

STRIPED

A PUBLIC HEALTH
INCUBATOR

Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders

A Collaboration of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Boston Children's Hospital

Newsletter Fall 2019

From the Director



S. Bryn Austin

Imagine a world where girls, boys, and children of all genders believe in themselves. A world where they are willing to speak up to share their ideas, speak out when they see something unfair, and step in to make positive change in their communities and lives.

This is the world we want all children to be able to take for granted someday. But far too many learn that they are not good enough, that their bodies are shameful. How can children reach their full potential when the deck is stacked against them?

With your help and my help. With help from STRIPED and many dedicated public health, mental health, adolescent medicine professionals and so many others. But not just in our roles as scholars or clinicians. In the words of my friend and colleague Jessica Henderson Daniel, Immediate Past President of the American Psychological Association, we must become "citizen psychologists" — or more broadly for public health, "citizen scientists" and "citizen clinicians."

Jessica implores and inspires her fellow psychologists to engage in the world: "Almost every aspect of human existence is impacted by psychological science, education, and practice....And almost every social policy can be informed by it." She calls on her fellow

psychologists to step out of the university or clinic to ensure they are in the room and at the table when decisions are being made about communities and their health. Jessica's wise words resonate just as well for STRIPED.

Our mission — to create a world where girls, boys, and children of all genders can grow up at home in their own bodies — inspires us to put a premium on impact in everything we do:

- ◆ On p. 2, read about our latest Delphi study to source solutions to the ongoing problem of weight stigma in public health, and learn about our national webinar on eating disorders early detection, headlined by none other than U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams.
- ◆ On p. 4, catch the latest on our trio of policy translation initiatives, each informed and shaped by our scientific and legal research targeting high-potential leverage points to remove and reduce toxic environmental influences on eating disorders.

Imagining a better world is a good start. But now as citizen scientists, let's make that world a reality.

S. Bryn Austin, ScD

What Our Trainees Say About STRIPED



Bree Wilhite

“ After struggling with an eating disorder for eight years, STRIPED gave me a voice and fueled my commitment to ensuring behavioral health equity. Through STRIPED, I have engaged in evidence-based public health advocacy and policy translation research that aims to promote healthy body image and prevent eating disorders and other harmful weight control behaviors. ”



Kendall Sharp

“ STRIPED is forging new frontiers in addressing the dangers of dietary supplements for weight loss. I am working on a first-of-its-kind content analysis of social media data to analyze how people discuss and use these dangerous products. I'm excited to be on the frontlines of research that will pave the way for public health surveillance and policy changes to keep kids safe. ”

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Eradicating Weight Stigma in Public Health: Using the Delphi Method to Source Solutions

The medical oath “first, do no harm” is as sage a principle in public health as it is in medicine. It is an advisement against providing treatment that results in more injury than cure. Recognizing that some common but ill-informed public health practices have done more to exacerbate harmful weight stigma than to promote health, STRIPED and our team of visiting scholars and fellows — including Laura Hart, Suman Ambwani, and Katelyn Ferreira — initiated a collaborative effort using the Delphi research method, a systematic,

“*Weight stigma is pervasive in public health. This project demonstrates that multidisciplinary professionals recognize and condemn weight stigma. I'm excited to continue working with STRIPED to help create a future that affirms and includes people of all sizes.*”

— Katelyn Ferreira

iterative approach that solicits the ratings of panels of experts on a list of proposed guidelines. The experts for our study were the multidisciplinary group of attendees from STRIPED's 2018 eating disorders prevention symposium. The Delphi method is ideal for finding consensus among such a diverse group of stakeholders. This novel study method is providing us with a set of mutually agreed-upon guidelines that we will disseminate to public health professionals to help them decrease the harmful impact of weight stigma in the field.

Body Image in the Global South: Taking on Colorism via Health Professional Education

Starting with our newest STRIPED teaching case, “Coloring the Narrative: How to Use Storytelling to Create Social Change in Skin Tone Ideals,” we have had increasing opportunities to focus on colorism with colleagues in the U.S., Europe, and now in India. A type of bias favoring lighter skin tones, colorism is often experienced as part and parcel with weight stigma in driving body dissatisfaction in youth of color. It is especially salient in the Global South, where carcinogenic and caustic skin-bleaching products are widely sold and used by youth.

