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Naked Truth about NZ Women's Bodies Alarming Eden (Eating Difficulties & Body Image Specialists)

Eden

Monday 13 February 2012, 2:45PM

Media release from Eden

Eating difficulties and body image specialists, Eden, are concerned about the results of the recent Next Magazine survey. Next surveyed over 1500 women about their relationships with their bodies. The result showed three out of four women are unhappy with their weight and 86% think about their weight daily.

Eden has been supporting those struggling with eating and body image issues for over 20 years. Eden Manager, Deb Schwarz, says the survey reflects what the agency is seeing in their counselling service and through their health promotion work; body dissatisfaction is a huge issue for New Zealand women.

'We are concerned about the results of the survey because the research shows that when women are dissatisfied with their appearance they are at higher risk of depression, eating disorders, reduced physical activity, poorer sexual health, risk taking behaviours (including increased drinking/smoking), and lower self-esteem', Schwarz says.

Only 17% of women reported never dieting. Eden would like to see this percentage grow. 'The majority of our clients will talk about their disordered eating being triggered by going on a diet and research shows that dieting is the second biggest risk factor in developing disordered eating is dieting - the first is being a woman,' Schwarz explains.

54% of the women surveyed said they set rules about what they eat. Schwarz holds some concerns over this, "Our bodies need a range of nutrition. Often when we make rules about what we eat - such as cutting out certain food groups or only eating at a certain time of day - we end up depriving ourselves of the nutrients and energy we need. We can also miss

opportunities to enjoy celebratory food, cultural experiences, and social eating with others."

The survey focused on the personal experiences of women's own relationships with their bodies. More research is needed into the experiences of those who are playing supporting roles in women's lives. Often supporters feel unsure as to what they can do to help boost the body image of the women in their lives.

'Friends, partners, whanau and supporters can play a significant role in supporting the women in their life who are struggling with body image and eating issues.' Eden is holding an information evening on the 21st of March at their Auckland centre for those who are worried about friends and whanau. More details can be found on their website

www.eden.org.nz.

For more information, comments or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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