WORK IT OUT: THREE CASE STUDIES EXAMINING DANCE AND GIRLS' BODY IMAGE IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE

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Abstract

For young girls, the self-disciplining of their physical bodies, both in their use and appearance, has resulted in the prevalence of body image issues. Supported by extensive literature on body image, I argue that young girls learn that their self-worth as future women is tied to the evaluation of their bodies as aesthetically pleasing, reproductively able, and representative of conventional femininity. In this dissertation, I detail a new approach to teaching dance to girls in schools who are on the cusp of becoming teenagers through a specially designed program, Work It Out. This program aims to account for the performative nature of gender (Butler 1990) and the prevalence of "beauty sickness" (Engeln-Maddox 2005) among adolescent girls through self-reflexive, embodied play activities. This teaching strategy applies the inherently expressive nature of creative dance and choreography to girls' experience of their bodies and body image. Work It Out fills a pedagogical gap in current body image programming options for girls provided by existing programs. While these other programs have brought the issue of girls' body image to the attention of mainstream media, they do not adequately address the issue of girls' body image in an inclusive, girl-centered, expressive, flexible, or reflexive way. Through a series of three case studies conducted in a coeducational public school, a girls-only private school, and a type one diabetic girls-only recreational setting, I address the following questions: Can dance, as a form of embodied play, assist girls aged 11 to 14 in grappling with the body image issues that frequently occur in adolescence? Which pedagogical strategies have the potential to foster a more positive corporeal self-conceptualization? And how can educators use dance in a range of settings to encourage positive body image? Overall, this research shows that in these three distinct settings, educators invested in fostering positive body image need to attend to the following three fundamental concepts: body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals. If

girls learn to appreciate their bodies' functionality, forge a stronger sense of belonging, and diversify their body-based ideals, they will be empowered to re-conceptualize their body image in a positive way.

Dedication

"Promise me you'll always remember:

You're braver than you believe,

And stronger than you seem,

And smarter than you think."

– A. A. Milne

For my Mother and Father, without whom this dream would never have come true.

Thank you for your unconditional love, steadfast confidence, and unwavering faith in me.

Acknowledgments

At the beginning of this degree, the task of researching and writing a dissertation was daunting. Although I had some ideas about what I wanted to research, I could not quite tell how I was going to fit all of my thoughts together. Little by little, though, the relationship between all of my interests became clearer and a project began to emerge. I have many people to thank for helping me through the process of writing this dissertation.

My sincerest gratitude goes to my fantastic committee members whose guidance helped me dig deeper, think more critically, and write with clarity and purpose. Thank you to my advisor and committee member, Dr. Danielle Robinson. Your work ethic and attention to detail inspired me to be better and work harder. I am the scholar I am today because you took the time to teach me what it really means to do research. Thank you to Dr. Bridget Cauthery for your constant support and unfailing optimism. I always left our meetings armed with new and fruitful ideas about the theories with which I was working. This project and I are better because of your kind, knowledgeable guidance. To Dr. Don Dippo, thank you for your willingness to step in as a committee member when I needed your help most. Your dedication to education, research, and your students is commendable and I am honoured to have had the opportunity to benefit from your instruction. Finally, thank you to Dr. Chloe Brushwood-Rose. Your expertise and suggestions enriched my understanding of what arts and aesthetic education are and how I can contribute to this area of study.

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Introduction

Popular media, school, puberty, growing up, fitting in—these factors contribute to a fractured self-image during adolescence (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005; Coulter 2014; Ornstein 1994; Pipher 1994). As early as 1950, Erikson argued that the central emotional crisis faced by adolescents (aged 11 to 18) is "identity versus role confusion" (57). Since Erikson, other scholars have built upon this understanding of adolescence, revealing that the establishment of identity during adolescence directly relates to the fulfillment of societal norms (Christensen and James 2008; Kidwell et al. 1995; Kroger 2008; Marcia 1993, 1966, 1967). Pressure to solve this psychosocial struggle motivates adolescents, defined as young adults between the ages of 10 and 19, to accept and ultimately embody culturally-constructed norms of behaviour, speech, self-talk, and dress characterized as stereotypically feminine or masculine (Butler 1990). For female adolescents in particular, in Western culture, the objectification of their physical bodies—both in use and appearance—has resulted in the prevalence of body image issues among this population. Such issues can be understood through objectification theory (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997), which explains how adolescent girls come to believe that their self-worth depends upon the evaluation of their body and behaviour as aesthetically pleasing, socially circumspect, reproductively able, and ideally "feminine" (Butler 1990; Bordo 2003; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997; Welter 1966; Wolf 2002). Helping girls to move away from this objectifying view of their bodies was the primary goal of this project.

The topic of body image is a popular one in media today. Usually, issues with body image are presented as exclusively tied to concerns surrounding physical appearance. However, in this project I define body image in a more diverse way. Firstly, I recognize body image as both a physically and emotionally charged topic for my participants. Under this same line of thought,

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the girls who took part in my programming could have experiences with body image that are rooted in a physical or emotional experience. For example, girls who exhibit a noticeable physical difference (e.g. worn medical equipment or a disability) could have concerns about peers recognizing their different ability. On the other hand, another girl's body image could be based upon how she feels she compares to a desired body type. In each of these examples the girls' concerns surround how their body is perceived. However, one was centered on a physical attribute while the other was based upon how the girl felt about her body but not necessarily in physical fact. The work of Cash (1990) supports my understanding of body image through his acknowledgement that in studying body image there is both an "outside view" and an "inside view" to be considered. The outside view focuses on physical characteristics and the ways that human appearance affects a person's life. However, there is also the more emotional inside view which acknowledges that body image can also be influenced by self-perceptions not rooted in reality (Cash 2004: 1). Together Cash's (1990) views on body image reveal how "the multifaceted psychological experience of embodiment, is especially but not exclusively [tied to] one's physical appearance" (Cash 2004, 1). Cash's (1990) work expands the possibilities for understanding and researching negative body image and relatedly finding ways to help those struggling with it. It is also a viewpoint that I have used in defining what body image means within the context of my research.

The second part of my definition for body image relates to how it is evaluated and understood. This is important because how a girl feels about one aspect of her physical body may or may not translate into her having negative feelings about herself overall. Although she could be concerned about how muscular her legs are she may feel quite confident about how fast she can use her legs when running. Scholarship on body image has uncovered a number of different

ways body image can be evaluated and have an effect on those who struggle with it (Martin

Ginis, Bassett, and Conlin 2012; Cash 2004; Stewart and Williamson, 2004; Thompson,

Heinberg, Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn, 1999). Martin Ginis, Bassett, and Conlin (2012) outline the

many dimensions of body image that have been found and researched throughout the last decade.

In identifying body image as multi-dimensional Martin Ginis, Bassett, and Conlin (2012) explain

the many ways people see, feel, think, and act toward their bodies through an explanation of

various dimensions in body image research. These dimensions include:

> Perceptual Dimension: This dimension pertains to how a person sees themselves in their mind. It is based in what a person notices when looking in the mirror, or how they imagine their bodies to look.
>
> Affective Dimension: This dimension is centered on the feelings a person has regarding their body's appearance and how it functions. How a person feels in this dimension could be positive (i.e., feeling confident in one's skills) or negative (i.e., feeling anxiety or shame about inability to perform a desired task).
>
> Cognitive Dimension: This dimension relates to an individual's thoughts and beliefs on what the most important aspects of the body are. This could be based in appearance, health, or ability.
>
> Behavioural Dimension: Examining this dimension looks at how a person communicates their feelings about the body through behaviour. Examples such as wearing revealing clothing or trying to hide a scar or piece of medical equipment could be factored into those interested in this dimension.
>
> Subjective Dimension: This approach to body image looks to find peoples' overall level of satisfaction with their bodies. This could relate to individual body parts or to looking at the body as a whole. (Martin Ginis, Bassett, and Conlin 2012, 3)

The most prominent idea to take away from Marin Ginis, Bassett, and Conlin's (2012)

explanation is that although "many people may be dissatisfied with their appearance, […] their

dissatisfaction does not necessarily impact their emotional well-being or daily functioning" (4).

This is because there are so many factors including perceptions of health, ability, and personal

beliefs that influence how a person's body image is formed. In this research I am most interested

in looking at the perceptual and affective dimensions of body image. Specifically, I wanted to know how girls' relationship with their body is affected by their physical appearance and personal ideals. My definition of body image in this project therefore is based on acknowledging how girls relate to their bodies. Included in this relationship are their thoughts about their appearance and abilities. Within my understanding of body image is the recognition that physical appearance and emotion are not exclusive to one another in relation to the body. There is the possibility for girls to hold both positive and negative views on their bodies at the same time.

Linked to my definition of body image, (which includes the possibility for girls to simultaneously have positive and negative feelings about their bodies) is delineating the meaning of confidence, self-esteem, and identity. I understand confidence as related to perceived ability. My definition of confidence stems from Gould's (2009) "confidences" which can be either dispositional (e.g., being generally positive about ability) or state (e.g., being certain about one's ability in a specific task or scenario such as dance). In my research I saw girls' confidence in their physical ability (e.g., dancing, creating choreography, or participating in discussion) as directly related to how able they perceived themselves to be in our classroom. Related to perceived ability is the more emotionally based self-esteem. My understanding of self-esteem is related to the work of Cast and Burke (2002) who explain that self-esteem is built and lost depending on how a person feels they have performed a particular task (1043). In relation to my research girls' self-esteem was directly related to how confident they felt in their performance. Moreover, my definition of self-esteem also acknowledges that while girls could feel negatively about their performance in one aspect of our class (e.g., physically dancing) they could perceive their contributions to our lessons as positive in other ways (e.g. discussing ideas about the body).

In this way, confidence and self-esteem are linked as self-esteem is the emotional reaction to girls' recognition of physical ability.

The last component to consider in understanding my definition of body image is identity. I understand identity as the way that girls saw themselves in relation to cultural ideals, peers, and recognized ability. Returning to Erikson's (1950) psychosocial crises identity is emotional but rooted in social comparison. My female participants looked for ways to fit in with their peers and in so doing found ways to define themselves as individuals that helped them to relate to one another. Girls' choice of identity in this scenario was predicated on what skills (e.g., dancing) or experiences (e.g. having type one diabetes) they perceived as important to fitting in. Moreover, for many of the participating girls, identity was linked to the ways they used or took care of their bodies within our classroom. They were not only dancing, they *were* dancers. They were not only taking care of their diabetes, they *were* diabetics.

Schools across Ontario have acknowledged the need to address body image issues and are attempting to help adolescent girls. Their current method for assisting girls with body image is including sex-segregated, extracurricular programming options for girls about body image. Two of the most common programs are the Dove Self-Esteem Project® and Girls on the Run®, which focus on discussing media and engaging in sports, respectively, as methods for helping girls reframe their body image. However, the programs' curricula are somewhat limited by the conflicting messages their choices in activity communicate. For example, the Dove Self-Esteem Project's goal is to help girls appreciate their own beauty rather than satisfy particular physical ideals. However, as a company, Dove makes and sells cosmetics and skin care. Can a program sponsored by a renowned beauty company effectively be a spokesperson for helping girls to overcome their body image issues? Alternatively, Girls on the Run uses training for and running

a 5 km race as a way for girls to use their body to achieve a physical goal. As an inherently competitive activity, I question whether running is the most inclusive choice for helping all girls improve their body image. Can a competitive environment centered on the body serve as an inclusive learning environment for girls to achieve body-positive views? I discuss the specific curricula of each program and analyze their approaches to body image programming in greater detail in chapter 2. Within the context of my research, the use of these programs implies that schools realize how pervasive body image issues are for young girls and how influential continued negative body image is on their well-being.

My research on the pedagogy behind effective body image programming was a twofold project. First, I wanted to address the gaps I saw in current body image programming options for girls. To do this, I created the Work It Out program, a teacher-guided, student-led program in which participants engage with their moving bodies while reflecting, creating, and commenting on its many uses through dance. Making girls the sole creators of their own dances avoids leading students to a particular conclusion about their bodies. Instead, Work It Out guides them through a process of self-recognition and inquiry that culminates in a level of enhanced awareness about how the concepts within society and the media influence how they think and feel about themselves. Second, I wanted to know if dance, as a form of embodied play, can assist girls aged 11 to 14 to address the body image issues that frequently occur in adolescence. If so, I questioned how educators could use dance in public and private schools as well as recreational settings to encourage positive body image within this population. Which pedagogical strategies have the potential to foster a more positive corporeal self-conceptualization in early adolescent girls? What types of dance, or aspects of dance practice, are best suited to body image enhancement activities? Finally, what external factors (e.g., prior dance background, school

environment, family relationships, religious orientation, media consumption habits, parental involvement, sexual orientation, and health) impact girls' experience in this type of dance class? As I describe in chapters 4-6, through a series of three case studies in coeducational, single-sex, and recreational settings respectively, I addressed these questions.

I chose dance for the primary physical activity in Work It Out due to its recognition as a starting point for body image issues. With its narrow views on what constitutes the "ideal body," technical dance instruction emphasizes the need to control the body to achieve particular abilities and aesthetics (Foster 1997; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013). I use the term technical to describe dance classes where a specific dance technique is taught (e.g. ballet, jazz, hip hop, tap, etc.). In the school setting, educators approach dance less formally than in the studio setting. Ontario's dance curriculum focuses on creative dance rather than technical training in technique. This pedagogical choice is very body positive. Removing the technical focus of formal dance training helps divert students' attention away from the aesthetics of the body in favour of self-expression. However, I do not assume that because students are free to dance in any form that they are immune to the grander cultural constructions tied to idealizations of the dancer's body. Rather, the non-prescriptive nature of this framework for using an artistic medium to attack body image allows any ideas girls have to be expressed. Instead of having finite lesson plans with specified discussion points for each class, I chose to adopt a more general classroom organization, so I could see what conversations students would have about dance and the body on their own. (See appendices A and B for the workbook and lesson plans I used for each session of Work It Out.)

