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February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009

**RE: Evaluation Framework for the *Real Me Experience* Body Image E-Learning Module**

To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed our submission of a proposal for an evaluation of the *Real Me Experience* Body Image E-Learning Module as developed by the National Eating Disorder Information Centre.

Enclosed is our evaluation strategy that includes:

- The scope and objectives of the evaluation
- An evaluation matrix providing questions and key indicators regarding the relevance, outcomes, cost-effectiveness, access, and impact of the initiative
- An evaluation plan outlining the recommended data collection methods and the rationale for this approach
- A budget detailing anticipated project costs
- Challenges and recommended solutions

Solomon Four Consulting is excited to be given an opportunity to evaluate such a valuable initiative. If you have any further questions regarding our evaluation plan, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Solomon Four Consulting

# **Evaluation Framework for the *Real Me Experience* Body Image**

## **E-Learning Module**

**Prepared for:**

The National Eating Disorder Information Centre

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## **1.0 Background of the National Eating Disorders Information Centre and the *Real Me Experience***

The National Eating Disorders Information Centre (NEDIC) is a non-profit program of the University Health Network in Toronto, Ontario, Canada that was founded in 1985. It was established in response to a national needs assessment around eating disorders that was conducted by the Health League of Canada in 1983. The main goal of the organization is to inform the public about eating disorders and related issues. NEDIC strives to accomplish its goal by providing displays at events, running prevention and awareness campaigns, presenting workshops and presentations, staffing a telephone helpline, and assisting communities in developing programs.

NEDIC launched the *Real Me Experience* Body Image E-Learning module three years ago with funding from the Dove Canada Self-Esteem Fund. The E-Learning module corresponds with Dove Canada's goal to develop tools and resources to help Canadian women and girls to build stronger self esteem and to support organizations that promote positive self-image. The *Real Me Experience* was developed to deliver information in an accessible, appealing, and interactive fashion, and supplement NEDIC's existing services.

The *Real Me Experience* is an online program that uses quizzes, stories, illustrations, and journals to help young women aged 15 through 18 to understand factors that affect self esteem and body image. By using the *Real Me Experience*, the user will:

- Be introduced to clear and usable definitions of concepts such as self esteem, body image, and eating disorders
- Learn about how the concepts are influenced by culture and society
- Be able to engage in self-evaluations of self esteem, body image, and other issues
- Be given a range of tools that may help enhance their self esteem and body image, and help them improve that of others
- Have access to links of over 80 feature articles, a glossary and related materials

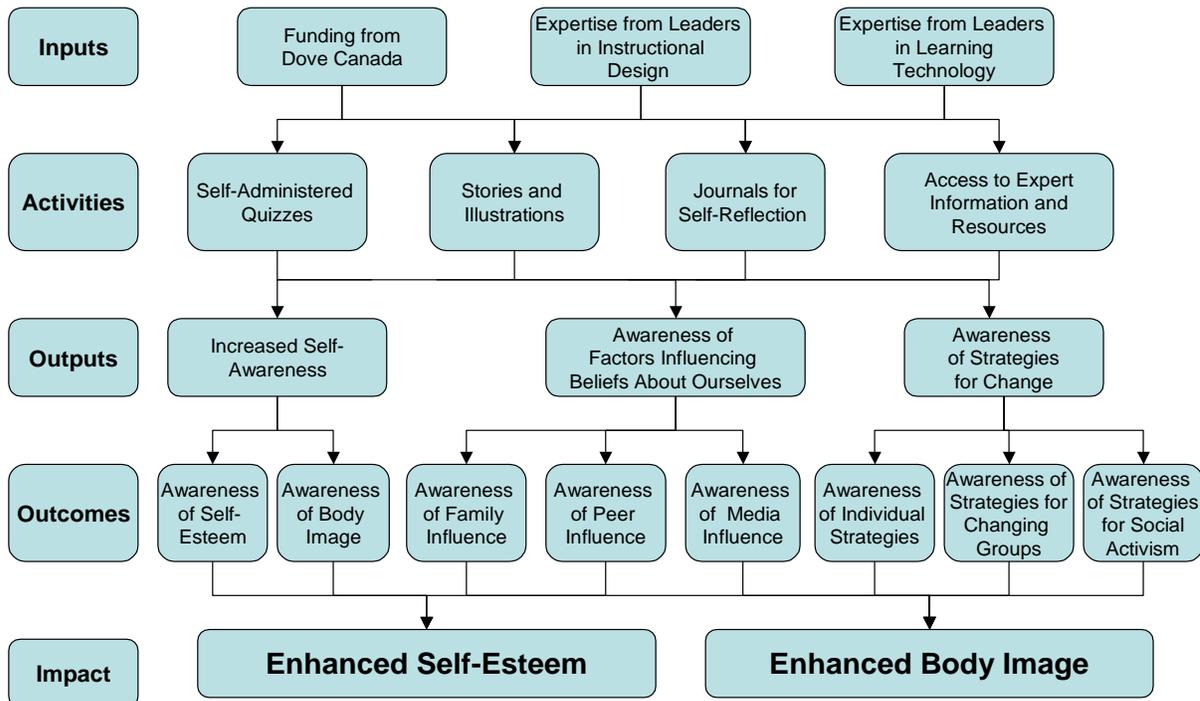
The *Real Me Experience* is viewed by the NEDIC as a valuable way to deliver their services because:

