

# Chalk It up

## Who Am I? – Activities

### Teachers and Parents:

Activities in this section are focused on the notions of 1. **Identity**, 2. **Self esteem** and 3. **Being in control**.

These notions will be defined so there is a shared understanding at the start.

Students will consider

- the many aspects of their identity.
- the uniqueness of their identity.
- different ways that people define identity.
- how a person's identity develops.
- self-esteem as a product of values and beliefs.
- how they can have control over their future.

## 2. Self- esteem

### Exercise 1

Now that you've got a picture of yourself, how do you like what you see?

Or asked another way, do you have high self esteem, low self esteem or are you somewhere between?

This section will help you understand how you make judgements about your own abilities and worth as a person.

Do you judge your own worth or do others do that for you?

Who are the others?

What criteria do they use?

Is that a true picture

### Exercise 1a

For ages 12+

**Learning from the pigs** (Not just any pigs, the classic Three Little).

(activity for ages 12+)

Can you recall the story of the three little pigs? Here is the jumbled plot.

Have some fun reorganising it, if you need to jog your memory.

Pigs moved out of home                      Pigs enjoy wolf stew                      Each pig builds his own house

Pigs live happily ever after                      Mother cannot feed piglets

Piglet 1 builds his house of straw.

Piglet 3 built his house of bricks

Piglet 2 builds his house of twigs

First two piglets make fun of hardworking piglet 3

Piglets 1 and 2 sing and dance because they've finished their work.

All 3 pigs share brick house

Wolf blows down twig house.

Parent pigs warned them about wolf danger.

First two piglets make fun of hardworking piglet 3.

Wolf tries to blow down brick house.

Wolf is too clever by half

Wolf blows down straw house

### **Exercise 1b**

For ages 12+

#### **Where's the pig lesson?**

In your opinion:

Which pigs had high self esteem at the beginning of the story?

Which pigs had high self esteem after the first house collapsed ?

Which pigs had low self esteem after the first house collapsed ?

Analyse the pigs' levels of self esteem at each part of the story.

And what about the wolf? Do the same for the wolf.

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### **Exercise 2a**

For ages 12+

In The Lounge at Headroom you will find out what the experts have to say about high and low self-esteem . Go there now: [http://www.headroom.net.au/lounge/self\\_esteem\\_txt.html](http://www.headroom.net.au/lounge/self_esteem_txt.html)

(NOTE: there should be an underscore after self and esteem in this address)

Read page 1 in The Lounge to see how the experts describe high and low self-esteem.

Now check your own opinions about the pigs. Do they fit together well?

### **Exercise 2b**

For ages 14+

Create a graph to show the high/low levels of self-esteem of one or all of the animals in the story (remember the wolf). You will need to devise your own rating, perhaps using percentages.

### **Exercise 2bi**

For ages 15-16

Using the story of the three pigs, create a comic strip to illustrate varying levels of self-esteem.

**OR**

**If you're working with others:**

### **Exercise 2bii**

For ages 14+

Create a sequel to the story for one of the pigs.

Make it clear by your narrative that your pig now enjoys a healthy level of self-esteem.

Share your stories with the rest of the group.

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### 3. Self-esteem – where does it come from?

Our relationship with our parents has a lot to do with self-esteem. The way parents encourage, support and show affection, from birth, helps you to have a healthy view of yourself.

Your family and friends and the wider community give you positive or negative messages about yourself.

You also give yourself messages about your own worth - all the time. This is known as self-talk.

Setbacks and successes affect you, some in a lasting way, others just in passing. If your team loses a match it probably won't damage your self-esteem much, but if you are badly injured and unable to play that sport again it may be a different matter.

Adolescence is a time when self-esteem may suffer a lot. You may want to be seen as popular, intelligent, attractive and able to manage in different social settings.

But what do you have to do to be popular and attractive and who values your intelligence?

#### Exercise 3a

For ages 12+

Your school formal is a couple of months away and you really want to be there. On this grid describe the elements that you wish for at your school formal .

Or

If you aren't at school, describe the party that you'd like for your next birthday.

<b>clothes</b>	<b>hair</b>	<b>friends</b>
<b>place</b>	<b>transport</b>	<b>music</b>
<b>length</b>	<b>feelings</b>	<b>other</b>

Tick those wishes that are likely to come true.

How many of your wishes do you think would be shared by your friends?

Cross those wishes that are out of the question for you.

What are the likely alternatives to your wishes?

