I am beautiful

03/2021 – 12/2025

Initiator
Wiener Gesundheitsförderung – WiG

Background and objectives

The project “I am beautiful – Healthy self-esteem through a positive body image” was implemented from January 2023 to December 2025 by queraum in cooperation with the WIENXTRA Media Center, commissioned by the Vienna Health Promotion Agency (Wiener Gesundheitsförderung – WiG). The project aimed to provide young people with a safe space to explore body image, beauty ideals, gender roles, and questions of self-esteem and well-being. A key focus was the critical reflection on societal and media-driven body norms. A central methodological approach was the integration of health-promoting reflection work with participatory media work.

The target group of „I am beautiful“ consisted primarily of socioeconomically disadvantaged young people aged approximately 14 to 19, especially those in dual vocational training or vocational qualification programs.

Implementation

The core of the project consisted of annual workshop series, each comprising four intensive workshop days plus an additional session for reflection and conclusion. The workshops were led by interdisciplinary teams of trainers from the fields of health promotion and media education. The participants explored topics such as beauty ideals, societal body norms, media portrayals of bodies, gender roles, and the connection between self-image and well-being. Through discussions, group exercises, and creative methods, the young people were able to reflect on their own experiences and critically examine societal expectations.

A key component of the project was the development of own media projects. Working in small groups, the young participants created films that expressed their perspectives and experiences on body image and self-esteem. The participatory media work proved to be particularly motivating and offered the young people an opportunity to make their issues visible and to convey their own messages.

Each project year culminated in a semi-public presentation event where the young people presented their films to representatives of Vienna's health promotion program, professionals from the participating institutions, and other young people.

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