- It allows certain geographical and financial barriers to be overcome
- The internet is a credible format and is increasingly being used as a tool by individuals to seek health-related information
- The website has the power to educate, inform, and empower many people affected by food and weight preoccupation
- It can alleviate pressures on human resources while not compromising service

The *Real Me Experience* has already reached 5000 people. Self esteem and food and weight preoccupation in young women is important to address, since they are most likely to strive for the female thin-ideal (Levine & Smoklak, 2002). Health Canada found that one in two tenth grade girls were either on a diet or wanted to lose weight. Eating disorders have been cited as the third most common chronic illness in adolescent girls (Adolescent Medicine Committee, 2001).

## 2.0 Logic Model

### ***National Eating Disorder Information Centre Real Me Experience***



## 3.0 Purposes and Objectives of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, success, cost-effectiveness, access, and impacts of the *Real Me Experience* program as a part of NEDIC. The objectives of the evaluation are:

- To determine the impact of the *Real Me Experience* on users' awareness, understanding, thinking, and beliefs
- To examine what, if any, improvements can be made to enhance the learning experience and the impacts on users

## 4.0 Company Profile

Solomon Four Consulting derived its name from the infamous Solomon Four group design, a highly sophisticated true experimental design that uses four different comparison groups. It is considered by many to be the ideal design as it can rule out many alternative explanations for results and enables a more complex assessment of the cause of changes in the dependent variable. Solomon Four Consulting was established based on the philosophy of applying innovative methodologies to provide clients insight regarding the impact and cost-effectiveness of their programs and services. Our consultants have worked on a wide range of projects including evaluability and needs

assessments, process and outcome-based evaluations, program and policy development and have developed expertise conducting surveys and market research, focus groups, interviews, statistical analysis, and cost-benefit analysis. We believe that the breadth of our expertise can be applied to help meet your evaluation objectives and obtain results that fit the needs of your organization.

## **5.0 Overall Approach to Evaluation**

In approaching evaluation assignments, Solomon Four Consulting is committed to working with our clients to identify their goals and objectives. Our team is dedicated to collecting and analyzing data thoroughly and precisely using the best available methods. Our firm highly regards the program evaluation standards outlined on the Canadian Evaluation Society's website: <http://www.evaluationcanada.ca> and takes every step to ensure that the following standards are respected when conducting evaluations:

1. **Utility Standards.** Our firm is committed to ensuring that the evaluation will serve the information needs of our clients.
2. **Feasibility Standards.** We take every precaution to ensure that our evaluations are realistic, prudent, diplomatic and frugal.
3. **Propriety Standards.** Our firm believes that an evaluation should be conducted legally and ethically, respecting the welfare of those involved and how they will be affected by the results of the evaluation.
4. **Accuracy Standards.** We ensure that our evaluations will reveal adequate information about the features that determine the worth or merit of the program being evaluated.

### **5.1 Evaluation Design**

Our evaluation plan will utilize a multi-phase approach to address the relevance, success, cost-effectiveness, access and impact of the *Real Me Experience*. Our interviews and focus groups will be cross sectional in nature, so they will provide us with a “snapshot” of opinions and potential positive and negative consequences of the *Real Me Experience* at one given point in time. Our document and database review will encompass analysis of a larger time frame. The logic model that we have created will guide us throughout the course of the evaluation, and we will update it if necessary based on the information collected through initial consultations, document/file reviews, and key informant interviews. Furthermore, efforts will be made to identify any major factors preventing the program/initiative from achieving its objectives.