Which of your wishes do you think are important for your self esteem?

#### If you're working with others:

##### Exercise 4

For ages 14+

(People might be more comfortable being anonymous in this activity)

Cut out your 9 wishes, toss them together and form groups of the similar/same wishes

Can you see the influence of current youth culture in what people want to wear, their music preferences, or where they want to have the event? Discuss the result.

How do you feel if your wishes are out of step with the majority?

What if you really don't like the idea of a birthday party or a school formal?

That's fine, especially if you feel confident in making your own choices.

## Exercise 5

### What are you led to believe about ...?

#### Fashion

A recent fashion trend was for girls to wear tops and pants that left a lot of bare skin in the middle.

Some girls looked relaxed and comfortable with this style.

Some girls wore it, but didn't seem so comfortable.

Some girls chose to ignore the fashion, perhaps because it didn't suit them.

Perhaps the girls in the second category were anxious about appearing fashionable even if it was not such a good look. Perhaps their self-esteem relied on being 'in fashion'.

#### Are you a fashion slave?

For ages 14+

Choose one of the following questions and illustrate your answer to it.

Try a bit of humour

1. How do you know what is in fashion?
  2. Who decides what will be fashionable in the future?
  3. Do you feel less of a person if you don't wear a style that is currently popular?
  4. Have you ever bought clothes from a recycled fashion store?
  5. Whose opinion about your clothing choices, do you most value?
  6. Have you ever changed your eating habits to lose weight for fashion sake?
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## Exercise 5a

### What's the link between fashion, body image and dieting?

For ages 12+

For some interesting facts about gender, fashion and weight loss go to:

<http://www.avcc.edu.au/news/univation/mar97/page21.htm>

The report calls on fashion and advertising industries to change .

Find magazine/newspaper pictures that show how fashion is advertised using very slim people.

## Exercise 5b

For ages 12+

Find Internet sites for men's and women's fashion labels .

Look at the body shape of the models .

Spend 30 minutes observing body shapes of young people in a busy place, such as a shopping mall or at a sporting venue.

What differences between ordinary people and models are obvious to you?

Do you think changes are required in the fashion and advertising industries to match fashion to real body shape ?

#### If you're working with others:

Discuss or debate the last question after you've thought about it yourself.

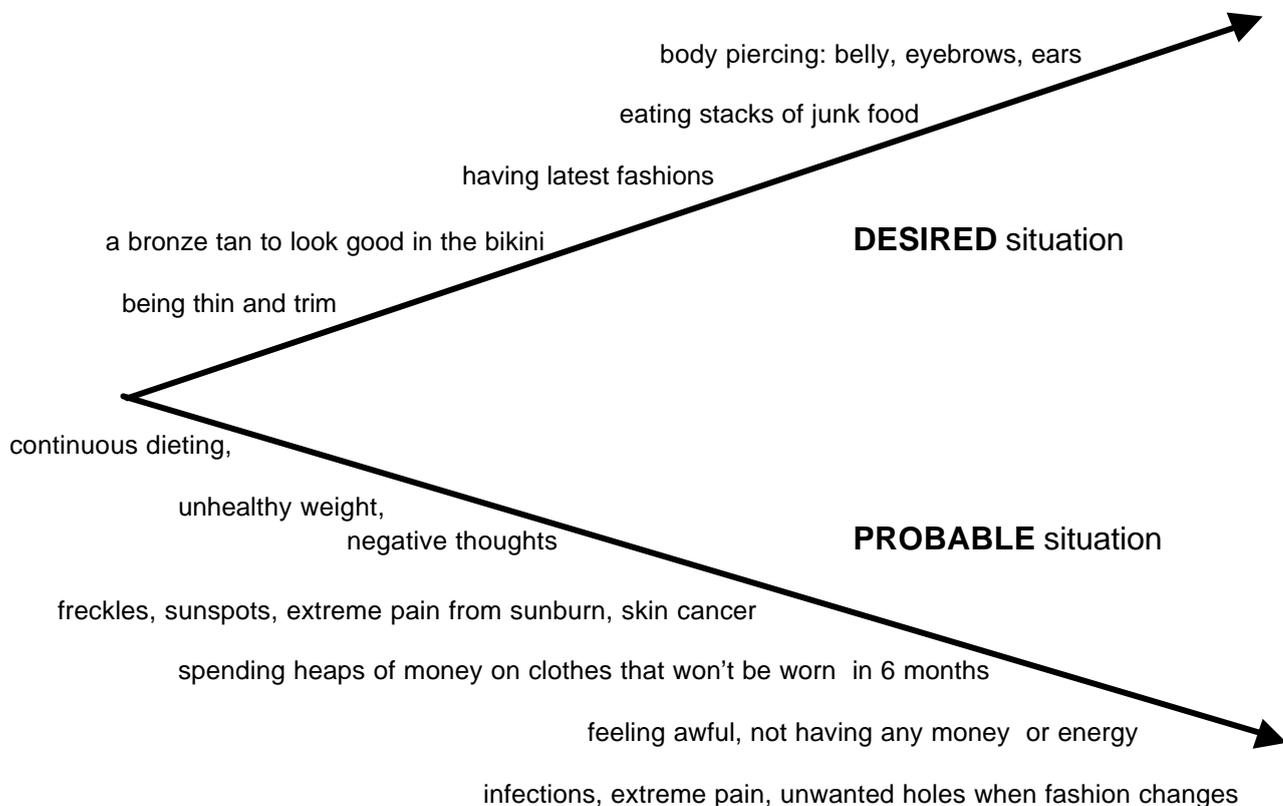
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## Exercise 6

