



EDENnews

NO 18 August 2007

'Promoting Body Satisfaction'

The theme for this newsletter is Activism. We look at how you can make a difference to eating and body image difficulties by getting active and getting vocal. We include a letter from collective member (and former governance member) Lesley Gamlen and some ideas on how to have a voice around issues for women in relation to food and body size messages in our society.

WHY GETTING VOCAL??

While it is important on an individual level to critique the messages we receive about 'ideal' weight, shape and size, joining forces with other people can make this much easier. Addressing fat phobia, eating difficulties and eating disorders is a social justice activity. Learning to speak up for social justice around body size frees people to live proudly and happily at whatever size they are.

Activism can take many forms from a simple assertive response by an individual, to an organised activity with others....

Some suggestions for activism or social change from Carolyn Costin, The Eating Disorder Sourcebook:

- ☺ Educate yourself and others
- ☺ Be an activist
- ☺ Practice taking people seriously - regardless of size or shape
- ☺ Critique society's mania for thinness
- ☺ Educate people about the dangers of dieting
- ☺ Avoid criticising your own body
- ☺ Discuss cultural influences
- ☺ Love people and make them feel loved for who they are on the inside.
- ☺ Avoid making, and confront others who make, comments about weight.
- ☺ Focus on health, not weight.
- ☺ Love, regardless of looks.
- ☺ Communicate effectively.
- ☺ Help promote strong, multifaceted roles for girls and young women.

Have you ever wanted to be involved in promoting body satisfaction? Would you like to be a part of EDEN? Do you have an interest in volunteering your time? Would you like to support EDEN to make a difference? We are seeking applications from volunteers interested in becoming an EDEN collective member. EDEN's next induction workshop for new collective members will be in October. For more information and a collective member pack please email info@eden.org.nz

Services we offer:

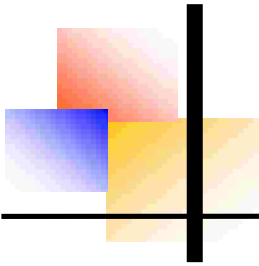
1 Garnet Road, Westmere

- Telephone Support
- Support Groups
- Resource Centre Visits
- Counsellor Directory
- Library
- Health Promotion Services
- Workshops
- Education & Information to schools, community groups, gyms, health professionals

www.eden.org.nz info@eden.org.nz

EATING DIFFICULTIES EDUCATION NETWORK

1 GARNET ROAD, WESTMERE. PO BOX 78 005, AUCKLAND 2. PH 09 378 9039 FAX 09 378 9393



EDEN Staff - comings and goings

Firstly we welcome Louise...

Hello and Kia Ora everyone. My name is Louise and I am the new accounts administrator at EDEN. I started at the beginning of April, and I have barely been able to catch my breath since then! As you can tell from my job title, my job has two parts to it - accounts and admin. The accounts part so far has involved (amongst other things) getting to grips with EDEN's accounts, managing the daily, weekly and monthly accounting tasks, and developing a budget so that we can plan for EDEN's long term viability. The admin part has involved (amongst other things) attending meetings and writing up minutes, filing, running errands, managing the library database, and creating a statistics collection procedure, that will make creating our annual report easier. My job description is three pages long, and this is a part time job! In the rest of my time, I am in my second year of full-time study for my Bachelor of Social Practice at Unitec, which I am enjoying immensely. I am incredibly interested in creating social change, which is why, when I saw the advert for an accounts administrator at EDEN, I jumped at the chance to use the skills from my past life (as an accountant in Queenstown) in a way which is more congruent with my current goal - to create social change. Whilst I am not directly affecting social change, I like to think that indirectly I am supporting all the staff at EDEN to focus on providing our services to as many people as possible. I have so far found my experience at EDEN to be fun and enlightening, and look forward to whatever the future may bring.