## **6.0 Methodology**

Solomon Four Consulting recognizes each method has its own set of strengths and limitations, and therefore we will use a variety of methods rather than relying on any single approach when evaluating the *Real Me Experience* program. Additional benefits of selecting a mixed-methods approach are that it strengthens validity through triangulation of data. When gathering data, we will ensure informed consent is obtained and that our participants understand the purpose of the study. Furthermore, we will take steps to ensure individual responses will not be identified and personal information and data will be stored in a safe and secure location. Our office has firewalls and anti-virus

software installed on all our computers, and data is protected using encryption and complex 8-character passwords.

## **6.1 Data Collection Methods**

### **6.1.1 Document Review**

A document review will be undertaken to examine the *Real Me Experience* program to establish whether the objectives are being accomplished, and to realize the feasibility of achieving future objectives. Furthermore, the document review will assist in the development of a complete profile of the program since it's inception. We will access data from the e-modules to determine any changes in participants' self-esteem and beliefs about themselves. Relevant documents that will be reviewed include finances, activity reports, memos, and general program files. Specific potential documents include

#### *Advantages*

- Get comprehensive and historical information
- Information already exists
- Few biases about information

#### *Limitations*

- Narrow scope of documents
- Information may not be complete
- Documents may be stored in different locations
- Data restricted to what already exists

In order to overcome these limitations Solomon Four Consulting proposes to critically analyze all documents to ensure that the most accurate information is obtained. We also propose to supplement our document review with additional data collection methods including interviews and focus groups. This will allow us to better understand the program and fill in any gaps that may be present after conducting the document review. *Real Me Experience* files will be cross-referenced with results from the alternative data collection methods to develop an in-depth understanding of the program.

### **6.1.2 Literature and Jurisdictional Review**

We recommend a thorough review of relevant research literature and existing programs targeting body image and self-esteem among young women, including the content and costs of other programs. Also, a template will be developed to enable better comparison of jurisdictions.

#### *Advantages*

- Can identify steps and practices to further enhance program
- Assists in the development of indicators
- Can make comparisons to other existing programs

#### *Disadvantages*

- Results in one context may not translate to another

- Outcomes may differ depending on the target population group
- File Drawer Problem- research demonstrating promising results and programs with favorable outcomes may be reported more often than those without

### **6.1.3 Key Informant Interviews**

We propose using in-person and telephone interviews with key informants to obtain relevant data concerning objectives and priorities of the *Real Me Experience*, allocation of resources, to gather opinions from stakeholders and partners, and to develop recommendations for the future. Individuals with a high degree of involvement in and knowledge of the *Real Me Experience* will be identified as experts and will be interviewed where possible. In-depth interviews are useful for capturing and describing program processes, evaluating programs that are evolving and documenting variations in program implementation. Protocols for interviews will be developed in conjunction with the evaluation committee and a template for capturing the results will be used. Potential key informants include: NEDIC program officials, *Dove* Canada Self-Esteem Fund officials, Experts in the field of body image and self-esteem (these can be of an academic setting, a policy group or other)

#### *Advantages*

- Informants are highly knowledgeable regarding program activities and can provide a deeper understanding of the program's operations
- Can gather in-depth information regarding strengths and weaknesses of the program
- Provides an opportunity to gather recommendations for future planning

#### *Limitations*

- Can be time consuming
- Can be difficult to analyze and compare
- Can be expensive

Since key informants possess their own set of values and beliefs, details on the informants' background will be provided to offer a better understanding of their perspectives. Furthermore, efforts will be made to interview people from diverse backgrounds to obtain varying views where appropriate. In addition, to help minimize costs, informants will be carefully selected to maximize the information obtained while decreasing the number of interviews to be conducted. In order to gain maximum coverage and minimize costs, telephone interviews will be used where appropriate.

### **6.1.4 Focus Groups**

We intend on randomly selecting participants that have taken part in the *Real Me Experience* program to determine whether the needs of participants are being met, if their self-esteem and body image has improved, and whether there have been any unintended impacts of the program. In order to recruit participants we intend on utilizing a list of contacts provided from the NEDIC stakeholders. Each focus group will consist of 6-8 participants and will be conducted using the best practices outlined by Krueger and Casey (2000). The number of groups will be determined by the feedback and trends that emerge,

the number of different groups that require representation, and the point at which saturation is reached.

#### *Advantages*

- Can obtain in-depth information regarding the opinions of groups of people
- More structured than interviews
- Interaction and exchange of ideas among participants
- More economical than individual interviews

#### *Limitations*

- Cost associated with large number of target groups/geographical coverage area
- Difficult to schedule 6-8 people together
- Sensitive topics can create obstacles to participation
- Can be problematic recruiting enough eligible people

To encourage participation rates, incentives will be provided to youth and efforts will be made to ensure that the atmosphere is relaxing by having pizza and by carefully selecting a moderator who is capable of establishing rapport with adolescents.

