17, said: "There should be role models for young girls who are confident in themselves and not afraid to make their own decisions about what they wear or what they look like."

Working with Fixers, the group are planning to create a booklet that can be used in Social Education classes at Peebles High to help teenagers to become more confident with their body image.

Fixers is a charity which supports thousands of young people across the UK to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported over 7,000 young people across the UK to have an authentic voice in their community.

Now, thanks to a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers aims to work with a further 20,000 young people over the next three years.

Fixers is a project of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.

"Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea... an idea given a voice by some 7,000 young people over the past five years," says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

"They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves."

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: "The Big Lottery Fund is extremely proud to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Fixers has a tremendous potential – one young person's initial idea can be transformed into reality, spread across a community and make a positive influence on a wide range of people. There are thousands of young people campaigning to make improvements in their neighbourhoods and Fixers provides a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements."

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Related Keywords:

Body Image; Fixers; Youth; Scotland; Peebles ::

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One photo attached. Caption:

Body Image Fixers (L-R) Kirstin Gray, 17, Isaac Pringle, 17, Heather Allen, 17, and Sam Matthews, 16.

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sarah Jones in the Fixers Communications Team by email sarahj@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:

www.fixers.org.uk

www.twitter.com/FixersUK

www.facebook.com/FixersUK

Notes to editors:

- Fixers started in England in 2008. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. To date, over 7,000 young people across the UK have become Fixers and created 900 projects.
- The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
- The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
- BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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