Louise

...and farewell Bron

I am leaving my role as EDEN's support worker around the time this newsletter will be printed. I have been associated with EDEN for a few years now, and have moved my way through being a collective/governance member, youth and education worker, and my present role. Most of my support role has centred on initial contact with EDEN clients, providing information, support and referral via phone or initial contact visits. It has been a tremendous privilege to share people's experiences during the vulnerable times when they are either seeking the information to support someone with an eating issue, or to enable individuals to find the next place in their journey toward recovery from eating issues. I feel sad to be leaving EDEN at a time when such fantastic development is happening, and I wish to acknowledge my appreciation of the EDEN team I have had the privilege to work alongside. I would like to thank Maree for her co-ordination and leadership of a strongly united and focused EDEN team. I would like to thank Deb for the enthusiasm and warmth that is apparent in her work and in her work relationships, and to thank Louise for her much needed admin skills that have made such a difference to our sense of direction. It has been a pleasure to work with such a great team.

I leave EDEN to take up an extra day of private practice and to complete my Masters in Psychotherapy. I have loved my time working with EDENish women, and it has been wonderful to deepen my experience working with women with eating issues and their supporters. I take this experience and knowledge base with me into my private practice, with gratitude. I look forward to continuing to support EDEN as a collective member or Friend of EDEN.

Bron



GETTING VOCAL: AN ACTIVIST RESPONSE FROM LESLEY GAMLEN

To "The Rock Breakfast Show"

I was really saddened to hear you make comments on the 19 April 2007 that I considered bigoted and prejudiced (not for the first time). I specifically refer to your comment that morning that "fat people shouldn't be allowed to breed", and also to the tone of the discussion you were promoting. I suspect you consider yourself to be promoting discussion about a health issue of the day, but that's not what I see. I see you promoting prejudice and bigotry, and attempting to humiliate and shame a group of our society. Yes, a 'large' group in all senses of the word.

I cannot see how humiliating and shaming adults and children can contribute to their health or have any part in resolving the health issues of this country. In addition to fuelling eating disorders, your comment put me in mind of other times and places when those considered 'undesirable' were prevented breeding by means of mass murder, or parts of the world where those considered 'undesirable' have been brutalised, isolated, 'assimilated', and so on.

Humiliation and shame as promoted on your radio station today are part of the problem, not part of any solution. In fact it is rife in New Zealand culture currently: fat people are the butt of prejudice that seems to have become socially acceptable and even embedded within our health system. Everyone seems to focus on obesity when New Zealand has far more pressing problems – alcohol is still a primary factor in deaths, ill health, rape, murder, child and spouse abuse. I don't hear you suggesting that those who drink alcohol not be allowed to breed.

I grew up in this beautiful country, and it is hard to find that it is now acceptable for people to abuse me in public and for those in a position of influence via the media to support this abuse because I am big. So what. I am healthy, I exercise regularly, I have a responsible job, I support my children. I contribute in many ways to this society. I want to live in a society that supports positive health promoting initiatives such as "Push Play" or "Green Prescriptions", or Auckland's free activities in the parks over the summer. Is this an impossible dream?

I have a sense of pointlessness about writing this letter. Somewhat similar to dropping a pebble in an ocean really – but at least I have the satisfaction of taking some action to promote health by writing this. I used to listen to your show a lot, and enjoyed it, but increasingly my finger goes to the off button.

FOR MORE IDEAS ON GETTING VOCAL SEE EDEN'S WEBSITE

www.eden.org.nz

OR CHECK OUT

www.loveyourbody.nowfoundation.org

www.bodypositive.com

www.naafa.org

www.about-face.org

Love Your Body Day 2007

In the current climate there are very few opportunities to celebrate and appreciate our bodies as they are and to acknowledge the beauty and natural diversity of all body shapes and sizes. Research demonstrates that body satisfaction is a key determinant in healthy self esteem and self worth for women (and increasingly men) and that combined with positive body image this helps to protect against the development of eating difficulties.

Celebrating LYBD on October 17th 2007 is a positive, engaging and proactive way to raise awareness of these issues and to promote body satisfaction (for all women). This is an inclusive and very topical 'cause' that will resonate across age groups and body sizes with a wide applicability (research with New Zealand women indicates that over half are dissatisfied with their physical appearance). The campaign has the dual focus of creating debate/raising awareness of the issues and of raising EDEN's profile/raising funds for EDEN's work.

