

## Five ways parents and adults can combat poor body image in young girls

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Mildred Antenor is a Professor at Seton Hall University. After reviewing the recent study reported by the [Klarman Eating Disorder Center](#), that young girls are more afraid of becoming fat than they are of a nuclear war, cancer or losing their parents. The study also found that after viewing images of female fashion models, 7 out of 10 women felt more depressed and angry than prior to viewing the images.

After careful contemplation of what [Mildred Antenor](#) called “bizarre statistics,” she realized it was not a surprise. Here’s why. According to Antenor, images of the “perfect body” for women are everywhere and many are unreal as they are often perfected by digital photography. Antenor points out that these images sell everything from food, dish washing detergent, to life insurance. Women’s magazines don’t help the issue, she says, because they bombard women with feature articles saying that if they can just lose those last twenty pounds, they’ll have it all.



Mildred Antenor

Mildred Antenor says it is all a “well-organized scheme” by the diet and cosmetic companies because they know that women who are insecure about their bodies are more likely to buy beauty products, new clothes, and diet aids. It is estimated that the diet industry alone is worth \$100 billion a year. Researchers also say that exposure to images of thin, young, air-brushed female bodies is linked to depression, loss of self-esteem and the development of unhealthy eating habits in women and young girls.

Mildred Antenor created her [website](#) as an online awareness tool for women across the globe to overcome cultural, gender and racial barriers. By tapping into their power and by recognizing the sacrifices that woman made in previous generations to remove gender barriers; women of the new millennium can now live their lives with goals, a sense of appreciation, and a clear purpose.

So what’s a woman to do when it comes to preserving her sanity in this age of size 0’s? Below are Mildred Antenor’s top ways that parents and adults can help combat this growing problem help give their daughters a healthy view of their developing bodies.

1. We can also learn to think outside of the box, think for ourselves as opposed to relying on the media to tell us who the most beautiful people in the world are as in the case of People Magazine.

2. We can talk to our young women and tell them that when a Jennifer Aniston or Gwyneth Paltrow appears on the cover of a fashion magazine, their looks are the end results of an entourage of employees from makeup artists, hair stylists and professional photographers.

3. We can show our young girls the different aspects of beauty from a diverse point of view. Show pictures of Asian, black, East Indian, American Indian women as well as the pictures that we see on the fashion magazine covers, to give them a more balanced view point on beauty.

4. Help build self-esteem by repeatedly pointing out their strong suits.

5. We can identify and discuss the various aspects of beauty including inner and outer beauty.

Visit [Communicating Women](#) to contact Mildred Antenor. Read her [comments](#) on Elizabeth Edwards book tour.