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## UNH Joins Forces with 'NOW' to Break Down Stereotypes of Body Image

By [Kim Billings](#)  
UNH News Bureau

September 15, 2000

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DURHAM, N.H. -- The Counseling Center, Health Services and Dining Services at the University of New Hampshire will host a day of events designed to break down stereotypes of body image created by the media and advertising.

"Love Your Body Day" will be held Wednesday, Sept. 20, in conjunction with a national effort sponsored by the National Organization of Women (NOW). It is being celebrated across the nation in efforts to speak out against advertisements and images in the media that create discriminating stereotypes against people based on size and appearance.

According to Kathleen Grace-Bishop, associate director of UNH Health Services, there are startling statistics about the effects media and advertising have on people -- particularly young women. For example, she says 80 percent of fourth grade girls have already been on a diet; more than 3,000 women begin smoking every day, many of them motivated by weight control; one out of every four college women has an eating disorder.

"This day of action encourages all of us to speak out against offensive, unhealthy and unrealistic ads and images," explains Grace-Bishop. "It is a day to challenge messages that tell us we are not good enough as we are -- that we have to look and act a certain way to be considered beautiful."

In addition to a schedule of events, (go to <http://www.unh.edu/health-services> for a complete listing), students will gather in the Murkland Courtyard at 6 p.m. to speak out about unhealthy messages and replace them with more positive and healthy ones.

"By speaking out and advocating for oneself and others we begin to feel powerful and understand that power lies not outside, but inside, the self," says UNH psychologist Trish Hanley.

In addition, the Women's Commission will display the Beautiful Wall, a quilt composed of photos and words

by UNH students, faculty and staff expressing women's and men's beauty, in the Murkland Courtyard and the Memorial Union Building.

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