Theoretical Foundation

Four key concepts provided the foundation for the curriculum I developed: the performative nature of gender (Butler 1990), the pervasiveness of "beauty sickness" (Engeln-Maddox 2005) in adolescent girls, the meaningful learning that comes from encouraging "imaginative transformation" through playful interactions with the arts (Eisner 2002), and the effects of "enabling constraints" on student interaction (Manning and Massumi 2014).

Gender Performativity

"Gender performativity" identifies the ways that ideals about masculinity or femininity affect behaviour (Butler 1990). Gender performativity effectively denaturalizes the idea that males or females should act in a particular way or like certain activities. Butler's (1990) idea is important to my work because dance is most often characterized in Western culture as a primarily female form of physical activity. The thin ballerina archetype, graceful movements, and role of female dancers as followers to their male leads align with culturally-constructed ideas about females. Butler's (1990) idea that gender is performed identifies these supposedly "female" behaviours as unnatural. As a result, the need to fulfill particular aesthetics to partake in certain ways of moving, behaving, or socializing breaks down, erasing the need to look a certain way in order to be ideally feminine.

Beauty Sickness

The idea of beauty sickness describes the negative effects the idealization of the female body has on women and girls. Engeln-Maddox (2005) coined this term to explain the obsessive ways in which young women pursue particular physical aesthetics. In her research with college-aged girls, Engeln-Maddox (2005) examined how images of female bodies in media affect young

women's body image. She found that while the majority of her participants knew that models featured on magazines were not representative of the general population, they still wished to look like them. Regardless of how accomplished Engeln-Maddox's (2005) participants were professionally or how supported they were by family and friends, the assessment of their bodies as beautiful remained a central and sometimes overwhelming concern. Engeln-Maddox's (2005) term gives a name to the objectifying of the body I recognized as problematic in my adolescent participants.

Imaginative Transformation

In Work It Out, I applied the inherently expressive nature of creative movement and choreography to address adolescent girls' relationships to their bodies and to help them manage their body image issues. In designing the framework, I drew from scholarship in education, psychology, and girlhood studies. The key innovation in my approach to teaching dance was its creative focus and use of play. According to Landreth (2012), play is one of the most effective tools for helping children to express difficult emotions. When playing, participants can explore troubling experiences under the guise of play (i.e., the toys or characters of the story undergo the traumatic experience instead of the child). As there are no perceived consequences, the process of playing is nondirective (Landreth 2012). In my program, dance stood in as a form of embodied play, guiding the girls through a self-reflexive practice where their ideas about body image could be expressed.

The playful aspect of this course stems from the creative movement focus of the program, which follows Eisner's (2002) concept of imaginative transformation. For Eisner (2002), meaningful learning through the arts happens when students take inspiration from others but do not attempt to mimic. When students apply learned techniques to create something that expresses

their own ideas, likes, or experiences, engaging with the arts becomes educative. I followed

Eisner's (2002) ideas by allowing girls to dance using movements of their own invention. Rather

than mimicking taught steps (as would be the case in a traditional dance class), the girls played

within their range of physical abilities. Moreover, they were not limited to a particular technique

or tied to certain ideal dance bodies. As a result, the body became a tool for girls to play with and

express the personal sentiments they held about their bodies.

Enabling Constraints

Enabling constraints describes the ways that placing limitations on research participants'

choices can yield new insights. I draw my definition of this notion from the work of Manning

and Massumi (2014) who explain that people are most comfortable with tasks when they are

given instructions that clearly outline their available choices. Manning and Massumi (2014)

identify that for some people the prospect of free choice causes anxiety. In the context of my

project I needed to provide students with specific criteria to follow for participating. Deciding

how much or how little freedom to give students in their creative process is an issue I grappled

with throughout this project. In each session of my programming the limitations I placed on the

setting, population of the room, and artistic choices available to participants changed. Seeing

how the responses of students to my programming were altered by my making more choices for

them as choreographers (i.e. the musical accompaniment or group member selection) was

extremely telling. I reference this idea in each of my three case studies in regards to examining

what I need to do in order to better support my participants' creative process. Moreover, I use

this idea as a leading consideration for the modifications I made to Work It Out in each setting.

Setting the Stage for Positive Body Image: A Three-Part Model

The basic premise of this project was that dance can help adolescent girls with body image problems. This assumption evolved from the understanding that girls formulate their body image (i.e., how they view themselves) in direct relation to the state of their bodies (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). Here, "state" describes the multitude of reasons girls could be unhappy with their body, including aesthetics (e.g., beauty ideals or size of their body), ability (e.g., dealing with a physical difference or being differently-abled), or sex (e.g., transgendered girls). Although the possible issues a girl could have with her body are numerous, all equally have the capacity to affect girls' body image negatively.

In order to help girls deal with body image, I developed a pedagogical model: the "positive body image model." This model includes three fundamental concepts, which I argue are the leading pedagogical concerns for teachers aiming to teach body positivity: body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals. I explain each of these three concepts more thoroughly below. I believe all three of these factors guide the development of girls' body image and associated feelings about their bodies. This means that if a classroom educator wishes to create a body-positive classroom, they must work to satisfy all three of these concepts in their lessons. While I used dance in this research as the leading activity in which students engage, this model can also be applied to other mediums (e.g. music, drama, visual arts, creative writing, etc.).

Body Functionality

Taken from Alleva et al. (2015), "body functionality" is based on the acknowledgement that noticed improved physical performance in a fitness class setting enhances body appreciation for participants. Alleva et al.'s (2015) success with adult women gave me confidence in the

possibility for the same to be true for adolescent girls. I expanded upon this work by using a creative physical activity instead of a fitness regiment as the foundation through which adolescent participants recognized the abilities of their bodies. My choice of activity is significant because of the documented history of women using fitness and diet to "fix" their bodies. Aapola, Gonick, and Harris (2005) support my thinking in their acknowledgement that in Western society, "women's bodies can never be quite right, and can always be improved" (137). According to the authours, fitness is one of the tools women and girls use to "improve" themselves. Crawford et al. (1992) more broadly justify girls' desire to change their looks as a particular response to adolescents' association of happiness with mastery and knowledge over particular areas of concern in their lives. For a young girl, the desired mastery is to "competently manage her unruly body to receive the appropriate amount of heterosexual approval" (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005, 139). Fitness and dieting are two of the leading tools for learning to "control" the body for aesthetic purposes. The goal of my programming was to improve body image for young girls by encouraging them to appreciate their bodies rather than control them. Using a creative dance focus instead of traditional gym-based activity directed girls' focus towards self-expression rather than self-improvement through movement.

In the traditional dance classroom, ability is judged via students' capacity to embody the specified mechanics of a single taught technique (e.g., ballet, jazz, tap, etc.). This can directly inhibit the recognition of body functionality especially for students who are differently abled. In Work It Out, I removed the regulations of technical, codified dance instruction to favour a creative focus where participants invented and shared their own movements. This empowered the girls to share movements with which they were familiar and in which they believed they were

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skilled. Karate chops, field kicks, and the twist were just as welcome in the Work It Out dance classroom as movements from ballet or jazz vocabularies.

Belonging

"Belonging" is a concept focused on creating a classroom that is a safe space for students to move and share ideas. For this reason, creation of a safe space for students to learn in is a goal to be striven towards by classroom teachers. However, when in the live classroom the task of making the classroom a universally safe space is difficult. I learned this with each session I ran of Work It Out recognizing the wide range of relationships participating girls had with their bodies and how their differing perceptions and experiences influenced how they cultivated a sense of belonging. For this reason, I want to stress that the creation of a safe space is important for teachers to endeavour towards but is difficult to completely satisfy. This is because there is no one-size-fits all pedagogy or universally ideal pedagogic space. With each session I ran of Work It Out, my understanding of this concept grew. Initially, I encouraged a sense of belonging by removing technique from the Work It Out classroom. As previously stated, the narrow physical aesthetic ideals girls subscribe to are exclusionary to most people (Foster 1997). Taking away students' pressure to perform within the parameters of a particular technique enhanced belonging in the classroom by allowing for students to make modifications to their movements. That is not to say that I could fully divorce my dance program from any kind of technical instruction; students entered the program with diverse movement backgrounds that impacted the choreography they created. Work It Out generated a sense of belonging, however, because the curriculum did not limit students to a singular type of movement. My goal as their teacher in this program was to support them in using their individual abilities to make a dance. I guided them by discussing basic choreographic tools (e.g., the elements of dance), and allowed them to decide

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what they wanted to use. I further fostered belonging by acknowledging students' different bodies and valuing their abilities as individuals. The goal was not to erase their individual differences but instead to celebrate and share them with others.

As the sessions progressed, my understanding of belonging as a pedagogical concept expanded. Belonging also had to do with the social climate of our classroom. For instance, in the coeducational setting, gender difference interfered with the boys and girls' ability to feel completely comfortable expressing their ideas. Moving into the all-girls school, establishing belonging was challenged by girls' competitiveness. Finally, in the recreational setting where all girls had Type 1 diabetes (T1D), their shared struggle to maintain health encouraged a sense of belonging. Collectively, my work exploring this concept points to the value of finding ways, as a teacher, to build an inclusive classroom on two levels. Firstly, activities must provide a range of options and allow students to modify them to suit their needs. Secondly, the social environment needs to ensure that students can find multiple ways to relate to each other.

Body-Based Ideals

The concept "body-based ideals" influences body image by skewing how girls see their bodies in relation to others. Specifically, the ideal female body is linked to thin, young models in beauty advertisements. Hargreaves and Tiggemann (2004) explain how body image concerns arise when young boys and girls aesthetically compare themselves to the bodies they see in the media. Hargreaves and Tiggemann (2004) relate these mediated images of the body to the tenants of social comparison theory (Festinger 1954; Suls and Wheeler 2003; Wood 1989), which suggest that appearance-related social comparison is the mechanism through which media exposure affects body image. Following this research, it is important to understand what students' "ideal" body is. For my T1D participants, having a noticeable physical difference to

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deal with further complicated how they related to their bodies and the body-based aesthetics to which they ascribed. One way my T1D participants dealt with their noticed visible difference was to employ the use of "passing", or attempting to hide their health status from others. I will discuss this term and my use of it in the next paragraph. Van Ingen (2003) argues that physical activity spaces are specifically "linked to the social construction of dominant ideologies and to the politics of identity" (210). This is because the appearance of our bodies and how we use them (i.e., words used, gestures) communicate how we "fit" into the peer group we socialize with or move in. Van Ingen's (2003) ideas echo Foster's (1997) earlier discussion of the ideal body coveted in the dance world. For both of these scholars, the activity or peer group in which participants engage spurs them on a path to look and perform in a particular way. As a result, girls who are unable to embody a particular body-based aesthetic ideal because of an uncontrollable difference are at risk of developing poor body image.

I use the term "passing" in relation to how girls dealt with recognized, uncontrollable physical differences. Specifically, I apply passing extensively to my third case study (see chapter 6) on girls living with type one diabetes (T1D). In the context of my research passing describes the desires and resultant behaviours of girls living with T1D work to control the ways they are perceived by others within the dance classroom. The central goal of the T1D girls' passing in this research is to be perceived as healthy or not diabetic within the dance classroom. In this way, I am extending the definition of passing to include illness and health. Like race and disability, illnesses like T1D can be identified by peers visually (e.g., because of worn medical equipment) and could possibly lead to social ridicule, exclusion, stereotyping, and isolation in the dance classroom.

Even in a setting that promotes the acceptance of all bodies, aesthetic ideals remained pervasive. The girls assessed themselves by the degree to which they conformed to certain aesthetic ideals reinforced by the media, popular culture, their preferred extracurricular activities, or their peers. While girls' specific physical goals were important to understanding individual participants' responses to the program, pedagogically, the more pressing issue was how to address the comparative relationship girls had with how their bodies looked both to themselves and in relation to others. My solution to this reality was to promote a more diverse understanding of body-based ideals. In the dance classroom, difference existed on two levels: (a) how the girls reacted to perceived variance in their performance in comparison to peers; and (b) how the girls reacted to other factors of difference, both visible (e.g., race, gender presentation, physical ability, physical aesthetics) and invisible (e.g., sexual orientation, health, religion). I dealt with difference in Work It Out by remaining attentive to the social, cultural, and physical characteristics of my participants at each site. In creating the nontechnical curriculum of this program, I widened the parameters for how students could adjust movements to fit their different abilities and to value each student's contribution equally. From my own struggles with T1D and body image, I believe that connecting with other people who deal with a physical difference helps make accepting that difference easier. In this context, this approach called upon the girls to assess their physical ideals and relationship to body image more critically.

Why Dance? Why Body Image? Why Me?

My story as a researcher begins with my love for dance. Dance was the first thing I found and formed a close bond with outside of my immediate family. It was the one thing that captivated my attention, held my interest, and inspired me to learn continuously. At four years of age, my motivation to begin dance lessons was very simple: I wanted to wear ballet shoes, to

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perform in a tutu, and—given that I was a twin—to have a half hour of my mother's undivided attention during the car rides to and from the studio. As I aged into adolescence, however, my affinity for dance was challenged by the pressure to satisfy physically-specific and frequently unattainable bodily aesthetics. To me, having a dancer's body meant being long limbed and very slim, an archetype commonly linked to ballet. This research is the direct result of my experiences dealing with body image issues as an adolescent dancer.

