



MEDIA RELEASE

28 April 2009

Ditch Your Diet on International No Diet Day

Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV) is calling on **you** to discard your restrictive and pointless diet and instead embrace a future that involves a healthy relationship with food, starting from International No Diet Day, Wednesday May 6.

According to EDV's Executive Officer Kirsty Greenwood, 'Australians spend more than \$1 million dollars a day on weight loss dieting, with little or no long term benefits'. The past few decades have seen a marked increase in the size and profitability of the weight-loss industry, however over this time we have also seen a significant increase in obesity rates across first world countries.

The simple truth is that **diets don't work**. Studies prove that recurrent dieting can eventually lead to weight gain. Ms Greenwood asserts, 'Most people who diet will regain any weight they lose, and many end up heavier than they were when they began. They also tend to develop very unhealthy attitudes towards food and lose their ability to recognise when they are hungry or full.'

Dieting is the number one risk factor in the development of an eating disorder, and can be damaging to emotional, psychological and physical health. Studies reveal that adolescent females who diet severely are 18 times more likely to develop an eating disorders and even those who diet only moderately are five times more likely to develop an eating disorder than non-dieter.

Low self-esteem and a preoccupation with body shape and weight are prevalent in dieters. Feelings of inadequacy are further compounded by the physical and psychological effects of the restriction of foods.

Society and the media tend to shift the focus away from our achievements to our appearance, and bombard us with an enormous pressure to be toned, thin and beautiful. Former eating disorder sufferer Emilie agrees, 'It can be easy to get down on yourself if you don't think you reach these standards, and not many of us do'. Emilie is keen to emphasise that 'individuality is beautiful, not photocopies'.

Eating Disorders Victoria invites you to celebrate the beauty and individuality of natural body shapes and sizes, and to assert every body's right to health and self-esteem.

Give yourself a break this International No Diet Day. Go on, ditch your diet!

EDV's Tips for Improving Overall Health and Self-Esteem:

- Ensure you are providing your body and mind with the basic necessities for healthy living.
- Get enough rest.
- Eat a balanced diet containing foods with plenty of nutrients for living.

- Exercise for the simple joy of moving and feeling alive.
- Celebrate your achievements, no matter how small or large.
- Recognise the good choices you make and congratulate yourself on your successes.

Remember:

- **Diets make you FAT!** 9 out of 10 people who diet will regain ALL the weight they lose – and more!
- **Health at any weight, not thin at any cost.** Value your body for the things it can do, not for what it looks like.
- **Happiness comes in all shapes and sizes.** ‘Thin’ does not equal ‘happy’ or ‘successful’, and losing weight will not necessarily bring you happiness, success or higher self esteem.
- **Celebrate your individuality.** Everybody is different, and losing weight will not give you someone else’s body.
- **DON’T believe what you see in magazines.** Most models are airbrushed and digitally enhanced and don’t look like that in real life.
- **People who feel happy with their life look better - not the other way around.** If you are feeling unhappy, depressed, or have low self-esteem, then tell someone about it – there are people who can help.

If you feel your diet is adversely affecting your physical and/or psychological health, contact the **Eating Disorders Helpline on 1300 550 236** (operates 9.30am - 5.00 pm Monday – Friday)

For further information:

Megan O’Connor, Communications Officer, Eating Disorders Victoria 03) 9885 6563 or 0409 948 049

About Eating Disorders Victoria

Eating Disorders Victoria is Victoria’s foremost eating disorder charity and the primary source of support, information, community education and advocacy for people with eating disorders and their families in Victoria.

Support services are free and confidential and include the **Eating Disorders Helpline 1300 550 236**, on-line Chat Room and Message Board, confidential support groups and education programs.

About International No Diet Day

International No Diet Day was established in 1992 by Mary Evans Young. Recovered from anorexia nervosa and the director of a British anti-diet campaign, she was inspired after seeing a television show on which woman were having their stomachs stapled in a bid to suppress their appetites. Young was further moved to act after a 15 year old girl committed suicide because she couldn’t cope with being ‘fat’. She was an AUS size 16.

Since then, International No Diet Day has expanded and continues to grow worldwide. Its aim is to raise awareness of the health risks associated with dieting, and the consequences of poor body image. International No Diet Day encourages individuals to accept, enjoy and look after their bodies without dieting.