

MEDIA RELEASE

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Launch of Australia's first digital body image program for boys

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 12.01am Monday 29 October 2018

29 October 2018: Today, leading national eating disorder organisation, the Butterfly Foundation, launched RESET - Australia's first digital body image program for adolescent boys. RESET is designed to give boys the opportunity to talk about the pressures they face and concerns they experience in relation to body image. RESET will start a deeper conversation about body dissatisfaction and eating disorders which are unfortunately increasing in boys. This is a much needed and awaited prevention-focused mental health promotion program aimed at supporting schools and other youth organisations in having constructive conversations with boys.

The Butterfly Foundation CEO Christine Morgan says of the program released today:

"With body dissatisfaction, eating and body disorders increasing in young males we need to ensure conversations are inclusive of boys and the issues they face. It's time to RESET the conversation around body image and boys. It's time to RESET masculinity and appearance ideals for boys."

RESET, now available for all educators and those working with young people to download, has been designed in consultation with boys for boys. It aims to raise awareness of body image issues, reduce stigma and encourage help seeking in boys.

RESET was reviewed by an Expert Advisory Group, including internationally renowned expert on body image and eating disorders and Butterfly Foundation Board Director, Professor Susan Paxton.

RESET Advisory Group member and prominent researcher on body image, eating disorders and muscle dysmorphia in boys, Dr Scott Griffiths, says of the launch:

"We have understood for many years that body image is an issue many girls (and women) experience, but what about boys? Evidence tells us that males are consistently underrepresented in messaging and interventions in relation to body dissatisfaction and eating disorders which can have a devastating impact on boys' help seeking.

To mitigate the risk of eating disorders developing at a young age, we must normalise conversations about body image with all genders. RESET is about reducing stigma around body image and eating disorders and supporting young men to find their voice and ask for help.”

Headline statistics relating to males’ body concerns and eating disorders include:

- Over-exercising and an extreme pursuit for muscle growth are often perceived as healthy behaviours for males
- 90% of adolescent boys report that they exercise primarily to gain muscle
- Two thirds of adolescent boys report making specific changes to their diet to gain muscle.
- 25% of people experiencing Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa are male.
- Almost an equal number of males and females experience binge eating disorder.
- Eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of all psychiatric disorders and suicide rates are 20% higher in eating disorder patients than in the general population.

RESET contributor, Mitch Doyle, wishes a program like RESET was available when he was at school struggling with negative body image and ultimately an eating disorder:

“Now that I have recovered, I keep thinking I wish I’d spoken to someone sooner so I didn’t have to feel this way for as long as I did. If the RESET program was at my school, perhaps it would have saved me from over a decade of pain and secrecy. Maybe then I would have realised I wasn’t alone and better understood how to deal with bullying about weight, size and shape that I believe contributed to my eating disorder.”

RESET contributor, Thomas Conron, recognises the pressures faced in school playgrounds and is proud to have contributed to this program:

“If this helps boys who are struggling with their eating or body image I would see it as a very worthwhile cause, because I understand from personal experience how anxiety and stress can build up and cause us to have distorted ideas about ourselves and how others view us.”

Watch the trailer, find out more and download RESET at www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au/reset

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A reminder to refer to [safe reporting guidelines](#) on body image and eating disorders

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Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact

Butterfly’s National Helpline 1800 ED HOPE on 1800 33 4673 or

support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14.