Young people in Belfast say be happy in the skin you're in

Monday 3 June, 2013

A group of Fixers from Belfast are launching an innovative campaign to fight back against the culture of body 'perfection' on social media.

Fixers Dearbhla Crossen, Rachel Taylor, both 16, and the group want to inspire young people to have confidence in how they look and not feel pressured to conform to stereotypes.

With support from Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing the future', the group have designed stickers to put in shop changing rooms across Belfast to give people a boost when trying on clothes.

"I've seen how social media influences young minds and makes people feel they have to look a certain way," says Dearbhla.

"This is what I want to change among young people. We're constantly confronted, on a daily basis, with what it means to be 'perfect'. But what is perfect?

"It's not just girls we're looking to reach out to, because this affects boys too.

"We need to tell people what body image is all about. It's about being comfortable with the way you look and that's the message we want to promote."

A report about the group's Fixers campaign will feature on UTV Live on Thursday 6 June from 6pm.

The stickers are made to look like a Facebook 'Like' command and have a positive message, 'Like The Way You Look', with a thumbs up sign to encourage people to feel happy with their appearance.

A 'smart' code on the sticker can be scanned with a smart phone, taking users to a Facebook page set up by the group.

There they will see more positive body image messages and they can 'chat' online about the issue.

Fellow Fixer Rachel Taylor, 16, knows what it feels like to be pressured by pictures on social media sites.

"Whenever I see these images of people on social media, I feel as though my confidence has been knocked because I don't look like them," she says.

"But I don't know hardly anyone who does look like that.

"I am actually running and watching what I eat. I see celebrities putting pictures up and it makes me feel fat. I know I have a healthy body, but seeing that they are super skinny or really toned, it's not good for my self-confidence.

"I hope that we make some people realise that the perfect body image doesn't exist and that everyone should feel happy in their own skin."

It's not just girls that are affected either. "Boys do feel the pressure too," says Fixer Paul McKernan, 17.

"I'm hoping to show young people that it only matters what they think about their own body and not what other people think."

Fixers is charity which supports 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 their chosen issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported over 7,700 young people to have an authentic voice in their community.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need - such as films, websites or print work - to make their chosen project a success.

Related Sectors:

Children & Teenagers :: Health ::

Related Keywords:

Body Image :: Social Media :: Belfast :: Fixers :: Celebrities :: Facebook :: Photo ::

Scan Me:

Now, thanks to a £7.2m 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 trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT).

“Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea… an idea given a voice by over 7,700 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.”

Frank Hewitt, Big Lottery Fund’s NI Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Sue Meaden in the Fixers Communications Team by email sue@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:
http://www.fixers.org.uk
http://www.twitter.com/FixersUK
http://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 7,700 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.

Company Contact:

Fixers

T. 01962810970
E. sarahj@fixers.org.uk
W. https://www.fixers.org.uk

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.fixers.pressat.co.uk