

<b>Institution: University of the West of England, Bristol</b>		
<b>Unit of Assessment: 20</b>		
<b>Title of case study: Extending the global reach of body confidence interventions for young people</b>		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2009 - 2020</b>		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Phillippa Diedrichs	Professor	2010 – present
Emma Halliwell	Associate Professor	2008 – present
Melissa Atkinson	Senior Research Fellow	2015 – 2018
Kirsty Garbett	Research Fellow	2015 – present
Nadia Craddock	Research Fellow	2016 – present
Helena Lewis-Smith	Senior Research Fellow	2011 – present
Rebecca Steer	Research Fellow	2014 – 2014
Nichola Rumsey	Professor	1990 – 2017
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - 2019</b>		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No</b>		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Research at the University of the West of England (UWE) has directly contributed to the development, evaluation and implementation of evidenced-based interventions to improve body image, mood and participation in education and friendships in over 24 million young people in 128 countries (<b>S1</b>). The <i>Dove Self-Esteem Project</i> (DSEP) delivers body confidence interventions to young people worldwide, promoting better mental health and gender equality. Initial research at UWE demonstrated that Dove's interventions could be delivered effectively to girls <i>and</i> boys, and in different countries and cultures. This led to a sustainable expansion and diversification of the population of young people reached by the interventions. UWE research also increased the scalability of the interventions, by demonstrating that community providers could effectively facilitate the interventions.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<b>Confident Me: School-based Body Image Intervention</b>		
<p>Dove's <i>Confident Me</i> is a body image intervention for secondary schools. UWE research directly supported the development and implementation of this intervention (which led to the global expansion and roll out of the <i>Free Being Me</i> intervention described below). <i>Confident Me</i> was derived from an existing three-session intervention, <i>Happy Being Me</i>, which was developed and evaluated among early adolescent girls in earlier work at La Trobe University by Richardson, Paxton and Thomson (2009). UWE researchers determined that this intervention required adaptation to increase its scalability and impact. This is because boys are affected by body image concerns too. Further, most secondary schools are mixed-gender and there are logistical difficulties in delivering single-gender interventions (e.g. limited space and staff). Therefore, UWE researchers adapted the intervention into single-session and five-session formats that could be delivered to both girls and boys simultaneously. We conducted three randomised controlled trials between 2014-2018 with over 3,700 adolescents, to evaluate the impact of the <i>Confident Me</i> intervention on girls <i>and</i> boys aged 11-14 in the UK and India (<b>R1, R2, R3, G1,</b></p>		

**G2, G3).** These studies showed that *Confident Me* effectively improved girls' and boys' body image across countries and cultures.

The studies demonstrated that an over-reliance on health professionals is another major barrier to scaling-up evidence-based mental health interventions. Health professionals are expensive to train and employ, and are in limited supply. Enabling community providers to deliver interventions reduces costs and increases the availability and reach of interventions. With this in mind, UWE researchers looked at whether schoolteachers could effectively deliver *Confident Me*. Through two studies (**R1, R2**), we demonstrated that teachers could effectively deliver *Confident Me*. **R1 (G1, G2)** showed that teachers were in fact superior to psychology-trained facilitators in conferring intervention benefits up to 12 weeks post-intervention. **R2 (G2, G3)** showed the longest sustained improvements in body image ever observed at six months post-intervention, in a school-based intervention delivered by teachers. Together, these studies demonstrated that task-shifting the delivery of *Confident Me* to community providers could allow for more sustainable and larger-scale dissemination to a more diverse audience.

### **Free Being Me: Girl Guides and Girl Scouts Body Image Intervention**

Dove's *Free Being Me* is a five-session intervention derived from an existing evidence-based body image intervention, the *Body Project*, originally developed for high-risk adolescent girls in the USA (Stice and Presnell, 2007). *Free Being Me* was co-developed by *Body Project* authors Eric Stice and Carolyn Becker, together with UWE researchers, for global delivery in non-formal education settings via the World Association for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), the largest youth organisation for girls in the world.

UWE's research began in 2007 and made three major contributions to the development and dissemination of *Free Being Me*. First, we demonstrated that the intervention technique (cognitive dissonance) used in the *Body Project*, improved body image among girls aged 12-13 years (**R4**). Prior to this study, it was thought that dissonance-based body image interventions would not be effective in girls younger than 14 (Stice and Presnell, 2007). UWE research therefore expanded the potential beneficiaries of the intervention to include younger girls. Second, our research from 2009-13 demonstrated that the language used in the *Body Project* needed to be adapted to make it acceptable for girls in a universal setting (i.e. where girls received the intervention irrespective of risk status), and that the intervention was still effective when this terminology was changed (**R5, G4**). These insights directly informed the development of, and audience selected to receive, *Free Being Me*. Finally, we provided evidence that *Free Being Me* was largely acceptable to girl guides and their leaders across 19 countries, in the first multi-country implementation study in the field of body image research (**R6, G5**).