“*Colorism is deep-rooted in India, where 'fairness' has become synonymous with 'beauty,' causing low self-esteem in dark-skinned teens and a thriving skin whitening products industry.*”

— Kritika Tiwari

With the support of the Harvard Institute for Learning and Teaching, STRIPED hosted a ½ day workshop at Harvard, bringing together over 30 instructional designers, faculty, and other education professionals to share wisdom on how to create engaging and effective online courses using teaching cases. We then focused all that talent in the room on dreaming up creative approaches to transform our case “Coloring the Narrative” into an online course.

Now past the proof-of-concept stage, we are excited to work with STRIPED Fellow Ayesha McAdams-Mahmoud and India-based eating disorders specialist Kritika Tiwari to create the first online course for adolescent health professionals in India to take on this critical body image issue.

U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action Opens STRIPED's National Webinar

Compelled by the devastating impact that eating disorders have on public health, U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams opened STRIPED's recent webinar, “Screening, Symptom Recognition and Referral to Treatment for Eating Disorders in Pediatric Primary Care Settings,” with a heartfelt call to action for clinicians. He urged them to recognize the wide-ranging impact of eating disorders on people of all genders, race/ethnicities, ages, and diverse backgrounds and to learn to effectively screen patients for the early signs of trouble and help them access the critical care they need. The one-hour webinar included an interactive online tool developed by the Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness to identify local specialists and make referrals (<https://www.findedhelp.com/>).



U.S. Surgeon General
Jerome Adams

Our webinar reached hundreds of clinicians, eating disorders recovery advocates, researchers, and graduate students across the country and can be viewed on our website along with our other health professional trainings. STRIPED was truly honored to create the first national webinar on eating disorders early detection that was not only headlined by the Surgeon General but also supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health and seven other federal offices and agencies. Check out the archived webinar on our website at: <http://bit.ly/2ITLc4b>

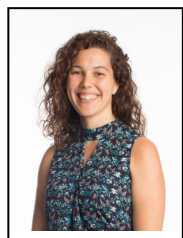
What's New From the STRIPED Team?

STRIPED and Be Real USA: A Partnership for Positive Youth Development



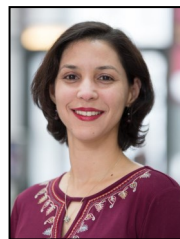
STRIPED is partnering with colleague Denise Hamburger and Be Real USA to launch an ambitious and promising multisector strategic approach to develop healthier mental, social, and physical environments for young people. Starting in Illinois, we are engaging leading businesses, departments of education and public health, elected officials, community organizations, and the young people themselves in collaborative, systems-level initiatives to boost positive youth development. Specific projects include empowering youth to engage in advocacy, partnering with the business community to promote more responsible advertising and to limit sales of dangerous weight-loss products to youth, and creating body confident school environments. Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to contribute to this work!

Eating Disorders in Latinx Adolescents



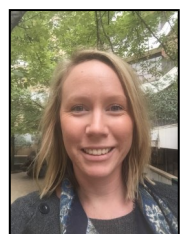
Hannah Cory

Hannah Cory and Josiemer Mattei are recipients of a STRIPED Early Career Research Award to support their research on body image and eating disorders among Latinx youth. They are exploring the unique lived experiences of Latinx youth and sociocultural influences on the development of body image and eating disorders. Through a series of qualitative interviews, Hannah and Josiemer are eliciting social and cultural weight attitudes among Latinx teens and their broader communities. Complementary quantitative analysis will examine data from the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos – Youth Cohort to explore associations between social attitudes toward weight and disordered eating behaviors. The results of their research will fill a critical void and inform socially and culturally relevant eating disorders prevention strategies for young Latinx communities.



Josiemer Mattei

Body Confident Mums Project



Zali Yager

Zali Yager from the Institute of Health and Sport at Victoria University in Melbourne visited STRIPED as a Creswick Foundation Visiting Fellow in April 2019. During her time with STRIPED, Zali made strides to advance her research for the Body Confident Mums project (www.bodyconfidentmums.org), the first evidence-based program to help women adjust to the changes in their lives and bodies during early motherhood. While with STRIPED, Zali attended a Harvard Extension School training program in design thinking and applied this framework as she developed resources to enhance body confidence for postpartum mothers and training materials for health professionals. The Body Confident Mums resources integrate practices of self-compassion, mindfulness, and a focus on the functionality of the body to support positive postpartum body image among women and prevent the intergenerational transmission of body image concerns to their children.

Thank You, Funders!