### **6.1.5 Web-Based Surveys**

In recent years, the World Wide Web has emerged as a new way to conduct research, allowing surveys to be delivered quickly to anyone connected to the Internet (Birnbaum, 2004). Given that the target audience completes the modules of the *Real Me Experience* online, this method is deemed the most appropriate. In this case, web-based surveys are an effective method for gauging program participants' awareness of self-esteem and body image and opinions and perceptions of the *Real Me Experience*.

#### *Advantages*

- Collecting responses via the web eliminates printing and mailing costs, and reduces the burden of data entry and analysis
- Can recruit large heterogeneous samples making statistical tests very powerful
- Can afford greater anonymity than in-person surveys increasing the reporting of socially undesirable behaviors

#### *Limitations*

- Repeated participation, especially if there is a reward for completing the survey
- Those that volunteer to complete the survey may differ from nonrespondents in ways that are difficult to measure

To encourage a high response rate, we will offer incentives to responding such as movie passes, money, or coupons with instructions explaining that rewards will not be provided to those who participate more than once. Furthermore, repeated IP addresses and cookies will be checked to detect multiple submissions. In order to increase response rates, multiple reminders will be sent out and the surveys will be kept as brief as possible to prevent participants from dropping out.

### 6.1.6 Surveys and Questionnaires

Surveys are a cost-effective way of obtaining information from the target audience on their awareness of the *Real Me Experience* program. Questionnaires will be conducted in schools with a random sample of adolescents between the ages of 15 and 18.

Background information will be provided to schools regarding the program and they will be encouraged to participate in our survey. This will also help gauge whether the program is meeting the needs of participants. The survey will be tailored to the sample and implemented using best practices from survey research (Posavec & Carey, 2007). In order to identify potential wording or comprehension problems, we intend on pilot testing the survey with a random sample of the target population group.

#### *Advantages*

- Can obtain a larger number of respondents than interviews or focus groups
- Cost-effective
- Can obtain a wealth of information in a short period of time

#### *Limitations*

- Often have a low-to-moderate response rate
- Obtaining consent from schools and parents
- Respondents may differ from non respondents

To overcome the issue of nonresponse, we intend on making our questionnaire as brief as possible since respondents are more likely to participate when effort and time commitments are minimized. Information will be provided to schools and parents to highlight the importance of the *Real Me Experience* program, to alleviate any concerns about confidentiality and to address the sensitive nature of the topic. Also, incentives will be provided for participation. We intend on having a prize draw for a large sum of money rather than providing individuals with smaller amounts of money since it has been found that participants prefer having a chance at a larger prize.

### 6.1.7 Census Data

We recommend on conducting a needs assessment to determine whether or not the *Real Me Experience* program is addressing regarding teenage self-esteem and body image. We will look at statistics regarding the rates of eating disorders, body satisfaction, dieting trends and so forth. We will determine if the trends from our needs assessment is consistent with that from the Health League of Canada in 1983.

## **7.0 Sample Research Questions**

**What improvements can be made to enhance the learning experience and impacts of the *Real Me Experience* program?**

Program participants

1. Have you used tools provided from the *Real Me Experience* in your everyday life?
2. Did the self-administered quizzes provide you with insight regarding your self-esteem and body image?

3. Did the stories and illustrations provide you with insight regarding your self-esteem and body image?
4. Did the journals for self-reflection provide you with insight regarding your self-esteem and body image?
5. Were there any other relevant issues regarding self-esteem and body image you felt were not addressed in the e-modules?
6. Has the *Real Me Experience* provided insight regarding the factors influencing the self-esteem of others?
7. Do you feel the material presented in the e-modules was appropriate and effective in improving one's body image and self-esteem?
8. What suggestions do you have to improve the delivery and design of the program?

#### Key stakeholders

1. What suggestions do you have to improve the delivery of the program?
2. What suggestions do you have to improve the design of the program?
3. What lessons can be learned to date about the *Real Me Experience*?
4. Do you feel the target population is appropriate? If not, what population do you feel would be better served by the *Real Me Experience* program?
5. To what extent do you feel the *Real Me Experience* program is sustainable?
6. What could have been done differently?