Looking back, two distinct life occurrences led to my understanding of and interest in the intersection of body image and dance practice—puberty and diabetes. The first occurred during my teenage years when the effects of puberty vastly changed my body's appearance. Until puberty, my body satisfied ballet's physical ideals, as I was thin with longer limbs than most of the girls in my class. However, when I reached puberty, I suddenly had a curvier figure and ceased to grow any taller than five foot three. This directly opposed the ideal dancer's body embedded in ballet dance culture, and which I had hoped to develop. Instead of being lean and long, I was short and round. While my maturing body's changes did not affect my ability to perform the movements taught to me, they did alter how I looked when embodying those movements, especially in comparison to some of my taller, slimmer peers. My negative feelings about my own body led me to develop a competitive attitude towards my peers, especially those with "ideal" bodies. In my perspective, skinnier dancers were better dancers and received leading roles. Looking back, I acknowledge that these dancers were extremely skilled and most likely received attention from teachers because of their superior talents. However, at the time, my concerns about my own body clouded my judgment. As a result of these perceptions, I began to question if I belonged in the dance world, and saw the shape of my body as the primary obstacle to achieving my goals as a dancer. I attempted to "fix" my body through restrictive dieting and

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relentless training, which soon became an obsession for me. This obsessive behaviour negatively affected by body image and eventually affected my physical performance in dance class. At that time, not looking how I wanted hindered my ability to recognize my talents as a performer.

My attitude changed when I began to train as a fitness instructor. Initially, I became a Zumba Fitness® and Pilates® instructor to fund my ongoing studies at university. Getting involved with Pilates and Zumba helped me to appreciate the functional skills I possessed as an experienced mover. My ability to break down steps, to follow the beat of the music, and to remember choreography was admired in the gym setting. The more time I spent teaching these fitness regimes, the greater my appreciation for the function of my body grew.

This change in my body image resulted from the way each of these fitness programs approaches the body. In Pilates, the individual and internal focus on building personal strength over time alleviated the pressure to perform. In my regular dance classes, I always compared my technique to other dancers. If I did not jump as high or turn as quickly as someone else could, I felt badly. However, in Pilates, the slow and controlled movements encourage participants to only focus on their own bodies. I did not have time or the desire to assess what other people were doing in Pilates because I was busy working within my own capability. In contrast, Zumba is an aerobic dance fitness program. This class is completely different from Pilates in that it encourages a group participation focus. The party-like atmosphere removes any competitive attitudes in favour of fun. Together, these two programs shifted my focus to what I could do with my body. I am not saying that the gym is a completely body-positive space—the desire to look a particular way is often what drives individuals to join a gym. However, in my case, the specific forms of fitness I invested in encouraged me to relate to my body in a new way, a way that

recognized the value of my training as a dancer while shifting away from individual performance.

The second challenge to my body image arrived with an unexpected health complication in my mid-twenties. In April 2014, I was diagnosed with type one diabetes (T1D). This diagnosis changed my relationship to my body, presenting the most difficult challenge I had ever faced emotionally and physically. Ironically, the months leading to my diagnosis were the best I had ever experienced in regards to my perception of my body. One of the symptoms of undiagnosed T1D is losing large amounts of weight quickly. I remember noticing my slimmer physique and feeling very pleased that my appearance was finally beginning to look the way I had always wanted it to. However, once I was diagnosed with T1D and began insulin therapy, the weight I had lost came back. At first, I was angry that my body had failed me after I had worked so hard to take care of it through ongoing fitness and dance activities. Then, I feared I would not be able to continue my dancing, fitness, or graduate studies because of how difficult managing T1D can be. As such, having T1D led me to create a new relationship with my body. While still focused on control, instead of considering weight, I had to focus on blood sugar levels. My experience learning how to manage T1D fuelled my desire to research body image as it relates to the challenges faced by diabetic girls and dancers—the subject of my third case study (see chapter 6). Drawing from my previous experiences overcoming body image issues using movement in the gym setting, I wondered if the same could be done for those dealing with T1D through dance. Collectively, my experience dealing with negative body image was rooted in an ongoing desire to control the body.

Research Considerations

In this project, I designed and tested Work It Out, a body image program and curriculum of my own making. I drew inspiration for the overall method of my research from the principles of Action Research in education. The specific ways that my methods are supported by models for Action Research based projects is discussed more fully in chapter 3. I followed a case study model for each of the three locations where I delivered the Work It Out program: (a) a public coeducational elementary school, (b) a private all-girls school, and (c) a recreational T1D-specific setting. Delivering my program in each of these environments allowed me to gain insight into the experiences of a range of girls and to understand how different scenarios impacted the success of the program. In each of the three sites, I taught participating students once per week for a span of seventy-five minutes.

Ethics and Confidentiality

I have kept the specific names of participants, teachers, and schools anonymous and replaced them with pseudonyms. Due to the sensitive nature of body image issues and young age of my participants, I thought it best to keep their identities private. All participants provided informed consent from legal guardians (see Appendix C for informed consent forms). When questioning minors on their thoughts about this emotionally charged material, knowing that their identities would remain secret increased both the girls and their parents' comfort with their participation in this project. Although I chose the specific schools that participated in each session, I did not select the students who took part in my programing.

Timeframe

A notable limitation of this study was the timeframe allotted in each setting. In the public schools, I delivered Work It Out over twelve weeks, while in the recreational setting it was only

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four weeks with many participants attending only one drop-in class. As an outsider to the establishments hosting my research in the schools, I adapted my schedule to the sites' availability. Ideally, each case study would have lasted the same amount of time, so I could compare the overall reactions of participating girls to my lessons more accurately. The reactions of a girl who had only had one lesson in comparison to one who gradually developed her ideas about the body were vastly different. As a researcher, it would have been advantageous to see how my participants' ideas changed over time as well as within each iteration of the program.

Choice of Settings

The main delimitation was the decision to run the program in three very different settings. I could have chosen to conduct three case studies all in public coeducational schools. However, I deliberately chose varied settings so that I could see how the environment affected the girls' interactions. Moreover, the characteristics of the three settings (public, private, and recreational; all-girls and coeducational) represent the most common organizations for girls' programming. As a result of this choice, it was impossible to have a control group or to lead a more scientific or quantitative study. The different context I ran each session in made comparing the responses of participants to one another difficult. Moreover, the program was altered to fit the setting for each session. Thus, having a control group was impossible as there were too many variables to consider given how different each session was.

Age of Participants

My choice to focus on girls between the ages of 11 and 14 was fuelled by the suggestions of body image teacher resources. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Dove Self-Esteem Project, and Girls on the Run advise that girls aged 11 to 14 are most prone to

body image issues (ETFO 2018; Dove Self-Esteem Project 2017; Girls on the Run 2018). As part of their teaching resources page, the ETFO offers elementary school teachers information about the social development of students. There is a specific section devoted to girls and body image. According to the ETFO, the onset of puberty "exacerbates gender differences in body and self esteem for girls [which leads to] increased objectification […] and body monitoring" (ETFO 2018: n.p.). Similarly, the Dove Self-Esteem Project's school program is recommended for girls between the ages of 11 and 14. Girls on the Run has two programming options, one of which is for grades 6 to 8 and was created to help girls to "sort through conflicting messages about their worth, their abilities and their value" (Girls on the Run 2017). In an effort to make my programming comparable to others, I chose to focus on the same age range.

Girls-Only Focus

The choice to focus upon adolescent girls related to the problem of body image, which tends to be more pronounced among female students in this age category. Body image as it relates to males is an entirely different area of study with its own separate literature and ideals. Examining how Work It Out and my model for positive body image programming relates to adolescent boys needs to be addressed in a separate study.

Participant Selection

The specific participants I drew from could have been further homogenized. For instance, if I had run a session with a group of dancers, gymnasts, or baseball players, the body ideals expressed might have been very different. Having a room full of girls who all related to their bodies through a shared specific activity yielded particular insights into how certain physical practices affected girls' body image.

Defining Success

I defined success within the program in relation to the level of each student's engagement with movement, her feedback, and her understanding of the three motivators—body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals. In between sessions, I made changes to the organization of lessons in response to participants' feedback and my assessment of how well the lesson addressed each of the fundamental concepts. Other considerations that led to changes in programming related to the specific settings of the case studies. For example, the time I spent with the T1D girls in the recreational case study was far shorter than in either school. Additionally, it was not possible to organize a control group for this project. However, in running the separate sessions of the program, I identified the key concepts essential to delivering a body image program successfully for girls.

Chapter Overview

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. In chapter 1, I outline the theoretical framework of my project and the Work It Out program. Specifically, I discuss why dance is an effective tool to create a more positive relationship between young girls and their developing bodies by engaging with the theories of other scholars (Dewey 1934; 1963; Eisner 2002; 2006; Vygotsky 1978, 1980). I then outline the pedagogical features of my program in relation to the literature, particularly its: (a) play-based focus (Landreth 1993; 2012; Sutton-Smith 1997), (b) process orientation (Anderson and Krathwohl 2001; Bruner 1985; Eisner 2002; 2006), and (c) emphasis on creative self-expression (Bloustein 2003; 2012; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013). Collectively, these features foster an inclusive classroom where girls can openly discuss body image, while offsetting the objectification of the young female body prevalent in the traditional dance classroom.

In chapter 2, I compare and contrast two body image programs currently targeted at adolescent girls: the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run. These two programs are the most popular body image programs running in Ontario today. I describe the history, philosophy, and curriculum of each program and compare them against the choices I made in creating the Work It Out program. Key to this discussion of existing body image programming is understanding how and why it is important to consider the fundamental concepts of my model (i.e., body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals) when dealing with body image in the classroom. Overall, I argue that in contrast to the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run, Work It Out is a girl-centered body image program.

In chapter 3, I describe the methodology of the Work It Out program and how I measured success. I explain why I chose Action Research and the reasoning behind the workbooks I created for students which were informed by body satisfaction scales (BSS) surveys. I further address the ways in which I altered and innovated upon the use of these methods for the purposes of working with young girls and creating a body-positive classroom. I review my methods for the collection and assessment of data, and provide a rationale for how I arrived at the conclusions presented in the case study chapters that follow.

In chapter 4, I explain my work in the coeducational school setting. For students in this session, recognized gender difference negatively affected students' sense of belonging in the classroom. Using Butler's (1990) concept of gender performativity as the basis for my analysis, I demonstrate how societal norms about femininity and masculinity affected the behaviour of my participants and their understanding of dance as an activity. I connect body image to gender through the work of scholars in body image (Feingold and Mazzella 1998; Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004; Olivardia 2002) and the gendering of the body through dance (Blume 2003;

Bordo 2003; McHale, Crouter, and Tucker 1999; Schnitt and Schnitt 1987; Shapiro 1998). I then compare and contrast the benefits and downsides of coeducational versus single-sex physical education classes, focusing on research on the effects of the environment on female student participation (Daalen 2005; Downey 1997; Ennis 1999; Lenskyj 1994; Naik 2010). Overall, this case study shows that in the coeducational setting, the girls could not effectively build a sense of belonging due to the presence of boys.

In chapter 5, I describe the second session of Work It Out, which took place in an all-girls private school. Here, I focus on how the attainment of the fundamental concepts of body functionality and body-based ideals connected to beliefs regarding achievement. This is pedagogically important because girls who are unable to "achieve" their specific physical goals are prone to a distortion of their body image, which impacts their chances for success. Work It Out aimed to dispel such body dysmorphic tendencies. In using dance as a nontechnical, inclusive activity, Work It Out subverted girls' attention to look or move in particular ways. The central question in this chapter is: can dance, as presented in the Work It Out program, help girls deal with perfectionist attitudes towards the body and achievement? The pedagogical intervention I make here underscores the need to encourage a "growth mindset" within this all-girls setting (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007; Dweck 1999, 2007; Kamins and Dweck 1999; Mueller and Dweck 1998; Nussbaum and Dweck 2008; O'Rourke et al. 2014). Overall, I demonstrate how the all-girls private school setting amplified girls' attention to achieving "perfection."

In chapter 6, I discuss the third session of Work It Out, which ran as a recreational program exclusively for T1D girls. I construct this case study as representing "difference" more generally because diabetic dancers are not unlike other dancers who exhibit a physical difference

(e.g., dancers of colour). Regardless of what specific physical difference a dancer may have, the common issue faced is the obstacles they encounter in reaching aesthetic ideals for reasons out of their control. Thus, the leading question I address in this chapter is: How can dance help girls who are disconnected from their bodies because of a perceived difference that makes fulfilling beauty ideals impossible? Using the idea of "passing" (Antencio and Write 2009; Lefebvre 1991; Van Ingen 2003) from critical race theory, I pull apart the responses of my T1D participants. Collectively, they demonstrate how dancers with physical differences work to control their bodies in order to satisfy body-based ideals and how being in a scenario where all girls had T1D further solidified the ways that the studio a "divided space" (Foucault 1983).

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

At its core, Work It Out engaged with the notion that play provides a platform to address adolescent girls' body image issues. This program thus incorporated my belief that creative dance is a purposeful pedagogical tool in this respect. Specifically, my approach positioned the body as a site of meaningful play through dance. By playing with movement through choreography, dancing became the medium through which the girls interacted with, conceptualized, experienced, and expressed definitions of girlhood and their changing bodies. In understanding the key concepts that undergird this investigation—adolescence, body image, and play—I draw from the fields of education, girl studies, and psychology.

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical insights that guided my project. By placing the voices of pertinent scholars into conversation with my own thinking, I explain why dance is an effective tool to create a more positive relationship between young girls and their developing bodies. I discuss my approach to teaching dance in a body-positive way by engaging with the theories and research of other scholars. I then link the literature to the pedagogical features of my program, namely its: (a) play-based focus, (b) process orientation, and (c) emphasis on creative self-expression. Collectively, these features foster an inclusive classroom where girls can openly discuss body image, while offsetting the objectification of the young female body prevalent in the traditional dance classroom.

More specifically, I begin by discussing the key characteristics of my approach to teaching dance. Combining the theories of key scholars in education (Atkins 1994; Bettleheim 1972; Dewey 1963; Eisner 2002; Greene 2001; Melchoir 2011; Piaget 1962; Vygotsky 1980), and play theory (Sutton-Smith 1997) supports my innovative understanding of dance as especially effective when assisting students in dealing with the social and emotional aspects of

body image. I further link dance as the active component of my body image-based programming to scholarship in dance education (Hanna 1999; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013), body image research (Alleva et al. 2015; Englen-Maddox 2005), and girlhood and gender studies (Bloustein 2003, 2012; Wolf 2002). I then synthesize this scholarship in relation to Work It Out, drawing connections to the literature as a whole.