### **3. References to the research**

**R1** Diedrichs, P.C., Atkinson, M.J., Steer, R.J., Garbett, K.M., Rumsey, N. and Halliwell, E. (2015) Effectiveness of a brief school-based body image intervention 'Dove Confident Me: Single Session' when delivered by teachers and researchers: Results from a cluster randomised controlled trial. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, vol 74, pp 94-104.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2015.09.004>

**R2** Diedrichs, P.C., Atkinson, M.J., Garbett, K.M. and Leckie, G. (2020) Evaluating the 'Dove Confident Me' five-session body image intervention delivered by teachers in schools: A cluster randomized controlled effectiveness trial. *Journal of Adolescent Health*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.10.001>

**R3** Lewis-Smith, H., Garbett, K.M., Chaudhry, A., Dhillon, M., Shroff, H., White, P., and Diedrichs, P.C. (2020) Evaluating a culturally adapted evidence-based body image school

intervention, 'Dove Confident Me,' in India: A randomised controlled trial (RCT). Peer reviewed paper presentation at the 2020 International Conference on Eating Disorders, Sydney, Australia. Available on request.

**R4** Halliwell, E. and Diedrichs, P.C. (2014) Testing a dissonance body image intervention among young girls. *Health Psychology*, vol 33, pp 201-204. <https://doi.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0032585>

**R5** Halliwell, E. and Diedrichs, P.C. (2019) Cognitive dissonance-based Interventions to facilitate positive body image and embodiment, pp 361-374. In Tylka, T.L. and Piran, N. (eds) *Handbook of positive body image and embodiment: Constructs, protective factors, and interventions*. New York: Oxford University Press. Available on request.

**R6** Diedrichs, P.C., Craddock, N., Stice, E. and Powe, B. (2016) A global adoption and implementation study to evaluate the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts 'Free Being Me' body image programme (confidential report for Dove). Available on request.

#### Evidence of the quality of the underpinning research

**G1** Diedrichs, P.C. *Evaluation of teacher and online body confidence resources for girls (Academic Business Partnership Years 1-3)*, Dove Social Mission, 2014-2017, £855,868.

**G2** Diedrichs, P.C. *Evaluation of teacher and online body confidence resources for girls (Academic Business Partnership Year 4)*, Dove Social Mission, 2017-2018, £172,949.

**G3** Diedrichs, P.C. *Dove Self-Esteem Project Year 5: Developing and evaluating evidence-based body image programmes*, Dove Social Mission, 2018-2019, £286,040.

**G4** Halliwell, E. *Evaluating the acceptability and feasibility of delivering a body image and eating disorder prevention program in secondary schools*, NHS England, 2016 – 2017, £18,600.

**G5** Diedrichs, P.C. *A global dissemination and implementation study to evaluate the World Association for Girl Guides and Girl Scouts 'Free Being Me' body image programme*, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, 2015 – 2016, £29,976.

**R2** was a finalist in the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine's Durant Award for Statistical Rigour. **R3** was awarded top paper abstract at the International Conference on Eating Disorders.

#### 4. Details of the impact

##### **Confident Me: School-based Body Image Intervention**

By informing the work of a socially responsible private sector business, UWE's research has led to an expanded delivery of body confidence initiatives to young people and subsequent improvements in their body image, mood and confidence to engage in education, friendships and preventative healthcare (**R1**, **R2**, **R3**). UWE's research evaluating *Confident Me* showed that the intervention could be effectively and sustainably delivered by community providers to girls and boys in different cultures and contexts, including in the UK (**R1**, **R2**) and India (**R3**). Informed by this research, Dove has scaled-up the delivery of *Confident Me* globally. Since September 2015, *Confident Me* has been delivered in schools worldwide, with intermittent updates to the intervention content based on further UWE research (e.g. **R3**). As of December 2019, *Confident Me* had been translated into 23 languages and delivered to 18,610,400 girls and boys in 45 countries across six continents (**S1**). The then Global Director of the Dove Self-Esteem Project noted that:

*'The Confident Me RCTs [randomised controlled trials] gave us the ability to assess [the programme's] appeal, or 'acceptability' as well as their effectiveness. Phillipa's design of the RCT to capture the appeal was therefore crucial in aiding the dissemination of Confident Me' (S2).*

Responding to the demonstration by UWE research that the programme could be effective in Indian schools (**R3**), Dove began a partnership with UNICEF in June 2019 aiming to reach a further 3,700,000 young people in India and Indonesia with programmes based on *Confident Me*

(S1). This was the first time the United Nations had introduced a school-based programme on body image. UWE's research (R1, R2, R3) also underpinned the successful integration of the *Confident Me* intervention into national school curriculums in France, Chile and Argentina (S1).

