

CURVES

Body image is everywhere in the media. Look at the people in any magazine, turn on a music channel, look at posters and billboards; most have unnaturally slender bodies, "perfect" skin, legs that seem to go on forever. And then there's you, looking in a mirror. Maybe you've got a spot, or you don't have the figure you want. Can this contrast really be any good for us? With all these "perfect" celebrities flaunting themselves everywhere, it's enough to make anyone feel a bit insecure.

We know what the media says, but we wanted to know a bit more about what you think. We recently ran a survey in different schools, colleges and 6th forms around Kingston to discover your opinions. The answer was very clear. Not only do you think the media puts too much pressure on young people – especially teenage girls – you also think it's wrong. Out of over 70 people questioned, only three said they thought a skinny figure was sexier than a curvy body. That's over 95% of you. It seems popular opinion definitely gravitates towards an average female shape. So why is the culture to lose it? Most people thought the media is to blame and they're about right. Every fashion picture of a model you see in magazine or on poster... it's been altered. Waistlines get pulled in, teeth are whitened, any facial flaw is covered. So perhaps the 'perfect'

look isn't perfect. In fact, it possibly doesn't even exist. But you would be hard pressed to find anyone that doesn't want to lose weight, dye their hair, change themselves in some way. Some say it's due to peer pressure; they need to look more like their friends. Why? If your friends are that bothered about how you look, it's possible they're not really such good friends after all.

No doubt you've heard this saying before: it's what's inside that counts. And it's a great theory, brilliant on paper. Sadly, I know very few people that live by it. One doesn't straighten her hair, won't wear make-up, doesn't care what people say about her clothes. And she's one of the most genuine, nicest friends I have. So, in case you haven't heard it all before, in case you think you need to change – don't.

You really don't need it. And anyone that says you do is probably very unhappy with themselves, and it's hard to believe they're a true friend if they don't like you the way you are. Maybe you're not perfect but no-one is. Settle for being yourself, which is damn near enough.

written bt Morgan Mead, Amy Moran, Leaticia Kitenge and Paul Kenny

VS. SKINNY

They're called
love handles
for a reason!!