Understanding Adolescence: Socializing and Body Image

In my approach to girl and body image-centered programming, I use play as a social tool and means of problem solving. Bettleheim (1972) defines "play" during adolescence as behaviours that test social and physical boundaries. It is a method of trial and error, "evidenced [for the adolescent] in 'playing' with problems, the belief in 'magic' solutions, and, most dramatically, reliance by some on drugs" (Bettleheim 1972, 1-2). Bettleheim (1972) further explains how this playful action assists adolescents in solving social discord, as it has "no rules other than those which he [the adolescent] himself imposes" (4-5). The player, or the adolescent, in this situation is in charge of what they choose to do or not to do. Depending on the outcome of his/her play, the adolescent garners information about how his/her behaviour has assisted in alleviating his/her original social/emotional concerns. Bettleheim's contribution to my work is in the acknowledgment that adolescents socially play with their problems and insecurities. His assertion that play is important for an adolescent to feel in charge of his/her behaviour supported my understanding that using a student-led approach for Work It Out was appropriate. What Bettleheim's work neglects to acknowledge, however, is the expressive and very personal nature of play. Bettleheim defines the ways in which play factors into the adolescent experience, but does not explain how critical thinking and self-making contribute to this behaviour.

In this project, I understood the basic emotional concerns of my participants through Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of human development. Erikson's work supports my understanding of social stress as extremely influential during adolescence. By negating the assumption that childhood and adolescence is a carefree and, therefore, crisis-free time in life (Christensen and James 2008), Erikson establishes there are indeed emotional concerns specific to adolescence. For children and adolescents, Erikson (1950) explains, these crises pertain to the stress of learning to trust the people around them and, later, establishing themselves alongside peers, with family, and in the world. Most relevant here is that the emotional struggles faced by adolescents are predicated on how they relate to their peers. As such, interacting with others offers a possible solution to help adolescents understand their place in society better. Socializing with peers through group choreography, movement, and discussion is central to the program I created. The girls had the opportunity to express ideas about their bodies in relation to their personal thoughts and the movements they created. I applied Erikson's work to body image by having girls speak about their concerns with one another. I believed that by giving girls the opportunity to discuss their personal issues with body image, they would gain better insight into how their ideas related to their peers. Moreover, they would feel less alone in their struggles with body image.

Poor body image relates to the social crises Erikson (1950) identifies. For the girls with whom I worked, the aesthetics and abilities of their body affected how they believed they fit into society. I define "body image" as how girls believe they relate to idealizations of the female body in society (Englen-Maddox 2005; Foster 1997; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013). Although the specific physical characteristics girls covet are entirely individual, the negative effects that arise from comparisons with female icons (e.g., peers and celebrities) are the same, leading to

self-objectification and lowered body image. Erikson's theory about adolescent struggle points to the importance of interactions with others during adolescence, in both the individual nature of the issues experienced as well as the influence of peers' reactions (Erikson 1950; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013). In lieu of this assertion, I began to question whether opening up conversations with other adolescent girls would help the girls to deal with their thoughts about body image. And, if so, would engaging more playfully with their bodies help to alleviate some of the pressures girls feel in deciphering their place in relation to body ideals and femininity?

Erikson's approach to understanding adolescence is organized linearly. Such a view on how people develop works to clearly delineate adolescence from other times in life and makes analyzing social development easier for researchers. However, models like Erikson's also limit our understanding of youth and the ways that social crises can manifest throughout different times of life. Lesko (1996) historicizes some of the discourses on adolescence as a time of crisis. She demonstrates how these powerful social constructions of youth as victims, in a process of becoming, or as hormonally charged can limit what adults imagine for them. What Lesko's work points to is how oversimplified assumptions about adolescence can negatively impact the way that teachers approach their young students. Moreover, Lesko's work highlights the possibility for different social crises to arise and change over time and throughout a person's life. I connect Lesko to my work with body image by acknowledging the relationship a girl has with her body as constantly in flux. This means that over time the potential for a girl to experience different social crises connected to body image is likely. As her body changes so will her relationship to her body. This is important because current popular programs on body image focus much of their attention on body image being a young girl's issue. Although I focused on adolescent girls

during this project with Work It Out I do not view body image as an issue that is exclusive to one time in life.

Another consideration in my choice to use dance in Work It Out was the impact of popular culture on adolescent girls and body image. As an object of study, the "girl" has been understood in scholarship as "an assemblage of social and cultural issues and questions rather than a field of physical facts, however much of the girl's empirical materiality is crucial to that assemblage" (Driscoll 2008, 13-14). The common thread weaving through published literature about the girl figure is an emphasis on the self, self-making, and selfhood. Moreover, the social pressures of satisfying iterations of "ideal girlhood" result in "middle childhood girls [tweens] begin[ning] to loose who they are" (Coulter 2014, 147). Popular characterizations of this drive for self include: (a) the girl in transition awaiting womanhood or puberty (Driscoll 2008; Welter 1966), (b) an entrenched bifurcation of possible girl personas in popular culture that construct girls as either/or (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005; Bettis and Adams 2005; Coulter 2014; Darms and Keenan 2013; Gonick 2005; McRobbie 1994; Pipher 1994; Wolf 2002), and (c) girls as individuals comparing and situating themselves in relation to their peers (Daniels 2009; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2005; Ornstein 1994; Pomerantz 2008). Depending on what behaviors girls understand as appropriate or desirable within a social context, they compare and valorize paradigms such as the nice/mean, popular/nerdy, or chaste/slutty girl. These ideas connect to my programming choices in that the girls who entered my classes were aware of the possible personas of "proper girlhood" and the related popular culture surrounding girlhood (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005). In Work It Out, the use of popular music represented a variety of these female paradigms. The girls' choices of musical accompaniment and requests to listen to certain female artists raised discussions about why they idolized particular artists. The descriptors the

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girls used for these pop icons were then applied to the way girls represented themselves through the choreographic choices they made. Using dance and popular music to fuel critical conversations about how the media represents girls and, conversely, how they represent themselves in choreography thus provided insight into body image and femininity. Moreover, it allowed the girls to play with how girly tropes factored into how they wanted to be seen.

Play-Based Focus

As stated above, Work It Out used play as a means for problem solving. The "problem" to be solved in this scenario was deciphering what social struggles my female participants felt most prominently in relation to their bodies and body image. The nature of their specific concerns related to many aspects of their lives (i.e., family/friends, relationships, religion, sexuality, economic status, education, body ideals, etc.). Regardless of what their individual issue was, I approached female participants with a mindset that recognized the possibility for personal crisis in adolescence and acknowledged how powerful these emotional concerns can be in affecting students' everyday lives. In this section, I discuss my use of play as a socially educative tool for helping students to express their ideas about body image.

What is Play?

Play and playing with movement through choreography are key components of the theory behind my program. In the context of Work It Out, play occurred through girls' engagement with the creative process of dance making. The body and the many ways it can move and express provided the basis for the girls' play. Throughout each session, the girls collaborated with peers to choreograph dances. The process of sharing, editing, and discovering movement to include in their dances encouraged the girls to play with their moving bodies and socialize with one

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another. While choreographing a dance for a graded assignment may result in feeling pressure to perform, in Work It Out, the girls were not marked for their performances. As a result, the process of putting together their dances focused on socializing with peers, discovering physical ability, and creatively expressing their ideas about body image. As they played with movement, the girls spoke to and connected with each other about their views on the body. In this way, the girls defined and embodied play through the creation, performance, and sharing of their original dances. How, then, did this playful action serve as a catalyst for meaningful social interaction between the girls? Here, I turn to the literature to answer to this question.

As a pedagogical and social concept, play is part of a larger scholarly discussion. Sutton-Smith (1997) deconstructs the multiple ways that scholars have defined, embodied, and conceptualized play across disciplines and over time. He makes sense of play's social role by identifying it as an "implicit ideological rhetoric" (5). Viewing play as an ideology situates it as a topic to be studied and, additionally, as a culturally-constructed action. By connecting playful behaviours to the wider social context, Sutton-Smith (1997) suggests the possibility of using play as a platform to discuss current understandings of culture. In my project, I focused on the multiple perceptions surrounding the female body and body image in society and in popular media.

Sutton-Smith (1997) explains that play can be led, carried out, and used for a variety of purposes including in activities typically thought of as recreation (e.g., dance) in a meaningful way. Under this line of inquiry, play's purpose (i.e., the goal, social context, or objective identified by the leader of a given playful activity) affects how it is defined, used, and graded. Relating Sutton-Smith's ideas to the modes of thought represented in my project, those interested in education, "focus on how play is adaptive or contributes to growth, development, and

socialization," whereas scholars in the fine arts "have a major focus on play as a spur to creativity" (Sutton-Smith 1997, 6-7). While I agree with Sutton-Smith's delineation, his theorization does not account for the crossover between education and the fine arts. Sutton-Smith's ideas clearly demonstrate that play is connected to culture and is an expression of the ideals it promotes in individuals. As a theoretical approach to understanding play his ideas are clear but practically I find his delineation of play's purpose in the classroom is too finite. This is especially the case when reviewing how scholars discuss play in arts and aesthetic education (Dewey 1963; Eisner 2002; Greene 2001; Piaget 1962; Vygotsky 1980). In such instances, pedagogical approaches synthesize artistic mediums with educational practice in a playful manner. My use of the theoretical approaches of these scholars in education and human development have helped me to form the curriculum of Work It Out. However, it is important that I acknowledge the original intent of these scholars' theories as prescriptive rather than practical.

In regards to the classroom, playful social interaction encourages critical learning and is a necessary part of human development and socialization. In his theory of cognitive development, Piaget (1962) identifies human development as a progression through four stages: the sensory motor stage (0-2 years), preoperational stage (2-7 years), concrete operational stage (7-11 years), and formal operation stage (11-16 years). Piaget has been highly influential to research in education because he was one of the first to acknowledge children as thinkers. In making this clear, Piaget challenged researchers and teachers to view children's responses as meaningful and socially aware (Ray et al. 2008, 360). Connecting Piaget's work to my own, the girls participating in Work It Out were entering the formal operational stage of their social development. According to Piaget, "the formal operational thinker has the ability to consider

many different solutions to a problem before acting. […] The formal operational person considers past experiences, present demands, and future consequences in attempting to maximize the success of his or her adaptation to the world" (cited in Salkind 2004, 139). I interpret this phase of Piaget's model as the stage when girls become acutely aware of social etiquette and cultural ideals. For the girls participating in Work It Out, the social challenge they collectively faced was how their physical bodies aligned with idealized images of females, and how differences from that ideal affected their emotional body image. Asking girls to create dances about their feelings on body image thus encouraged them to reflect upon past experiences, current thoughts, and how body image may affect them in future.

Play and Piaget's (1962) work come together further under his delineation that intellectual growth is achieved through "playacting." This means that children will manipulate, adjust, and assimilate their actions to the feedback they receive from their outside environment. They do this through action and experience or trial and error (Saxe 1983). This echoes Sutton-Smith's characterization of educative play. Both Piaget (1962) and Sutton-Smith (1997) identify the act of playing as a social endeavour that leads to some kind of personal development. Working alongside other girls to brainstorm, move, create, and perform pieces about body image enables adolescents to learn from one another. In Work It Out, the social aspect of playing with movement allowed the girls to playact their emotions about body image and to find a community among their peers around this topic. Piaget's ideas about play and social interaction support my curriculum's use of group choreography but I am left with more questions: What actions reveal the development Piaget discusses? What pedagogical approaches foster developmental changes in social behaviour? What contextual or cultural considerations aid students in their development? Must these stages be achieved consecutively or can progression occur

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nonlinearly? Looking at the work of Piaget's contemporaries provides further understanding of the educational purposes of play.

The theories of Dewey (1963) and Vygotsky (1980) provide a more in-depth explanation of the social and educational merits of play. For Dewey and Vygotsky, play functions as a catalyst for the learning process. Dewey (1963), reflecting upon his earlier work, compares what he deems the "old/traditional" and "new/progressive" approaches to schooling. Here, Dewey suggests remodeling how schools view the value of how subjects are taught to students. His ideal stems from his sense of education as a "continuum of experience" (27). This continuum concerns how a student's encounter with a particular subject influences his/her interpretation of whether the information learned will influence future endeavours. As such, the social or emotional memories a student forms of his/her first encounter with an area of study impacts future involvement within that area. In some cases, past experience may deter the student from grasping meaning from the work outside of dislike or frivolity.

Applying Dewey's ideas to Work It Out, the continuum girls focused on dealt with the subjects of body image and physical activity. The girls who entered my classroom carried with them their own ideas about dance and their bodies. Following Dewey's (1963) logic, the girls' previous experiences with body image affected their participation in my program. Such experiences included having an eating disorder, being bullied, or failing to meet personal physical expectations (e.g., winning a sport/dance competition, being a certain dress size). Dewey's theory directed me to two important realizations in my pedagogical approach to teaching dance in a playful manner. First, body image is a continuum of experience in and of itself for girls. Second, removing competitive or assessment-based pedagogy encourages creativity while removing the pressure of expectations. By acknowledging girls' past experiences

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with body image issues and by making the actions of the class more social than academic, play became possible. Moreover, making the girls the dance makers enabled them to find personal meaning in their movements. In so doing, Work It Out utilized dance as a meaningful and positive experience to address body image.

Another important consideration in regards to play is how classroom action is made meaningful. Dewey (1963) warns against the danger of assuming that all experiences carry the same weight: "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all are genuinely or equally educative" (25). For an experience to be educative depends upon the qualities and habitual behaviours tied to the information learned. Interpreting the term "habit" in its most basic and biological sense, Dewey (1963) argues that "every experience enacted and undergone modifies the one who acts and undergoes [...] this modification affects [...] the quality of subsequent experiences" (35). To Dewey, then, the repeated perception of a student towards a particular subject, if significant enough, as either good or bad leads to the formation of a permanent relationship. This relationship then affects how the student engages with any activities associated with said subject matter throughout his/her education and life.