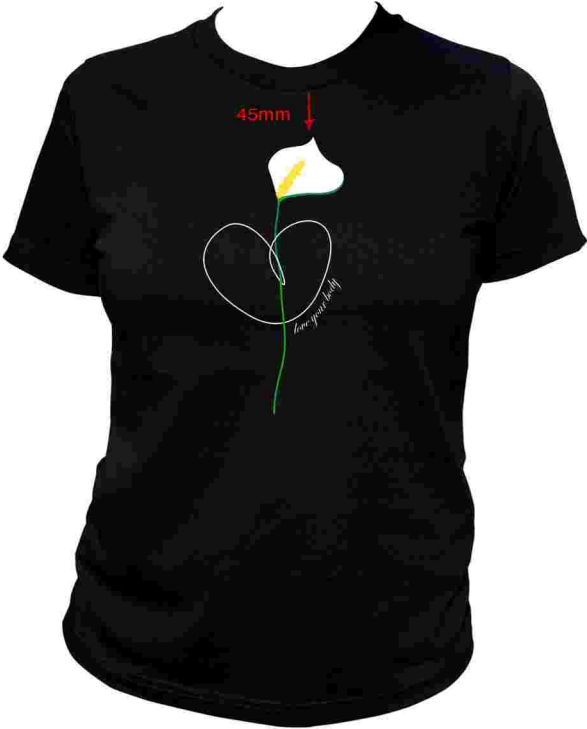
To raise awareness of the importance of loving our bodies and to raise funds FOR EDEN we are planning a t-shirt campaign and corresponding publicity. EDEN is producing and distributing t-shirts with three relevant LYBD designs/slogans (in a variety of colours) to be purchased online.

ACTIVATE YOUR ACTIVISM

SUPPORT EDEN AND THE 2007 LOVE YOUR BODY DAY
CAMPAIGN BY PURCHASING A T-SHIRT

For more information see www.eden.org.nz

EDEN'S Love your body t-shirts



Body
peace tee

Love heart
tee



Love pear
tee



Text on each tee 'Love your body'

YOUTH UPDATE FROM DEB



It's been an exciting second term! Our schools have been creating ball packs, running assemblies, teaching health classes, holding workshops, responding to challenges and planning their campaigns and activities for the rest of the year. We had our second group training for the year at EDEN to launch the BodySense resource we have create with Dove, which has activities and resources for educators. The students had the opportunity to run some of the activities and look at how it could help them with their work

I have just returned from Dunedin, where I was presenting papers at the Children's Issues Centre - Body Matters Conference and the New Zealand Health Teachers' Association Conference. I presented a paper on BWISE and promoting positive body image in schools, and we collaborated with Netsafe to research and create a paper on cyber-safety. It was great opportunity to hear a wide range of perspectives, see some of the emerging research in children's health and meet other youth workers and health promoters.

Some ideas for activism for young women adapted from Body talk: A power guide for girls

by Elizabeth Reid Boyd and Abigail Bray

COMPLAIN

You are the customer. If you don't like something, complain. If don't like something in a magazine, write and tell them why it bothers you. Complaining is about expressing your own mind and owning your power.

GIRLCOTT (BOYCOTT)

If you aren't happy with a product or how it's advertised, refuse to buy. Tell your friends not to buy. Organise a petition.

SPEAK UP

Don't be silenced. Give positive and negative feedback. You are providing free market research by speaking out about what you do and don't like.

PAPER POWER

Write a letter to the person at the top. Mention you've copied the letter to several government departments.

CLICK POWER

If you find something offensive on the net, look up the webpage and complain. Web blogs have a huge impact. Start a blog and tell the world what you think.

TAKE OFFENCE

Some ad campaigns try to get extra coverage by being offensive and attracting high profile complaints. Don't let this stop you. Complain anyway, and let them know you know what they're up to.

POWER READER

Look for the power relations in media. If you feel put down or victimised by the way the media positions you in terms of size, shape, gender, or whatever, reclaim your power. Be an active part of the communication process.