Ellen Feldberg Gordon Fund for Eating Disorders Research
Jennifer Perini
A Chance to Heal Endowment
Denise and Daniel Hamburger
Manley Family Foundation
Ivy Silver
Joanna Berwind Creamer
Susan Jackson Tressider
Barbara & David Goodman
Jennifer Miles
Jean Marie Arduino
Amy Spies
Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health
Boston Children's Hospital Translational Research Program
Delta Delta Delta Fraternity/The Center for Living, Learning, and Leading
Harvard Catalyst
Harvard Chan School Curriculum Innovation Grant
Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching
Janssen Research & Development, Johnson & Johnson
National Adolescent and Young Adult Health Research Network
National Eating Disorders Association, Feeding Hope Fund
Rhode Island Fndn./Ophelia's Place
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Seed Grants
U.S. Department of Defense
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health
U.S. Maternal and Child Health Bureau/HRSA training grants MC00001 (PI Tiemeier), LEAH MC00009 (PI Emans)
Willamette Nutrition Source

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The Ellen Feldberg Gordon STRIPED Fund

We are deeply grateful to our longtime friend of STRIPED, Ellen Feldberg Gordon of Newport Beach, CA, for her continued, generous support of STRIPED and our core mission to prevent eating disorders and create a world where all children can grow up at home in their own bodies. As she says, "I know the work will continue to inform and inspire, and ultimately make eating disorders much less prevalent."

Philanthropy is critical to STRIPED's work, and private contributions directly support:

- **Student financial aid and research grants**
- **Pioneering research in eating disorders prevention and adolescent health**
- **Events and advocacy to raise awareness about dangerous weight and shape control behaviors and the harmful societal influences that contribute to them**
- **Teaching cases and online courses to be used to teach thousands of public health students and healthcare professionals around the world**

You can help spark innovation and impact for eating disorders prevention by supporting the STRIPED community with your tax-deductible donation. To make a gift, visit <https://goo.gl/MyI7Wl> and select the fund option "Eating Disorders Prevention (STRIPED)" or contact Judi Taylor Cantor, Director of Planned Giving, Harvard Chan School, at 617-432-8071.



Ellen Feldberg Gordon

STRIPED Policy Translation: From Research to Impact

As a training initiative and public health incubator, STRIPED is committed to cultivating novel insights and strategies for prevention. A key part of STRIPED's mission is to translate our research findings into sound public health policy to tackle harmful influences in our environment that increase the risk of eating disorders. We work closely with community partners to craft evidence-based policy solutions and see them through to implementation, all while training the next generation of public health scholars in the skills they need to be powerful policy translation advocates. We are so grateful to work with such talented and dedicated colleagues with our community partner organizations, including the Multi-Service Eating Disorders Association, Eating Disorders Coalition, National Eating Disorders Association, Academy for Eating Disorders, and many others!

Promoting Mental Health Through Realistic Advertising Images

It is standard practice for photo editors to correct perceived "flaws" in the appearance of models in advertising. For young consumers, though, these ad images set unrealistic beauty norms and have profound negative effects on mental health. Massachusetts bill H.3892 is based on STRIPED legal research and is the first of its kind to offer tax incentives to companies that pledge to not alter body shape, size, or skin tone in ads to conform to harmful beauty ideals.

Protecting Children From Harmful Supplements

Research has repeatedly shown that dietary supplements for weight loss and muscle building are too often laced with dangerous ingredients with potentially life-threatening effects. The American Academy of Pediatrics has even warned against using them, yet stores all across the country legally sell these products to children every day. That could change with Massachusetts bill H.1942, based on STRIPED legal research, which would ban the sale of diet pills and muscle-building supplements to children and move these products behind the counter or into a locked case. Along with a coalition of Massachusetts-based and national community organizations, STRIPED is working with Rep. Kay Khan, sponsor of the bill, to call attention to this important child health issue. New York City may be next, where City Councilor Mark Levine filed a bill to ban the sale of supplements containing laxatives or appetite suppressants to minors.

Putting an End to Weight Discrimination

Weight stigma fuels discrimination from landlords, lenders, employers, educators, and service providers and is well-documented to increase risk for eating disorders in people of all sizes. Even healthcare settings are not immune, and experiences of stigma can lead to delayed care, missed diagnoses, and disparities in treatment, especially in people living in larger bodies. Despite its pernicious and pervasive impact, there are almost no protections against this type of discrimination anywhere in the U.S. Now in Massachusetts, bills H.3413 and S.1012 are being considered to make weight discrimination illegal. STRIPED Director Bryn Austin and Program Coordinator Jordan Levinson testified in support of these bills in front of the MA Joint Committee on the Judiciary, and STRIPED is working with a coalition of partner organizations to build awareness and support for policy solutions for this vital health equity issue.

Check out our website at www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped



Newsletter by: S. Bryn Austin, Erin Gibson, and Julia Vitagliano