Dewey's work resonates with current scholarship within the discipline of dance education. Bannon and Sanderson (2000) speak directly to Dewey's theory of experience in relation to the current objectives of the U.K. dance curriculum. Specifically, the authours relay how elementary school dance students experience belittling due to the negative social connotations of North American culture, which views dance as idle in comparison to written subject areas. Bannon and Sanderson (2000) argue the inclusion of dance in the physical education curriculum has given way to "an essentially 'practical' approach to dance [...] where,

at worst, content may be reduced to motor skill coordination and competition" (11). This approach results from the "political and cultural reluctance to accept the value, or even the existence, of the knowledge embodied in the dance experience" (11). Bannon and Sanderson's (2000) work supports Dewey's (1963) theory in that the students' negative views of dance as a subject stem from their introduction to dance as part of physical education. As a result, the students internalize the notion that dance is purely about practical movement for health purposes and ignore the artistic possibilities dance holds.

In Work It Out, the girls entered the classroom with their own ideas about dance and body image. As previously stated, the continuum of experience they had with their body image affected their view of the program. In this context, the combination of journaling, discussion, and movement encouraged the girls to play with their ideas individually and collectively. As a student-led program, Work It Out served the needs of the girls in the classroom. Unlike the United Kingdom's approach to dance curriculum Bannon and Sanderson (2000) argue against, Work It Out did not address dance as a set grouping of steps or techniques. Rather, it used movement as an opportunity for girls to both speak about and move their bodies in ways that were meaningful and appealing to them through play. Thus, Work It Out set aside the pedagogical habits that Dewey (1963) and Bannon and Sanderson (2000) caution against.

The educative value of play as an action is based in its socially active nature. The social benefits of play in the classroom can be understood through Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory. Vygotsky (1978) directly contests Piaget's understanding of cognitive development by arguing learning occurs first on a social level (i.e., through playful action with peers and adults) before a developmental change occurs. Vygotsky (1978) explains: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on

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the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (36). Vygotsky's (1978) idea that interaction with peers can greatly influence student participation speaks to the value of using journaling and group collaboration for students in the choreographic process. I interpret Vygotsky's (1978) theory as demonstrating the importance of socializing with peers and how that interaction can lead to positive changes in students' thinking. For the girls who participated in Work It Out, the change their socializing and choreographing inspired was a more critical view of body image.

For both Dewey (1963) and Vygotsky (1978), social interaction through play enables a child's progression through the stages of development and related learning. To Dewey, play happens through continued experience while for Vygotsky, play allows for interaction with others. Collectively, these scholars demonstrate that development in a classroom is emotionally driven, socially influenced, and nonlinear. This is important to my project in that it supports the idea that the expressive nature of dance practice serves as a tool for students to engage with one another playfully. Moreover, the artistic aspect of creative movement leaves room for students to create dances that are meaningful to them in light of social and cultural expectations. In this way, their encounter with dance can lead to continued positive learning engagements.

Dewey (1963) and Vygotsky (1978) both make clear that social interaction is a starting point for learning. However, their interests in education and discussion of theory were not tied specifically to the fine arts. For a more focused connection between play and the arts, I turn to aesthetic education. Greene (2001) supports my understanding of artistic outlets as playful, positive influences on students' social development. Greene (2001) defines "aesthetic" as a term "used to single out a particular field of philosophy, one concerned about perception, sensation, imagination, and how they relate to knowing, understanding, and feeling about the world" (5).

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According to Greene (2001), these kinds of student-centered experiences enable "reflective, conscious encounters with the arts," though "it is important to understand that the concepts and precepts available to the learner stem from funded meanings or ways of knowing designed over the years by artists, teachers, and philosophers" (5).

The ideas of Dewey (1963) and Vygotsky (1978) surface in Greene's writing in relation to educative experiences. Specifically, in speaking about the aesthetic classroom, Greene (2001) incorporates the concept of "funded meanings" in curriculum design. I interpret Greene's term as communicating that in all classroom tasks, students learn on multiple levels. They memorize basic material and gain insight into ways to communicate their thinking to others. Greene explains that in the classroom, student learning is about more than the graded papers students hand in. Thus, according to Greene, Dewey, and Vygotsky, the onus falls upon educators to assist students in their encounters with and within the arts. Such encounters should facilitate "an open-mindedness and a sense of exploration; there must be breaks with ordinariness and stock response […] in our students and in ourselves" (Greene 2001, 28). This teaching approach, combining play and exploration, speaks directly to my project as Work It Out shifted away from the traditional technique-centered dance class in favour of creativity and engagement. Moreover, Greene (2001) vouches for the ways that connecting with other girls about a difficult topic such as body image leads to meaningful learning opportunities for students. She does this through her acknowledgement that engaging with the arts and the learning process is both social and personal. By interacting with peers, students grasp a greater understanding of how they relate to others and new insight into the topics discussed. Acknowledging the issue of body image is important, but how does dancing help adolescent girls deal with their personal issues? What does this play look like exactly?

Process Orientation

Dance practice is a highly curated tool that can be taught in a robotic manner if acquiring technique is the desired goal. However, in Work It Out, delegating the participants as the choreographers meant that technical training was not the focus. The girls took movements they knew, learned, or created and pieced them together in a manner that communicated their ideas about body image and their understanding of it. In removing technical training and the pressure to perform, the girls concentrated on the experience of dance making, placing emphasis on the process of dance making over the product of their work. In this section, I discuss this process orientation in relation to scholarship in arts education (Eisner 2002) and dance education (Hanna 1999; Giguere 2011; Melchoir 2011; Smith-Autard 1994, 2000). I explain how and why encouraging students to appreciate the process of learning is beneficial particularly in regards to body image. More specifically, I first apply Eisner's (2002) idea of imaginative transformation to the approach of the Work It Out program. Then, as Eisner's work is based in the visual arts, I draw from dance education scholarship to relate this discussion to my context more directly.

The Pedagogy of Process Over Product

Pedagogically, having students mimic taught or modelled material serves a purpose, as is evident in the "scaffolding" approach. Bruner (1985) first coined this term, using it as a metaphor for the gradual progression of students' learning from teacher-directed to independent. Bruner's (1985) idea was greatly influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) "zone of proximal development," which explains that leaders' developmental changes result from both independent problem solving and the quality of mentorship/guidance teachers provide. Work It Out employed a scaffolded approach as each lesson took students from shared movement and discussion to independent choreography. In so doing, I followed Bruner (1985) and Vygotsky's (1978)

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suggestions about learning. The questions and surveys I administered prompted the girls' initial conversations about body image, with movement first presented through a group warm up. By the time the girls worked on choreographing independently, I had guided them as a teacher. As a result, the students established a foundation from which to build their own ideas and movements.

It is possible that if relying solely on modeling, students may become reliant on provided materials. As a result, students may tend to regurgitate memorized material (e.g., taught movements) rather than create new ideas of their own. Work It Out, however, deviated from the traditional classroom format as it emphasized students' personal expression over memorizing materials given to them. In the more traditional use of modelled learning, teachers demonstrate how to perform a task and then expect students to perform the actions demonstrated to them independently. However, in my approach, I gave the students examples of dance steps and choreography but did not pressure them to mimic those same steps. Instead, I asked them to build upon the group choreography they learned. They could do this by altering learned movements from our dances in their choreography or by creating their own movements entirely. Learning through modelling in the Work It Out program served as a way to inspire students' personal creativity and boost their confidence as movers. I provided them with an example of what a dance could look like so that they could take what I had given them and use it to choreograph something of their own.

Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) expanded upon Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational goals in a way that connects with the Work It Out program's pedagogical approach. In the newer version of the taxonomy, Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) use verbs to label the categories so as to root the understanding of learning as an active endeavor. The categories include: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Work It Out

took students through each phase of Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) taxonomy. Specifically, the girls first took in steps and ideas about body image from the group discussion and warm up. Then, over the course of the session, the girls applied that information (i.e., their compiled movements and ideas on body image) and made sense of it in their own way as leaders. This process highlights the need to scaffold learning for students first so that critical thought can follow.

Eisner's (2002) work describing the cognitive and educational value of arts-based education further validates my approach to scaffolding learning. Specifically, Eisner (2002) focuses on the development and representation of imagination, or what he calls imaginative transformation. Using the medium of visual art to explain his principle, Eisner describes how a student may take inspiration from an experience, an object, or another artist's work and transform the feelings imparted by these influences using the techniques taught to them. This is significant because in seeing artistic play as a tool for curating critical thinking, the student's "appreciation, though active, can be mute. Something else is needed if the products of our imagination are to make a social contribution to our culture. That something else is representation" (Eisner 2002, 5). The painting then serves as a documented representation of the student's imaginative thinking, where "representation stabilizes the idea of imagination in material and makes possible a dialogue with it" (Eisner 2002, 7). I interpret Eisner's (2002) "representation" in two ways. First, there is the artifact that students create (i.e., the choreographed dance). From a mechanical point of view, the creation of certain formations, shapes, and movements serve as a physical manifestation of the girls' creative process. Looking at their choreographic choices step by step provides a concrete representation of their ideas about body image. The second aspect of Eisner's (2002) representation pertains to students' thinking.

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Representing their ideas about body image using learned materials or altering taught movements transforms mimicked steps into critical learning. In this way, Eisner (2002) demonstrates how skills in an artistic medium are rooted in personal expression, and how the process of creation enables the production of a concrete object—here, the dance.

Eisner's (2002) ideas highlight the role of the teacher in the learning process, particularly how the adoption of a process orientation requires teachers to guide but not dictate to students. This complicates the traditional classroom model and calls into question how teachers affect student learning when leading discussion. There are, however, some models for helping teachers to find a balance between giving students instruction without overriding their creativity. Atkins (1994) recognizes two models for student-teacher relationships in the process of learning: the transmission model and the interaction model. The transmission model is a more traditional approach to teaching, where "the teacher has the knowledge and passes it on to the students, who passively receive it" (as cited by Melchoir 2011, 125). Eisner (2002) warns such a scenario makes students "mute" and without imagination. Conversely, the interaction model "is focused on process, or creating knowledge—[where] the teacher and learner actively participate in the construction of knowledge, exchanging values and validating personal experience" (Atkins 1994 cited in Melchoir 2011, 125). The Work It Out program follows Atkins's (1994) interaction model, which is more in line with Eisner's (2002) imaginative transformation, as it encourages students to think critically about and apply the skills they learn. Darling-Hammond (2000) and Melchoir's (2011) work further support this approach.

Darling-Hammond (2000) examines how classroom teachers' overall knowledge/experience in a subject area affects the final grades students receive. Ultimately, she finds no correlation between teacher's subject content knowledge and student achievement.

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However, she discovers that teachers' use and knowledge of more interactive pedagogical tactics has a positive effect on how students perform. The more classroom teachers engage students as active contributors to lessons (i.e., they do not sit, listen, and memorize), the better their results overall. In similar research, Melchoir (2011) investigates how taking a more interactive approach to teaching dance in school affects student engagement. Overall, she finds that the amount of technical dance experience a teacher has is irrelevant in inspiring students to participate. What is important in motivating student creativity is teachers' willingness to allow students to express their own cultural backgrounds and ideas through movement. For Melchoir (2011), the term "culturally responsive pedagogy" stands in for Eisner's imaginative transformation and is related to Atkins's (1994) interaction model. As such, Darling-Hammond (2000) and Melchoir (2011) show that when teachers emphasize the process of learning over the final product, students perform more effectively. In making students active contributors in lessons, they take the ideas presented to them and draw their own conclusions. In so doing, learning becomes a more meaningful experience. Work It Out's curriculum exemplifies this interactive teaching model and encourages imaginative transformation. I chose this approach because of the program's goal to assist girls in dealing with an extremely personal issue—body image—in a student-centered way. While working towards a goal (the creation of a dance to present), the most important aspect of girls' participation in Work It Out is their creative process. The girls utilize movements, sentiments, and experiences of their own and piece them together to demonstrate their relationships to their bodies.

The ephemeral nature of movement makes connecting Eisner's ideas to the dance classroom more challenging, though not impossible. If girls' final performances are fleeting, can they provoke further inquiries into body image? Hanna (1999) discusses the fleeting nature of

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dance as a medium. According to Hanna (1999), in dance, the connection to the body is not the main deterrent for schools, but rather the perceived inability for assessment of student work (86). Speaking to this pedagogical apprehension, Hanna suggests the formation of a dance curriculum and institution of technique into dance programming provide a solution. I interpret Hanna (1999) as an advocate for an approach to teaching dance that follows curriculum ideals. Her thinking is influenced by the thought that if dance is connected with other core subjects, it will be justified as a necessary subject of study. Eisner (2002) furthers Hanna's ideas in discussing the effectiveness of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development. In this line of thinking, "the child's achieving mastery, a form of learning, promotes independence" (Eisner 2002, 73), which, in turn, allows for personal growth and learning through experience. The "mastery" Eisner speaks of is represented in the techniques taught to students within the studied art form. In this way, in dance, the implementation of technique Hanna proposes provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate and achieve mastery while simultaneously supporting their future engagement in personal expression.

While I disagree with Hanna's (1999) thinking in regards to technical dance instruction, I understand how and why she would propose such an approach to teaching dance in schools. Traditional schooling follows a product-over-process mentality, which explains why assessing movements as right or wrong may be important to some educators. I argue that such a mentality may evoke negative thoughts among students who struggle to or cannot embody specified steps. Moreover, promoting a narrow view of correct bodily performance in dance may increase girls' objectification of their bodies. Such a result directly opposes what Work It Out aimed to do. For this reason, drawing from Eisner's understanding of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development is more useful. Here, mastery in dance results from students' ability to create their own dances

using movements of their making. Achieving this goal of independent mastery validates the process of choreography as a form of success more important than a single performance. Although all girls who participated in my programming shared their dances through a final performance, their work was only shown to fellow participants and parents. These performances focused on recognizing the similar and different ideas their choreographies expressed and served as a basis for more insights to be shared and discussed about body image. As the girls engaged with choreography as a process rather than worried about final performances, they could more thoroughly explore their ideas about body image. Moreover, focusing on their own ideas rather than copying those made by someone else highlighted the girls' personal skills and views of body image.