## **8.0 Evaluation Matrix**

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The evaluation matrix was developed using the developed logic model for the *Real Me Experience* program of the National Eating Disorder Information Centre. The purpose of the matrix is to highlight the key evaluation issues that will be explored, the indicators that will be used, and how data will be collected. Please see Appendix A.

## **9.0 Data Analysis**

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Quantitative data from the document review will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. We will utilize the statistical program SPSS to analyze the quantitative data where possible. Confidence intervals of 95% with margin of error of 5% will be utilized and will allow for the survey findings to be generalized to the sampled population group. Qualitative data gathered from focus groups and key informant interviews will give a richer and deeper understanding of the *Real Me Experience*. This data will be coded for themes by independent consultants, and the results will be compared for inter-rater reliability (a measure of the degree of agreement among consultants).

## **10.0 Deliverables**

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Throughout the evaluation process, we intend on incorporating communication checkpoint meetings to present the preliminary results, draft report and final report. We also intend on sending out e-mail status reports to ensure that our clients are aware of progress being made, any issues or challenges that may arise, and to provide opportunities for our clients to supply input regarding the direction of the evaluation.

## Appendix A

Evaluation Issues/Questions	Indicators	Methods
<b>Relevance</b>		
1. To what extent does the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program reflect the objectives and priorities of NEDIC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detailed analysis of NEDIC's objectives and priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document review</li> <li>▪ Key informant interview</li> <li>▪ Annual reports</li> <li>▪ Mandate of NEDIC</li> </ul>
2. To what extent does the <i>Real Me Experience</i> meet the needs of the targeted population and influence their participation in the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinion of stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Public opinion surveys</li> <li>▪ Opinions of participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▪ Document review</li> <li>▪ Community survey</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
3. Is NEDIC's role in improving body image and self-esteem unique and complimentary or does it duplicate already existing programs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analysis of existing programs</li> <li>▪ Opinions of stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jurisdictional review</li> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>		
4. Was there a strategy in place to develop the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program? If yes, was it followed? If not, what were the obstacles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detailed analysis of NEDIC's program files</li> <li>▪ Opinion of stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document review</li> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> </ul>
5. Have adequate resources been allocated to promote the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detailed analysis of financial records and program files</li> <li>▪ Opinion of stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Comparison with other programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document review</li> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▪ Jurisdictional review</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>		
6. Has the <i>Real Me Experience</i> increased participants' level of self-awareness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants awareness of their self-esteem</li> <li>▪ Participants awareness of their body image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ E-module data</li> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
7. To what extent has the <i>Real Me Experience</i> enhanced participants' awareness of the factors influencing beliefs about themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants awareness of family, peer, and media influences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ E-module data</li> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
8. To what extent has the <i>Real Me Experience</i> increased awareness of strategies to change the influences on self-esteem and body image?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants awareness of individual strategies for change</li> <li>▪ Participants awareness of strategies for changing groups</li> <li>▪ Participants awareness of strategies for social activism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ E-module data</li> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>

Evaluation Issues/Questions	Indicators	Methods
9. How did users benefit from the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinions and perceptions of program participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
10. Are there gaps that NEDIC needs to address in the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinions of participants</li> <li>▪ Opinions of stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Comparisons to other programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> <li>▪ Jurisdictional review</li> </ul>
<b>Cost-Effectiveness</b>		
11. Are the most appropriate and efficient means being used to achieve objectives, compared to alternate design and delivery approaches?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of stakeholders</li> <li>▪ Comparison with other programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key stakeholder interviews</li> <li>▪ Administrative records</li> <li>▪ Jurisdictional review</li> </ul>
12. What further results could have been achieved if additional funds have been made available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinions of stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> <li>▪ Document Review</li> </ul>
<b>Access and Reach</b>		
13. Do various demographic/economic strata have access to the program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Profile of program participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Document review</li> </ul>
14. Is the target audience aware of the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Awareness of target audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Survey</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>		
15. Has the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program enhanced the self-esteem of participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reported self-esteem of program participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data from e-module activities</li> <li>▪ Surveys</li> </ul>
16. Has the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program enhanced how participants feel about their body?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participants reported feelings about their body image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Data from e-module activities</li> <li>▪ Surveys</li> </ul>
17. Are there any unintended effects from participating in the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perceptions of program participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> </ul>
18. What improvements can be made to enhance the learning experience and impacts of the <i>Real Me Experience</i> program?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opinions of program participants</li> <li>▪ Opinions of key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Surveys</li> <li>▪ Focus groups</li> <li>▪ Key informant interviews</li> </ul>

## Appendix B

### References

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