

MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION, JOINT COUNCIL FOR COSMETIC PRACTITIONERS AND BRITISH BEAUTY COUNCIL ISSUE NEW GUIDANCE TO INFORM CHOICES ABOUT COSMETIC PROCEDURES

New advice about how to feel good about our bodies and how to make informed decisions about cosmetic treatments is being launched today by the Mental Health Foundation (MHF), supported by the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP) and the British Beauty Council.

The practical advice has been tailored to support people at three stages of life, each of which can come with its own concerns about body image: young adulthood, parenting and mature adulthood. The three new guides are:

- Young Adults– a selection of strategies and personal stories about how to maintain a healthy body image despite social and commercial pressures, and making informed decisions about cosmetic treatments.
- Feeling my mind: Tips for maintaining a healthy body image despite social and commercial pressures
- Facing my mirror: Tyra's personal story
- Mirror my mind: Making informed choices about cosmetic treatments
- Parents' Guide – raising awareness of how parenting and other influences can impact children and young people's developing body image, and sharing tips for counterbalancing unhelpful social and commercial pressures.
- Parenting for a healthy body image
- Mature Adults – highlights the most common influences on body image in adulthood, sharing tips for maintaining a healthy body image, and addressing safety and informed choice if someone is seeking cosmetic treatments.
- Mind over mirror: Tips for adults to have a healthy body image and make informed choices about cosmetic treatments

Young people have said that the Covid-19 lockdown has intensified their body image concerns. Non-surgical cosmetic treatments are on the increase, especially in younger people. Marketing of products and services such as dermal fillers and injectable botulinum toxins injections are sometimes inappropriate, and is increasingly targeting younger audiences through social media. Non-surgical cosmetic procedures are provided in an unregulated market in which practitioners have widely varying qualifications and training.

Previous research has shown that 51% of 18–34-year-olds considered accessing a cosmetic treatment in the next 12 months. 91% of 160 members of MHF’s Our Personal Experience Network who responded to a body image survey in 2021 said they believed that cosmetic providers must be registered and insured, which is not the case for non-surgical practices. 43.3% of people felt uninformed about the risks or side-effects of cosmetic treatments.

Top tips for dealing with body image concerns have been released, as well as a Comic Strip which gives advice to young people in a visually friendly way. The tips include recognising unrealistic body images on social media, taking regular breaks from social media, checking the facts first before deciding on treatments, and building a positive feedback loop between you and your friends.

Katrina Jenkins, Targeted Programmes Manager at the Mental Health Foundation, said: “Body image is so closely linked to our mental health. Social media, peers and family can all impact how we feel about ourselves, and the image we have of our own bodies. Making informed choices is central to our wellbeing, and this is also true for decisions about our bodies, which are unique to us and our individual needs. Asking the right questions and being informed means we can be protected against predatory marketing and make decisions that support our safety and mental health in the long run.”

The MHF and the JCCP believe that everyone who seeks cosmetic procedures should be provided with accurate information that informs choice, and increases awareness of how these procedures interact with their mental health.

Professor David Sines CBE, Chair of the JCCP said: “The JCCP places public safety and informed consent at the heart of its consumer engagement campaigns. It is committed to enhancing and strengthening public protection but acknowledges that at the present time what has been lacking are clear, transparent and easily understood guides to assist younger people, parents and adults to make informed, risk-assessed choices about the aesthetics treatments that best meet their personal needs and expectations.

“The Council considers that further informed understanding of the benefits and risks associated with the administration of such procedures is required if we are to better protect members of the public. The JCCP is delighted to endorse the excellent work undertaken by the Mental Health Foundation as a key contribution to the enhancement of consumer safety and public protection.”

Helena Grzesk, Chief Operating Officer at the British Beauty Council, said: “We are delighted to collaborate with the Mental Health Foundation to support the launch of these essential toolkits promoting healthy body image and wellbeing. We know that body image can affect self-esteem and mental health at all ages; raising awareness and supporting young people and parents to make informed decisions is crucial.

“Part of the work we do at the British Beauty Council is representing the sector at government level and raising public awareness. The Council has recently published a report, ‘The Effects of the Personal Care Services on Mental Health and Wellbeing’ which includes important recommendations for further UK-based trials, funding and for the accelerated

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development of higher-level qualifications to upskill the workforce and improve the support of mental health and wellbeing in the future.”

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

The Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundation is the leading charity for everyone’s mental health. With prevention at the heart of what we do, we aim to find and address the sources of mental health problems so that people and communities can thrive.

For further information contact: press@mentalhealth.org.uk or call Fran Edwards on 07786 437247. Also visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk

The Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners

The Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP) was formally launched In February 2018 as a ‘self-regulating’ body for the non-surgical aesthetics and hair restoration sector in the United Kingdom and has achieved Professional Standards Authority (PSA) recognition and charitable status. The charitable status reflects the overarching not-for-profit mission of the JCCP which is to improve patient safety and public protection. The concept of the JCCP was envisioned by the Department of Health and was inspired by Health Education England on behalf of NHS England and the Department of Health. For more information please contact:

admin@jccp.org.uk

British Beauty Council

The British Beauty Council was founded to represent the voices, opinions and needs of the British beauty industry – from hairdressing to cosmetics, cosmetic surgery, therapy and spa; in education and training; and from formulation to manufacture, supply, logistics packaging, design, retail and media. We are a not-for-profit, inclusive organisation that works to engage policy makers and business leaders about the value of British beauty to the national economy, and its key role in the UK’s creative and cultural character.

Our ambition is to ensure that the beauty industry is recognised and valued at all levels of government, throughout the wider economy and by consumers, as well as supporting a successful, innovative and inclusive British beauty industry.

For further information contact: Helena Grzesk at joinme@britishbeautycouncil.com

References:

- Mental Health Foundation (2019). Body Image: How we think and feel about our bodies. London: Mental Health Foundation.
- MHF – National Survey: Opening Participation to Everyone Network (OPEN). [Unpublished: May, 2011]
- Real Self (2018) U.K. Aesthetics Interest Survey
- Real Self (2018) Aesthetics Interest Report
- DH. (2013) Review of the Regulation of Cosmetic Interventions.

Notes to Editors:

For general information and enquiries on the JCCP and a full version of the JCCP Guidelines on use of Social Media go to: www.jccp.org.uk

For further information on standards for non-surgical aesthetic treatments and hair restoration surgery please go to: www.cosmeticstandards.org.uk

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