Creative Expression and Inclusivity

Technique has no place in my approach to dance pedagogy. I did not teach the girls a specific genre of dance; they instead had control over the movements they choreographed. Although the warm-up portion of our classes used prechoreographed movements, these dances drew from basic motor skills (e.g., marching, shifting weight, bending, and stretching) so as to prepare their bodies for playing with their own movements. These warm ups did not draw from or were reminiscent of a specific technique. The pedagogical reasoning behind the exclusion of technique-based instruction was that it encouraged creativity and self-expression. My desire to unlock the girls' feelings about their body image called for the removal of a specified ideal body. Foster (1997) describes the ideal body as a goal for dancers that is not physically realistic for most dancers. Girls who do not satisfy the idealized physique commonly experience a negative body image. In order to understand how the girls in my classroom saw their bodies, I needed to know what their ideal bodies were. What does the "perfect" female physique look like, how does

it perform, and why it is so attractive? Moreover, in order to help the girls recognize their relationship to their bodies (i.e., where and if they needed help), they first needed to express their ideas. Following this purpose, Work It Out used creative dance that did not strive towards a singular ideal. The girls controlled how they wished to present themselves and questioned why they made such choices through discussion.

In this section, I discuss the creative dance orientation of Work It Out, drawing from the literature on body image (Alleva et al. 2015; Englen-Maddox 2005; Foster 1997; O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray 2013), women's and girlhood studies (Bloustein 2003, 2012; Wolf 2002), and psychology (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). This collection of scholarly ideas demonstrates how body image connects to girlhood and, subsequently, why encouraging self-expression was important in Work It Out. Overall, the central argument here is that allowing girls to be creative makes for an inclusive classroom. Inclusivity is essential to assisting girls with body image because negative relationships to the body are predicated on the objectification of the body. In this binary, there is a "good" and "bad" body. Creating a space for creative expression yields inclusivity, breaking down and critically assessing this dualistic understanding of the body. As such, to understand body image and its effect on young girls, I begin with a discussion of objectification theory (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997). I connect this theory to the dance classroom with support from the research of O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray (2013) on the occurrence of eating disorders in dancers. I then turn to Englen-Maddox's (2005) research on beauty sickness in young women. Finally, I connect girlhood to creativity as a means for self-expression and inclusivity through Bloustein's (2003, 2012) work with girls in filmmaking.

Creativity, Self-Expression, and the Inclusive Classroom

The root cause of body image issues is tied to how girls see their physical appearance. By comparing themselves to certain culturally-constructed ideals, girls objectify their bodies through their assessment. Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) objectification theory can be used to explain this social reaction. The authours theorize that women root their social agency in their appearance. As a result, any physical feature that opposes culturally-held ideals about female bodies is harmful to body image. The relationship a woman has with her body is thus emotionally charged and based on physical objectification. If her body looks "good," she is also "good" (Fredrickson and Roberts 1997, 175). This mentality of aesthetic appeal connecting to positive feelings about oneself is also part of the technical dance classroom's culture, especially in regards to the attainment of an ideal body (Foster 1997).

I argue that the effect of prioritizing technical ability and execution in dance instruction leads to coveting an ideal body. This, in turn, may lead to body image issues. O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray (2013) report trends in how experience in the formal dance classroom produces specifically gendered conceptualizations of the female body. The authours demonstrate that girls in the traditional dance studio setting hold concerns with being looked at, meeting aesthetic goals, and monitoring body size. For this reason, Foster (1997) and other researchers on body image (e.g., Alleva et al. 2015; Englen-Maddox 2005; Lambert et al., 2009; Martin and Lichtenberger, 2002; Myers and Crowther, 2009; Slater and Tiggemann 2002) view dance training as a starting point for possible self-objectification and a rich site for applying objectification theory. The findings of these researchers fuelled my understanding of creative dance in opposition to teaching dance techniques as superior for cultivating a positive body image for girls in the dance classroom.

The work of psychology researchers on body image is further helpful in understanding objectification theory, particularly Englen-Maddox's (2005) work on the body image of college-age women. Englen-Maddox (2005) uses the term "beauty sickness" to describe the fixation her female participants exhibited in regards to perfecting their appearance. In particular, she analyzes the repeated and strategic positioning of girls' bodies in photos on social media to demonstrate their collective concerns about looking beautiful. She describes common practices such as the hands being placed on the hips so as to make arms look thinner and wearing heels to look taller. Notably, Englen-Maddox (2005) did not focus solely on dancers; some had experience in dance but many did not. Regardless of what their physical activity preference was, all participants revealed a general concern about how they looked to others.

The influence of beauty sickness and ideal bodies in the dance classroom informed my use of creative dance. Firstly, as O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray (2013) show, formalized dance practice significantly affects girls' body image. Following objective theory, dancers draw self-worth from looking and performing in a particular way. The characteristics they strive towards are determined by the specified demands of the technique in which they train. What would happen, though, if there were no ideal, or no technique? Creative dance allows for all kinds of movement and also different body types. According to O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray (2013), encouraging girls to move from a creative and nontechnical mindset promotes inclusivity and lessens self-objectification. Secondly, Englen-Maddox's (2005) findings on beauty sickness show that concerns about bodily aesthetics are generally prevalent for young women. This work connects to the creative aspect of Work It Out because it demonstrates that body image issues are not only tied to the dance classroom. Rather, body image issues are a social struggle that exists

beyond physical activity. Social interaction through creative, playful practice like I encouraged in Work It Out, then, helps girls to express and deal with their self-objectification.

In fusing play and creative dance to promote positive body image for girls, I further drew from girlhood studies. Specifically, the ability to manage self-representation in a creative manner serves as a platform for building positive body image. Wolf (2002) examines female identity and self-making. In light of more recent publications that deal with the same subject matter (Englen-Maddox 2005; Fredrickson and Roberts 1997; Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004), Wolf's understanding of the "beauty myth" speaks to the long-term effects poor body image has on female identity making. Wolf asks, "Can there be a pro-woman definition of beauty?" Wolf answers, "Absolutely. What has been missing is play. […] The pleasure of playfulness is that it doesn't matter" (290). Wolf's words directly connect to my pedagogical choice, linking the principles of play with creative dance practice. Acknowledging that the parameters defining feminine beauty need to be broadened in order to cultivate positive self-image for women/girls, Wolf supports my program's nontechnical focus. In this way, using creative dance rather than technical instruction does not objectify the body. Creative movement does not strictly define the mastery of particular steps as the criteria for success, but rather creates a platform for girls to participate in a less judgmental and inclusive environment.

The Work It Out approach is further supported by the research of Bloustein (2003, 2012), who looks at adolescent girls' play through documentary filmmaking. In her project, Bloustein (2003) gave cameras to girls and asked them to record parts of their daily lives as well as conversations with the camera. Bloustein then sorted through the footage and created a film. To Bloustein (2012), play is a "lifelong, extremely serious process, involving risk and experimentation that sometimes feels potentially threatening and dangerous" (120). The

"danger" here results from testing boundaries (i.e., social, cultural, physical, and imagined) through self-representation. Bloustein's participants constructed on-film personas, choosing to share certain aspects of their lives while hiding others. When all of the separately filmed footage came together, it created a single conversation about girlhood. The overall commentary of the final documentary was that all girls struggled to find a balance between being unique while remaining grounded in societal notions of femininity. These girls used the filmmaking to explore the characteristics and life circumstances that made them individuals but also desired to be included in a more general grouping of girlhood (Bloustein 2003).

For my participants, dance replaced the filmmaking in Bloustein's study. In the dance classroom, the girls constructed and presented their desired identities through their dance making. The empowering aspect of using artistic mediums like dance and film to play with representation related to the perceived risk their performance presented. Creating and sharing art had the potential to be both exciting and daunting. However, with the girls leading as playactors (Piaget 1962), they occupied a position of control and power. The girls chose what skills to show in choreography, how to present themselves artistically, and what aspects of body image and their journaling to use as the inspiration for their work.

Concluding Thoughts

In bringing this collection of scholars together within the framework of my program, I illustrate the direct connection between education, dance, play, girlhood, and body image. Situating these concepts as interrelated and reciprocal, I highlight a gap in both the literature and in the classroom that my programming aimed to address. While scholars have shown how involvement in dance can lead to negative body image issues for girls, none have presented finite frameworks for how it could promote positive body image. Moreover, no researchers focused on

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this aspect of body image or connected positive body image to dance instruction as I did in Work

It Out. By addressing their problems through play, the girls approached a difficult subject in a

gentle way. Also, by including a creative active component, the girls had the opportunity discuss

their body image concerns while using their bodies in a productive way alongside their peers.

Play is powerful—this is where I believe my work expands current ideas and practices about

body image and girlhood in effective and important ways.

Chapter 2: Problematizing Popular School-Based Body Image Programs for Girls

In the last decade, the Ontario school board has become increasingly concerned with girls' body image issues. In response, it has incorporated sex-segregated, extracurricular programs for female students that aim to build body positivity. I have taught and assisted two of the most common programs used in Ontario schools—the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run. The use of these programs suggests that the school board views body image as a visible issue for girls across the province; classroom teachers lack the knowledge and resources to help girls with this issue on their own; and female students need girls-only environments to deal with this issue.

Both the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run provide curricular resources for teachers and coaches. Their aim is for girls to acquire a stronger sense of themselves and to avoid being passive consumers of mediated images of female bodies or societal and familial expectations for women. Each program advocates for body-positive actions by providing definitions for body image ("diagnosing" the problem), discussing eating disorders (by identifying the symptoms), and attributing the negative body perceptions girls commonly hold to the influence of unethical media. The resources model how to speak about the body and encourage girls to think critically about their body conceptualization, primarily through discussion with their peers in the program. Each program uses its own specific tools and activities (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, videos or games, running) and shares in its desire to engage girls to voice their opinions about body image.

A pedagogical problem that arises in both programs, however, is in the way they frame their understanding of adolescent girls as "at risk" and "voiceless" (Currie, Kelly, and Pomerantz 2009; Pipher 1994). While I agree that "any effort to engage girls has to take seriously the

shifting, fragmented work of popular culture, the clever ways it shapes girls' desire for love, happiness, visibility and power" (Brown 2008, 7), I disagree with the assumption that girls are "potential victims of the culture that surrounds them" (Mazzarella 2008, 75). By targeting media, beauty, and Western representations of femininity as the only problematic influences on girls' body conceptualization, the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run deny participants' agency. If the goal of these programs is to empower young girls to hone their place in the world as women, then they must provide a place to express the diverse experiences that comprise girlhood. Moreover, the methods employed should allow girls to explore their relationship with the body in a way that is inclusive and adaptable.

These programs have made the pressing issue of girls' body image more popular, and set schools on the path towards teaching body positivity. My program builds upon what the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run have started but with its own pedagogical approach. Specifically, Work It Out aims to fill in the gaps in programming the curriculums of Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run currently leave unattended. Central to Work It Out's approach to curriculum is an attention to inclusivity, girl-centeredness, self-expression, flexibility/adaptability, and encouraging reflexive thought. Inclusive educational practice has been a lead topic of discussion in Ontario schools. Schools' heightened concerns about inclusivity in classrooms has led to the publication of Ontario's "Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy" (Government of Ontario 2009a), a document aimed at serving the diverse needs of students in Ontario schools today. In this document, "inclusive education" is defined as "education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader

environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected" (Government of Ontario 2009a, 4).

In both the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run, the curricula provide specific topics of discussion and activities. These areas of discussion cover a number of issues and influences related to body image most of which are tied to media and social anxiety. The Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run have chosen to focus on the most prominently expressed influences on girls' body image (e.g. beauty ideals and media). This collection of clearly defined body image topics is an effective starting point for girls to begin discussing their relationship to their body. However, in adhering to such prescribed curricula the opportunity for girls to have input on the topics discussed is limited. In order to enhance girls understanding of body image we need to develop curriculums that go beyond discussing media and beauty ideals alone. If the goal of these programs is to help all girls more positively engage with their bodies we need to allow girls the opportunity to share their personal struggles with body image outside of of specified parameters. There needs to be room for creativity and discussion. This is where Work It Out expands upon the scope of current body image programs.

In this chapter, I discuss how the Work It Out program relates to both the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run. In doing so, I demonstrate how the Work It Out program builds upon preexisting body image programming offered to girls. At the center of my analysis, I relate my positive body image model to the programs. The main point of expansion I highlight through this comparison between Work It Out, and these programs is how they have treated body functionality and the negative effects of that pedagogical choice. For the Dove Self-Esteem Project, the absence of an active component puts girls at risk of objectifying their bodies in discussion. In Girls on the Run, their choice of activity is potentially harmful to girls achieving

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body functionality and belonging. Applying my positive body image model to both the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run highlights the strengths and weaknesses of these programs. It also solidifies the strength of my approach to dance teaching in Work It Out, with my fundamental concepts for positive body image in mind.

More specifically, in this chapter I first provide an explanation of my positive body image model. This model is the basis of the Work It Out program and its three fundamental concepts—body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals—are integral pedagogical considerations for teachers when dealing with body image. Secondly, for each preexisting program, I give a brief history of its formation, highlighting the key contributors and campaigns that led to its establishment. Third, I discuss the curriculum of each program, including its methods of delivery, lesson organization, and central topics of conversation with participants. I compare the syllabi of both the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run against my model, specifically examining which fundamental concepts are satisfied by their curricula and which are missed. I further distinguish how the Work It Out program's use of dance as a means to approach the body satisfies the needs of adolescent girls in effectively addressing body image.