In the UK, responding to the results of UWE's research showing that teachers can deliver *Confident Me* effectively (R1, R2), Dove commissioned the development of online teacher training materials to mimic the training delivered in the UWE research studies. Education agency EdComs developed a series of videos, which were made available to teachers online (S3). UWE's research (R1, R2) also informed further body image interventions developed by EdComs. The Senior Producer at EdComs noted that UWE research had provided impetus for:

*'...A set of resources for the Media Smart body image programme for primary schools, launched in July 2016, called 'Body Image and Advertising' (S3).*

The Global head of Education and Advocacy at DSEP noted that UWE research informed both the way that *Confident Me* was promoted, and the decision to deliver the intervention in five sessions, rather than a single session (S4).

*Confident Me* has been awarded the Public, Social & Health Education (PSHE) Association Mark of Quality Assurance (S5). R1 and R2 also informed new guidelines issued by the PSHE Association and Government Equalities Office on how best to deliver school-based body image interventions (S6).

#### **Free Being Me: Girl Guides and Girl Scouts Body Image Intervention**

In 2012, Dove initiated a partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), the largest volunteer organisation for girls in the world. In November 2013, Dove and WAGGGS produced a Girl Guide and Girl Scout badge programme, *Free Being Me* (S7, S8). *Free Being Me* was based on UWE research into a cognitive dissonance-based intervention, the *Body Project* (R4, R5, R6). UWE researchers assisted with the adaptation of the *Body Project* into *Free Being Me*.

The then Global Director of the Dove Self-Esteem Project commented:

*'Phillippa [Diedrichs] and Emma Halliwell's research on the Body Project for 12-13 year-olds heavily influenced the decision to choose the Body Project as the basis for Free Being Me' (S2).*

Between 2014 and 2016, *Free Being Me* was delivered to 3,500,000 children in 120 countries on six continents (S7). The WAGGGS Global Programme Manager for *Free Being Me* noted the impact of UWE's research on engaging member organisations:

*'The fact that Free Being Me is based on Phillippa's research on the Body Project for 12-13 year-olds has had a huge impact in terms of buy-in from member organisations... From my experience the research basis has been a large part of the decision for many member organisations to take up Free Being Me' (S9).*

In 2013, UWE undertook a research project to evaluate the effectiveness and adoption of *Free Being Me* in collaboration with Oregon Research Institute (R5). The study assessed the implementation of *Free Being Me* by WAGGGS' member organisations in 50 countries. This research subsequently influenced the way WAGGGS disseminated and implemented other educational packages, with the organisation continuing to adopt an evidence-based approach (S8). UWE's research (R5) also informed WAGGGS' advocacy efforts to get body confidence on to the global women's empowerment agenda. In March 2016, WAGGGS presented UWE research at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York (S9). The WAGGGS Global Programme Manager for *Free Being Me* commented:

*'We have linked body confidence to Gender Equality, which is the UN's sustainable development goal five... The finding from the research trial showing [R5] that Free Being Me makes girls more likely to raise their hand in class, demonstrates the clear link between body confidence and speaking up and reaching one's potential' (S9).*

The results from R5 demonstrating the success of *Free Being Me*, also directly informed WAGGGS and Dove's decision to commit to a further three-year partnership of body image advocacy and education. The Global Head of Education and Advocacy at the Dove Self Esteem Project commented:

*'A UWE study demonstrating the success of the implementation of the Girl Guides and Girl Scouts badge programme Free Being Me published in 2019 [R5], informed Dove's decision to commit to a further 3-year partnership of body image advocacy and education (S1).*

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

**S1** Testimonial (2020) from the Global Head of Education and Advocacy, Dove Self-Esteem Project

**S2** Testimonial from the Global Director of the Dove Self-Esteem Project (2011 – 2015)

**S3** Testimonial from Senior Producer at EdComs

**S4** Testimonial (2016) from the Global Head of Education and Advocacy, Dove Self Esteem Project

**S5** PSHE Association website captured 13.04.2016

**S6** PSHE Association and Government Equalities Office (2015) *Teacher Guidance: Key standards in teaching about body image*

**S7** World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts website

**S8** Testimonial from World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts Funds Development Global Deputy Director

**S9** Testimonial from World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts Global Programmes Manager