POWER SHOPPING

Don't buy into the media push to buy what they tell you to.

PURSE POWER

As a consumer, you hold the purse power. Advertisers need you to buy the product. Become a conscious consumer and use your power effectively.

CAMPAIGN

Campaign when you buy. Find out about what you are buying before you buy. Don't support products that don't meet your standards, ethics or values. Whatever concerns you, you have the power to change it whenever you buy.



Noticeboard & Contributions



The main influence in my life is my gremlin. My gremlin is a man. But my man is not real.

You see, my gremlin is in my head. I have called him the Gremlin because of the turmoil, destruction, violence, hatred, and self loathing that he represents for me. Because of the life he could have taken and the lives he has destroyed. You see, my gremlin is an eating disorder.

As a teenager, he told me I was fat; not good enough; boring; ugly; shallow - even selfish. I would never be good enough. If I did everything that he said, if I was thin, then I would be popular and people would like me - I would become a worthy person, a people pleaser. So, I didn't just travel - I took on the world. I didn't just achieve, I succeeded. I didn't just please, I impressed. Everybody liked me – what more could I want?

Here lies the problem. Who am I? What do I want? What do I love. How can I exist without me? How could I have ever known what I wanted if I didn't know who I was? Devoid of emotion, I lived on a plateau where there were no dreams, no desires – not even laughter. Nothing mattered to me anymore.

The good news is that, at the age of 30 I was born. I began to breath again. And, as I took my first breath I started to learn about me. Refreshingly, I can now make myself laugh and I celebrated the first time I was ever angry. Basically I began learning how to live again.

So you see, not every influence is good. Once I would have said that my gremlin was my inspiration and my mentor. But, now my only mentor is me. Why? Because my mentor has so much to offer and I have so much to learn.

*Contributed by Kate Backler
Friend of EDEN*



Young Women's Network

*Providing a forum for
young women working in the community & women's
sector*

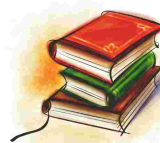
*to make contacts, exchange ideas, work collaboratively, and get
peer support*

The Young Women's Network has been recently established to provide a space for young women under 30 to access numerous peer supports.

Please contact Shelley at the Auckland Women's Centre for more details.



The Auckland Women's Centre
4 Warnock Street, Grey Lynn
Ph: (09) 376 3227
Text: 021 0271 1330
Email: youngwomen@womensz.org.nz
Web: www.awc.org.nz



***If you have one of EDEN's
books on your shelf at home,
please return it to us.***

*EDEN understands books are a
valuable resource for people
seeking to find understanding,
support or ideas about dealing
with eating issues. Please return
borrowed books so they can be
shared with others seeking
information.*

Thanks to all of our funders

including the Vodafone New Zealand Foundation, the ASB Community Trust, the Dove Self Esteem Fund, United Way New Zealand, the Auckland Community Organisation Grants Scheme, the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, the Auckland City Council, the JR McKenzie Trust, Save the Children New Zealand and the Lion Foundation.



**Vodafone
New Zealand
Foundation**



ASB Community Trust
Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau
supported by ASB



EDEN

**EATING
DIFFICULTIES
EDUCATION
NETWORK**

Services & Support:

If you wish to access the services of EDEN, participate in a support group or visit our resource centre, please phone us on 3789039 or email us at

info@eden.org.nz

To check out EDEN's resources (books, stickers, postcards) visit

www.eden.org.nz

Please Make a Donation:

EDEN does not receive any government funding to deliver services to the community. Please promote body satisfaction and support those with eating and body image difficulties by making a donation to EDEN.

- *\$20 funds a face-to-face session with our support worker*
- *\$50 funds a counselling appointment for somebody struggling with disordered eating*
- *\$150 funds a young woman to attend EDEN's 10-week support group*
- *\$250 subsidises a young 'Body Image Leader' to train and work for a year in their school promoting body satisfaction.*

Please send a cheque payable to EDEN to PO Box 78005, Grey Lynn, Auckland 1245 or credit EDEN's bank account 12 3077 0329692 00

www.eden.org.nz info@eden.org.nz

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