A Model for Building Positive Body Image for Girls

My research into the connections between body image, girlhood, and dance practice has resulted in the creation of a theoretical model, which I term the "positive body image model." This model focuses specifically on the motivating factors that contribute to the cultivation of positive body image in the dance classroom. Under this model, the acquisition of positive body image relates to the attainment of three fundamental concepts: body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals. While students may possess any or all of these contributing factors to varying degrees, all three must be present in order to reach a state of positive body image fully among

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participants. Pedagogically, teachers and programs must work towards the fulfillment of all three fundamental concepts if they wish to cultivate a body-positive classroom for students. The goal of such programming is, then, to assist girls in recognizing and building their capacities for each of these fundamental concepts.

Body Functionality

Body functionality is antithetical to self-objectification. As an ideal, it encourages individuals to focus on the abilities of their body rather than passing judgment on their physicality or appearance alone. In Alleva et al.'s (2015) work testing body satisfaction levels of women participating in a regular exercise program over time, the authours explain that body functionality is effective because "in contrast to appearance, there is no overarching cultural ideal for body functionality, so focusing on body functionality might be less likely to evoke body-related social comparisons that can cause body dissatisfaction" (81). Drawing their conclusions from their participants, a collection of eighty-one women, the writers identified changes in the women's level of body satisfaction as they engaged with tasks that emphasized body functionality. Alleva et al. (2015) further cite Avalos and Tylka's (2006) "body appreciation" as the most positive side effect for the women who recognized the functionality of their bodies, which resulted in a newfound "approval and respect for the body'" (Alleva et al. 2015, 82).

In creating the Work It Out program, I focused on body functionality with a different focus from previous researchers (e.g., Etcoff et al. 2006; Alleva et al. 2015). First, I argued the notion that there is no "ideal body functionality" is incorrect. While participants might not strive towards a particular physique, they may covet the ability to perform a particular physical feat. In the context of my programming, the use of creative dance and the placement of girls as the

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makers of the movement was the key to overcoming this issue. By giving the girls the power to

decide what movements to include in their choreography, I removed the need for the instructor to

demonstrate technical steps for them to imitate. There was no specific movement for them to

learn outside of what they discovered or created within their own work. I also directed the girls

to compile ideas for movement during discussion and survey time, during which they listed

possible movements they could perform using various parts of the body. The goal then became

for the girls to piece together their favourite movements, showcasing exactly what they could do

with their bodies rather than comparing themselves to a particular technical ideal, as in a

traditional dance classroom.

Belonging

Within the context of the Work It Out program, the girls negotiated their place in relation

to the discussions and creative dances in which they partook. The idea that dance can cultivate a

sense of belonging builds on the work of McNeill (2008), who asserts that moving together as a

group (e.g., in protest, in the army, in dance) promotes the creation of a bond among people. In

this way, I theorized that the very act of moving, creating, and performing as a team for my

female participants would set them on a path towards feeling supported by their peers. Moreover,

by using the task of creating a dance about body image, the girls received an additional

opportunity to connect by recognizing their shared struggles.

Body-Based ideals

I define body-based ideals as how a girl conceptualizes her body. The most popular

understandings of body image and girlhood relate to the desire to have a body that emulates

Westernized beauty ideals. This fixation with a particular female form is well described through

Engeln-Maddox's (2005) work on beauty sickness, in which she speaks to the psychological effects of beauty ads on young females' body image. Engeln-Maddox (2005) states that while the majority of her female participants identified the wrongdoings of advertisers in objectifying female bodies in ads, they could not separate their understanding of advertising guises from their level of body satisfaction. Engeln-Maddox terms this repeated sentiment "beauty sickness," a condition where the ideal of being thin equates with power and confidence.

Within the framework of Work It Out, the concept of body-based ideals is particularly difficult to address. The main innovation I made in regards to helping girls to not succumb to beauty sickness was removing the inclusion of a particular dance technique. In so doing, a particular dance body was not the central focus of our class. Another way I aided this goal of improved body image was to turn the girls' focus towards body functionality. The confidence gained through recognized abilities helped to overshadow ill feelings tied to the body. Lastly, I made the discussion portions of our classes open ended. This meant that when the girls discussed parts of the body, how they felt about themselves, or how they interpreted popular culture, I had the ability to expand upon topics raised. This understanding of body image also focused on the girls' personal concerns. This meant that the ideal the girls strived towards could be about beauty, but could also focus on other features such as health, gender presentation, or sexuality. The girls therefore dictated what they needed to talk about in regards to their body image and, as a result, received the support they needed to deal with their personal concerns through their discussions with each other and with me.

Campaigning for "Real Beauty": A History of the Dove Self-Esteem Project

> We have a vision of a world where beauty is a source of confidence, not anxiety. We are on a mission to help the next generation of women develop a positive relationship with the way they look, helping them raise their self-

esteem and realize their full potential. (Dove Self-Esteem Project Mission, 2017)

The Dove Self-Esteem Project emerged through the company's marketing tactics and desire to appeal to a wider female audience. Since its establishment in the 1950s, Dove has positioned itself in the public eye as a company that cares for its consumers. This approach to advertising has worked exceptionally well for Dove, and is especially important when speaking about its connection to body image and girlhood via its "Campaign for Real Beauty." Dove is one of the many brands owned by Unilever, a globally renowned manufacturer of consumer goods. Since the release of its first product, the "beauty bar" in 1957, Dove has remained a household name specializing in skin care (Deighton 2007). The main claim to fame for Dove results from its focus on marketing the functional benefits of its products—that its beauty bar would not dry out your skin as regular soap did. Dove's recognition as a company that cares about taking care of people's skin worked to make them a trusted name brand for many decades. However, as more and more companies began to manufacture their own skincare lines, Dove soon found itself in need of a new and improved method to distinguish itself from its competitors.

The answer to Dove's problems in self-promotion came with the release of the Campaign for Real Beauty. Turning its sights on research, the company launched a worldwide investigation of "women's responses to the iconography of the beauty industry, and unearthed deep discontent" (Deighton 2007, 3). Out of the three thousand women from ten countries that contributed to Dove's online survey, "only 2 percent of respondents worldwide chose to describe themselves as beautiful" (Deighton 2007, 3). Moreover, these women reported feeling taunted and uninspired by the representations of unattainable beauty standards on most packaging

(Deighton 2007). These findings led to the launch of a new mission statement and related advertisements boasting Dove's goal to "make more women feel beautiful every day by broadening the narrow definition of beauty and inspiring them to take great care of themselves"—which could, of course, be achieved by using their products (Deighton 2007, 4). The campaign's accompanying advertisements featured "real women"—ordinary people rather than famous supermodels. The ads showed women of many sizes, races, and ages posed in plain white underwear smiling at the camera, standing as exemplars of what Dove deemed to be "real beauty." Although female consumers responded positively to this new imagery for Dove, business moguls began to question whether the success would last, especially since "debunking the beauty myth brings with it the danger that you are debunking the whole reason to spend a little more money for the product" (Deighton 2007, 4). In other words, if your message is that the idealized beauty seen in magazines is unattainable, why should women want to purchase your products?

The launch of a second campaign, one aimed at younger girls and their mothers, provided a solution here. This set of advertisements used images of young girls accompanied by statements assumedly from their own points of view about their self-image. For example, one of the advertisements showed a young girl with freckles on her cheeks with the caption, "hates her freckles." Another featured a teenage Asian girl with the description, "wishes she were blonde." In releasing these images, Dove ascribed a particular meaning to its brand. The meaning Dove expressed in these advertisements was that they recognized and cared about body image issues. Specifically, Dove identified itself as a company that cares about its consumers, their families, and the emotional issues young and adult women face due to other beauty companies'

advertisements. Interestingly, this campaign worked to increase product sales and created a whole new fan base in the female adolescent population.

At the center of Dove's program and campaign is the idea of "real beauty." This new beauty ideal highlights the influence of supermodels as the primary exemplar of a desirable female. By calling attention to the manipulative ways the beauty and fashion industry affect female body image, Dove aimed to make beauty a more diverse concept. However, despite how body positive Dove's message was in regards to body image, it is important to remember its stance as a seller of self-care and cosmetics. Its campaign, although seemingly compassionate, was primarily about making money. Comor (2008) explains that, in cases like Dove's campaign on body image, "people prospectively value commodities not in terms of the skills, sweat, and time employed in their creation but, instead, in terms of the socially constructed meanings associated with them" (as cited by Dye 2009, 121). Following this argument, in the case of Dove, consumers are compelled to purchase, use, and enroll their young daughters in Dove's accompanying body image programming because its advertising has made them feel that in doing so, they are joining a social movement—a movement that is working to create a more body-positive world for girls. But is their approach to teaching girls about body positivity really that effective?

As a course, the Dove Self-Esteem Project maintains Dove's beauty and media literacy focus. The program's curriculum is dedicated to educating girls about the common use of photoshopping in images of models. In so doing, it endeavours to assist girls to read advertisements more critically and advocates for a more "natural" or "real" form of beauty. This is achieved through the completion of five learning modules, all of which focus on varying aspects of media and body image: "Appearance Ideals," "Banish Body Talk," "Media

Messages," "Confront Comparisons," and "Be the Change." The Dove Self-Esteem Project website provides discussion prompts, PowerPoint presentation slides, worksheets, and videos free of charge to school teachers.

The central goal of this program is to help girls to deal with idealizations of female beauty, as expressed through their mission statement: "We believe beauty should be a source of confidence, not anxiety. We want to see a world free of appearance-related anxiety so that girls can grow up to be confident and active members of society" (Dove Canada 2017). Dove's comment identifies two important assumptions underlying the program about girlhood and body image: (a) that "appearance anxiety" is the primary pressing social stressor for young girls, and (b) that the solution to increasing girls' confidence is making them feel more "beautiful."

There are a number of issues I see with Dove's body image program curriculum, specifically in regards to its notion of girlhood and girls' concerns. My unease with this program is rooted in the dangerous assumptions Dove makes about girlhood due to the narrowness of its view of femininity. Placing the attainment of any kind of beauty on a pedestal immediately harkens to a larger and longer debate on how young women have been socialized to view their bodies as objects (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005; Coulter 2014; Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004; Wolf 2002). Moreover, such an ideal ignores the third-wave feminist agenda of plurality, which identifies girlhood as an individual experience, one that "is remade partly by girls themselves as they negotiate their realities and discourses" (Coulter 2014, 148). Girls could struggle with any number of concerns, such as questions about their religion, sexuality, family dynamics, career aspirations, education, or friendships. While worries about beauty and body image may be a pressing issue for some girls, they may require support with many other issues as well.

Curriculum Design and Consumerism

Pedagogically, the Dove Self-Esteem Project focuses on enhancing girls' media literacy. While educating girls on the skewed imagery presented in advertisements is important, the program's teaching tactics do not attend to all three of the fundamental concepts in my positive body image model. Its focus on beauty turns the body into a topic of conversation, effectively objectifying physical appearance and ignoring body functionality. The following discussion of the Dove Self-Esteem Project highlights the ways that its curriculum both satisfies and ignores aspects of my model, and how this program influenced the creation of Work It Out. The main difference between Dove's program and Work It Out concerns the use of the body in each course. At the center of this analysis, I focus on the value of attending to girls' body functionality, sense of belonging, and understanding of body-based ideals.

Body Functionality

Understanding the links between girlhood and the body is integral to understanding the faults in Dove's programming regarding body functionality, for in Dove's program, the body becomes an object of study. Girls identify the forces shaping femininity as a particular look rather than as a lived experience. In so doing, Dove creates a platform from which girls assess, analyze, and discuss how they relate to the advertisements in question, without ever physically engaging with their bodies. Without a physical component to its programming, Dove does not enable girls to recognize body functionality.

In contrast, in its design, the Work It Out program engages with the body in a nonobjectifying, girl-centered way through the inclusion of an active component, creative dance. Specifically, Work It Out incorporates discussion that focuses on personal reflection, and recognizes the movement potential for dance that girls possess. It also recognizes the role of

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body in the reflective process that girls learn and create through dance, and utilizes broad discussion and choreography topics that leave room for the girls to contribute their own issues, ideas, and individual thoughts. Body image is then heightened for girls in Work It Out by directing girls' focus to physical ability through the movements they learn and share through dance, instead of discussion of beauty ideals alone. This does not mean that the girls participating will not want to bring beauty into the conversation; rather, the discussion prompts provided are more open ended than those in the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

The playful openness of the Work It Out program's framework is integral to its effectiveness in building selfhood while encouraging the development of positive body image. By teaching girls about and demonizing images from beauty advertisements, the Dove Self-Esteem Project heightens the potential for a hostile relationship between the self and the body. The resulting negative relationship between girls and their bodies is either due to girls painstakingly striving to emulate the images they see or feeling indignant about their inability to embody a narrow definition of beauty. However, when their understanding broadens, it makes the attainment of a particular image less necessary to their body confidence as women. As a result, girls come to appreciate who they are and the skin they are in. The Work It Out program accomplishes this by calling girls attention to the many ways girls can and do engage with their bodies through movement. Dance stands in for the main form of play and provides a tangible relation to the body in the Work It Out program. Rather than leaving interaction with the body as an object to discuss, the girls engage with it creatively and actively. In the West, dance is typified as a feminized art form (Francis and Lathrop 2014), making it ideal for encouraging young girls' participation. However, I acknowledge that dance may not be every girl's ideal form of play. Should a girl be less experienced in dance, the nontechnical focus of the dances created in Work

It Out enables the inclusion of many movement styles and abilities. In this way, the focus of the chosen activity is more about generating movement than mastery.

Belonging

Socializing with one another is essential to girls' participation and success within recreational programming (Daalen 2005; Downey 1997; Ennis 1999; Lenskyj 1994; Naik 2010). Within the context of a classroom, establishing a sense of belonging between peers facilitates students' willingness to engage with the activities. In the Dove Self-Esteem Project, girls come together through their shared struggles in satisfying female beauty ideals. Belonging within Dove's program is therefore made possible through the girls' relation to media and the symbolic representations of femininity they portray.