### Julia , aged 16, has this to say about *Body Image*.

*'Those two words have caused much hurt, sadness and pain among teenagers. The concept of body image involves how you 'should' look and it's everywhere; on movies, TV shows, in magazines with gaunt, waif models, in shops, displaying their clothes on size 6 mannequins, and probably everywhere else you look.*

*It's hard not to give in to its pressure, mostly because you don't even know you're doing it. It has become so much a part of your life that you find yourself caught up in this vicious cycle of 'looking right'. You find it difficult to remember otherwise. There are common traps for us teenagers, but we need to remember that there are two different paths for every dilemma we are faced with. When talking about body image there is what we might desire and what is probably going to happen. Here are some examples.'*



### Do you agree or disagree with Julia's view of body image?

For ages 14+

Write a letter to Julia telling her how you agree/disagree with her views.

## Exercise 7

### Consumer culture

(or what if you don't have what everyone else has?)

Sue grew up in Adelaide in the 1950s and '60s.

She lived with her parents and two brothers in a house that had four small rooms with only essential furniture and vinyl floor coverings. There was no hot water on tap and their food was kept fresh in an ice chest rather than a fridge. The (pit) toilet at the end of the garden was not connected to mains sewage or a septic tank and the plumbing for stormwater and wastewater was very basic.

Other houses in the neighbourhood were not like this.

Sue's family had only enough money for food, clothes and the necessities of life.

Although the house was always clean and tidy, Sue was embarrassed by the things about it that were different, so she didn't ask friends from outside the neighbourhood to visit.

Instead she went to their places.

Fortunately, the family moved to a bigger house with all the usual conveniences, just before Sue started High School.

Today that house of 4 small rooms is someone's shed.

Although the family lived in humble surroundings with few conveniences, life was otherwise good for the youngsters.

There was a lot of spare land in that suburb so there was always space for the local kids to play. Old grape vines and olive trees grew on some of the vacant blocks so Sue and the other kids always had plenty of grapes to eat. Some years they picked and sold the olives to get pocket money that they usually spent on the annual visit to the Royal Show

A nearby creek was a paradise for bike riding, catching tadpoles, building dams and cubbies and there were plenty of other kids to knock around with.

Life was safe and exciting and the kids were given lots of freedom outside their home.

### Thinking about Sue's situation

Sue's story is about consumer culture.

Her house was a consumer item that stood out in her neighbourhood.

Sue's self-image was affected by her poor house, because she refused to invite people there.

But imagine if that house had been located in the city slums of a developing country.

In many parts of the developing world Sue's house would be palatial.

### A matter of relativity

So is consumer culture a matter of relativity?

Do you really need that 'up-market' mobile phone or do you feel that you will be more acceptable to your friends and associates if you have it?



**Exercise 7d****If you're working with others:**

For ages 12-14

Find out which consumer items the people in your group value most. Imagine that you were a group of refugees who had to flee Australia in a hurry. Decide if it would be important to take with you any of those items that are highly valued by your people. Individuals might want to argue the case for their own possession.

**Exercise 7e**

For ages 14+

Look at all the descriptors used by the group and find those that are most common. Do most people in your group want to be seen as interesting, or imaginative, or trendy, etc? Explore ways to show that you are interesting, imaginative or trendy, etc, without depending on consumer items?



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