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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1984 Volume V: American Adolescents in the Public Eye

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## **Eating Disorders and Adolescents: Conflict of Self Image**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 84.05.05  
by Frances F. Conte

This curriculum unit examines the tragic epidemic of eating disorders currently affecting an alarming number of adolescents this country. It explores the cultural influences of this phenomenon and provides insight into the nature of conflicts and pressures experienced by adolescents in relation to issues of self esteem, sexuality and individuation which may lead to obsessive dieting; self starvation; or binge/purge compulsion.

The unit presents an overview of anorexia and bulimia including diagnostic criteria; causal theories; secondary effects on health; and current treatment modalities.

The activities are designed to give students a better understanding of these complex syndromes and an opportunity to explore and discuss their own feelings and conflicts. Students will be asked to investigate how the media and the advertising industry exploit external beauty, body image and thinness.

(Recommended for grades 9 through 12, Family Life Education classes; grades 6 through 12, Health classes; grades 9 through 12, Parenting & Child Development classes; grades 11 and 12, Psychology classes; and grades 8 through 12, Social Studies classes)

### **Key Words**

*Nutrition American Adolescent Disorders*

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