

Supporting Health and Wellbeing at all Career Stages – Ready to Get Professional

Young women can commence and thrive in a career thanks to support and care for their health and wellbeing in their formative years, ensuring that they prioritise their own health and wellbeing, and are healthy and strong enough to deal with life's challenges.

Why is this an area of focus?

Young women should be supported at an early age to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing as it relates to improved career outcomes.

Health and wellbeing, and educational outcomes supporting career development, are intrinsically linked.

As young women develop, and enter the workforce, today's practice of active social media engagement can negatively impact young women. However, social media can also be an effective method of communication and engagement on women's health issues and education.

What does the research say?

Obtaining further education at a younger age (prior to 39) can support both physical function outcomes and less depressive symptoms¹

Gender imbalance in higher education and course graduations is in favour of women, however regardless of higher attainment rates for females, gender pay gaps in favour of males exists in 17 of 19 fields of study over nine out of 13 industries²

The median undergraduate starting salaries for women are 4.8% less than for men. This gap widens 14.6% for postgraduate (coursework) graduates³

Cross-sectional research shows a negative associations between body image and active social media engagement, and may have a greater psychological impact than passive engagement⁴

What are the barriers?

- Girls and young women can be impacted by external factors that have a great impact on their ability to complete their education that they may not have control over. At this early stage, negative impacts of home environment, caring responsibilities, and access to resources, can

have long-term impacts on their ability to gain higher education, enter, and successfully navigate the workforce.

- Ongoing pay gap inequity in graduates.
- Social Media - Cross-sectional research shows a negative association to body image to active social media engagement.

What are the opportunities?

Advocate for policy that supports women to gain educational qualifications early in life in order to potentially offset negative health and wellbeing issues associated with lower education levels and poorer mental health.

Support for the draft *Gender Equality Bill (2018)* Supporting initiatives for positive social media engagement including health and wellbeing promotions through social media channels.

¹ Tooth L, Mishra GD (2015) Does further education in adulthood improve physical and mental health among Australian women? A longitudinal study. PLoS ONE 10(10): e0140334. Doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0140334

² Higher Education Enrolments and Graduate Labour Market Statistics – *Workplace Gender Equality Agency (www.wgea.gov.au)*

³ Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) (2018), *Graduate Outcome Survey National Report, Accessed 21 February 2019,*

⁴ The Effects of Active Social Media Engagement with Peers on Body Image of Young Women – *Hogue, JV; Mills, JS – (2018)*

What can BPW do?

Support programs that develop younger women

Provide financial support to young women in study

Mentoring programs within clubs to support young women entering the workforce

Support programs that support regional and rural young women to obtain further education
Engage in positive social media messaging directed at younger women

Legislation

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Draft Gender Equality Bill (2018)

Resources

Jean Hailes - <https://jeanhailes.org.au/>

Head to Health Resource -

https://headtohealth.gov.au/?utm_source=mindhealthconnect&utm_medium=301

Work 180 – online platform for pre-screening of employers and their support for women in the workforce - <https://au.work180.co/>

Women’s Health Victoria - www.whv.org.au

Women’s Gender Equality Agency – www.wgea.gov.au

health.vic – Victoria’s hub for health services and business – www2.health.vic.gov.au