The issue with the Dove Self-Esteem Project is that its tactics are of a visual nature. This means that girls receive exemplars of what a woman should look like. Aapola, Gonick, and Harris (2005) speak to this image-based selfhood: "Young women are encouraged to relate to their bodies as objects that exist for the use and aesthetic pleasure of others, and to work on the improvement of their appearance. The body is to be held away from oneself, considered critically and judged by its attractiveness or unattractiveness. Girls are told from a very early age to pay attention to their appearance" (136). Thus, in acknowledging both Dove's position as a seller of beauty products and promoter of the real beauty ideal, flaws in its body image project for girls become apparent. The program exposes girls, once again, to body-based media, which carries the potential to continue the cycle of self-objectification rather than end it.

Although Dove's goal is body positive, asking girls to study such images ultimately sets them on a path towards self-evaluation and comparison. Coulter (2014) supports my understanding of Dove's program as an example of how influential image-based media is in the

creation of identity for girls. Coulter (2014) discusses the emergence of the "tween" market and the gendered considerations merchants make in selling to the young female consumer. In discussing trends within media for girls, Coulter elucidates that during the 1980s, "debates about the impact of the beauty myth, body image issues such as anorexia/bulimia or the oversexualization of girls were all underpinned by a perceived notion that girls lose their self-esteem" (147). Coulter's ideas point to the ways that girls' body image connects to media. In relation to the Dove Self-Esteem Project, the acknowledgement of feminine beauty as harmful to girls' body confidence is the basis of how belonging is built in the program. While connecting with other girls about how mediated images of femininity affect body image could be helpful for some girls, it could also do harm. Girls may connect because of shared negativity but may not create a positive experience from that interaction. Something is missing—creativity and a collaborative project.

The Work It Out program establishes belonging through social and physical interaction. It fosters a connection between girls by allowing them to discuss their ideas, collaborate through choreography, and utilize their physicality in dances they create. This is framed within the common goal of expressing sentiments about body image. In this way, shared struggles with body image establish girls' belonging in the classroom and build relationships through dance making. Aapola, Gonick, and Harris (2005) discuss dance and its relationship to constructions of femininity, and the role dance can play in assisting girls with the creation of their identity. The authours explain that "it seems that for the young women, dance can serve many purposes: it can be a solitary form of self-expression, or one way to be social, create and maintain contact with other people, to experiment with different forms of femininity, or to get feedback on one's appearance and one's skillfulness at dancing" (163). The authours' assertion that dance can

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inspire girls to explore personal issues, experiment with self-representation, and connect with others through physical interaction supports the inclusion of dance as part of the Work It Out program. Furthermore, it strengthens my conviction that my program's pedagogy is superior to the Dove Self-Esteem Project, in that the Work It Out program allows participants to find a strong sense of belonging within the classroom. Girls connect both through the subject of body image and through a creative outlet, resulting in a classroom that is socially stimulating and personal rather than prescribed.

Body-Based Ideals

The topic of popular female beauty ideals provides a point of comparison for the curricula of Work It Out and the Dove Self-Esteem Project. Since physical appearance is a leading influence on the development of girls' body conceptualization, positively shifting the way girls speak about and comprehend their body is central to evaluating the effectiveness of body image programming. Assisting girls in understanding beauty advertisements is also an aspect of body image-based pedagogy in which the Dove Self-Esteem Project has excelled. One exceptionally successful lesson within the Dove Self-Esteem Project's programming incorporates its short film "Evolution." Evolution depicts woman's transformation into a model in an advertisement. As classical music begins to play, the action in front of the camera speeds up. The model's appearance changes through the process of hair, makeup, and finally, picture-taking. We then see how photo editing is used to alter the woman's appearance. Her neck is lengthened, jawline slimmed, eyes made wider, lips plumped, and complexion smoothed. In the end, we see the final advertisement bearing the newly edited photo, which looks nothing like the woman who originally sat in front of the camera. This image is followed by the tagline, "No wonder our perception of beauty is distorted" (Makshakova 2015). In the program, after

watching this film, the instructor asks the girls to list all of the changes made to the model's appearance and to comment on what the film says about female representation in advertisements. Keeping the Dove program's goal of improved media literacy in mind, this film is very useful. Not only does it provide girls with an example of how clandestine the effects of photo editing can be in advertisements, it does so in a clear and kid-friendly manner. In this way, the Dove Self-Esteem Project successfully fulfills the fundamental concept of body-based ideals.

Body-based ideals refers to the way that girls idealize the female body. In the lesson described above and throughout the program, Dove directs girls' attention to the ways popular culture skews our understanding of female beauty. In contrast, the Work It Out program discusses body image more broadly. This allows girls the room to express what their personal definitions of an ideal body are. While the examples of beauty depicted and debated in Dove's program might not specifically relate to the feelings of every girl, how media depicts female beauty promotes critical thought. In this way, the Dove Self-Esteem Project effectively satisfies the concept of body-based ideals through its pedagogical approach.

Running through the Rigor: The Girls on the Run Program

> I desperately wanted to fit in with the popular crowd but I couldn't fit into the box it placed over my spirit. […] The years I spent trying to mould my thoughts, body, lifestyle and being into what the box required were extremely painful. So I ran. I'd put on my running shoes and head for the woods, the streets, wherever my feet would take me. I felt strong. Beautiful. Powerful. (Barker, 2012a)

Girls on the Run is a nonprofit organization focused on girls' empowerment and health. It was founded in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1996 by social worker and four-time Iron Man Hawai'i finisher Molly Barker. Since its establishment Girls on The Run has become an international program and one of the most popular in Ontario schools. The Girls on the Run

program is a twelve-week course, which includes training for a 5 km run and twenty-four lessons designed to take students through a number of social issues faced during adolescence, such as physical and emotional well-being. With its mandate speaking to physical and emotional empowerment for girls, this program equates the completion of a physical goal (i.e., running the race) with mastery of the body and the cultivation of a positive body image.

The inspiration for Girls on the Run lays in its founder's personal experience of girlhood. Having grown up in an era where gender roles were strictly enforced, Barker, a self-proclaimed tomboy, did not easily fit into the cultural climate of her upbringing. In a TED Talk in 2012, she described running with her mother as a preteen as a life-changing experience. Barker explained that during that time with her mother, "I discovered what running meant to me. It isn't about the physicalness if it or what it does for our bodies or the cardiovascular functioning. What it did was give me sanctuary and solitude and a place to connect with my divine. It's where I find clarity and I still find it there" (Barker 2012b). This statement clearly tells us that for Barker, running has served as an esteem booster, something that made her feel good about herself as an athlete and, most importantly, as a person. Later in the same lecture, Barker expanded upon her relationship with running, admitting that as a teenager, she stopped training.

Barker designated this break in her relationship with running as the result of stepping into the "girl box." The "girl box" is a term and central idea to Girls on the Run Barker coined to describe "the place where many girls go around middle school when they begin to morph into what they think they should be instead of being who they really are. The messages of the 'girl box' vary but the overarching theme comes from a culture rooted in the belief that girls and women must conform to a set of standards that are often unattainable and dangerous to our health and well-being" (Women You Should Know, 2012). For Barker, a sport-loving girl, this meant

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refraining from being competitive, active, or tomboy-ish, as these characteristics do not support the culturally-constructed notions of what a girl is supposed to be in Western society. Later in life, as an adult, Barker began to run again. Having battled depression and alcoholism, Barker turned to the activity that once brought her joy and calm. The founding of Girls on the Run was, therefore, an extension of Barker's experience. She uses running, a profound movement practice to her, in the hope of inspiring a sense of self-empowerment in participating girls. In this way, the curriculum of the Girls on the Run program aims to foster in girls a "can-do" attitude, so they can avoid entering the dreaded girl box.

Let's Get Physical: Questioning Active Curriculum

Specific curriculum documents used to guide Girls on the Run are not publicly available. In order to obtain the official lesson plans, teachers must pay a fee or hire a certified coach. Having taught and assisted with a session of Girls on the Run in a school, I can speak to the general organization of this program in action. Each lesson is broken into three parts: group discussion, physical practice (i.e., warm ups and running workout), and final sharing (i.e., cool-down/stretching and personal reflections). The initial group discussions include icebreaker activities (e.g., a name game), reflections or stories from the week, and discussions about training (e.g., things the students find difficult or enjoy). Overall, each lesson aims to assist girls in becoming more comfortable among their peers and to think critically about how they see themselves as individuals.

One exercise central to Girls on the Run is the attendance name game. In this exercise, girls choose an adjective they feel accurately describes themselves to the group (e.g., "magnificent Mary" or "athletic Anna"). In so doing, the girls learn each other's names and acknowledge a positive trait they possess. This game is repeated every class and the personal

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descriptors may change over time. This game is followed with a group discussion of personal struggles encountered throughout the week, and how the girls addressed these difficulties (e.g., a test, a fight with a friend, views on training so far). The girls are not forced to share, but are encouraged to do so. The girls then participate in a shared warm up of basic dynamic stretches and gentle aerobics, and receive the task of running a particular distance for the day. The lesson concludes with girls performing final stretches together and reflecting as a collective on how their run went that day. The girls dictate the direction of the final discussion, which may include reflections on the physical aspect of training or their emotional state at the time (e.g., how they feel they are doing).

The Girls on the Run program has made a gallant effort to attend to girls as whole people. By this, I mean that unlike the Dove Self-Esteem Project, Barker suggests broader discussions on girls' emotional experiences outside of media literacy. Moreover, the program includes physical activity that allows the girls to use their bodies, moving beyond examining bodies as objects and enhancing their chance to fulfill body functionality. However, when dealing with the achievement of set physical goals, the danger arises that participants may adopt negative feelings in comparison to others. Some girls might not be able to run as fast as others, may not notice improvement in their performance over time, or may begin to compare and compete with their peers. These behaviours may impede the development of positive body image. Thus, instructors must be pedagogically mindful when selecting how the girls engage with their bodies and what movement practice serves as the basis for that exploration. In this way, a more expressive rather than competitive physical activity may diminish competition between girls.

Body Functionality

Running is not for every girl. What I mean by this is that the activity of running, while potentially enjoyable for some people, is not necessarily something all individuals like. In this way, the main potential issue I see in the Girls on the Run program is not in its mission but rather in its choice to use such a specific physical activity in the programming. In Work It Out, I chose to use dance, which is another particular form of physical activity. However, this choice differs from Girls on the Run because unlike running, dance has a creative component. This creative characteristic allows girls to tailor their dancing to their own abilities. In contrast, running is solely about achieving distance and speed. Without multiple options for physical engagement, girls' recognition of body functionality is put at risk. I will return to this idea later in the chapter and in the results from my case studies, specifically in relation to the private school setting.

As a sport, running is inherently a competitive activity. While the general environment created by the discussion aspect of Girls on the Run is welcoming and nonjudgmental, running inspires a very different mentality for participants. In a lecture speaking about her preteen and teenage years, Barker reminisced about how her attitude towards herself and her running changed in relation to the social pressures she felt. Barker described that "step by step my running improved and I began to get competitive at it because you can't just run because. You have to run for a reason. You have to run to compete. You have to run to achieve. You can't just run because" (Barker 2012b). In this quote, Barker speaks to the ways that the competitive aspect of running altered the relationship she had with her body. Instead of noticing her incredible ability and acknowledging her inner strength, Barker fell into a state of self-loathing, which she explains eventually led to other destructive behaviours in her life. If that is how Barker, a girl

whose body was athletically advanced at running, felt about herself, then how might a girl who is not as skilled or does not find running enjoyable see herself in the Girls on the Run program?

The choice of activity in the Work It Out program is more flexible and therefore more effective. While dance, in its traditional and technical form, can carry the potential for feelings of self-doubt, the creative movement approach of the Work It Out program is much more inclusive. This is exemplified in the choreography component of the program, where students are free to experiment with any and all of their movement vocabulary. There is no singular way to move and no right or wrong way to perform. In this way, the multiple ways that girls can choose to choreograph movement and the noncompetitive nature of this approach heightens the possibility for recognizing body functionality.

Belonging

Another consideration for the choice in activity is the inclusion of socialization and its role in enhancing belonging. Recalling Vygotsky's social development theory (1978), social interaction with peers highly influences learning. Relating this pedagogical consideration to girlhood, Harris (2004a) reveals how self-categorization influences girls' social interactions. The two prominent classifications Harris (2004b) speaks to are the "can-do" girl and the "at-risk" girl. According to Harris, the more desirable can-do girls "embody girl power because they are outspoken, not afraid to take power, believe in themselves, and run their own lives" (17). Conversely, at-risk girls are quieter, isolated, possibly follow more traditional ideals of femininity (i.e., early motherhood instead of education), and are therefore less fulfilled. At the heart of relating Vygotsky (1978) and Harris's (2004b) research is a power dynamic, a paradigm in which girls' willingness and comfort socializing with one another directly impacts their sense of belonging in the program. Thus, in comparing Girls on the Run and the Work It Out program,

I question the efficacy of a solitary and potentially competitive action like running in creating belonging among girls. If girls are not able to talk with one another while running, how will social relationships be built? Moreover, if girls are unable to compete alongside their friends, will that harm their sense of belonging and, ultimately, their body image in relation to their peers?

Positivity and encouragement are at the center of both Girls on the Run and Work It Out. However, the activities and discussion prompts used to inspire these feelings are vastly different in each program. A standard icebreaker in Girls on the Run is for the girls to ascribe adjectives to their names and introduces themselves to the group. While choosing these powerful descriptors could render some positive feeling about the self, they also ask girls to categorize themselves, essentially forcing them into the can-do girl attitude. Such an identity may or may not reflect their current state and therefore could impede honest interaction with other girls. This is further problematized by the recognition that running is a solitary activity. Girls cannot interact throughout the whole program and are instead called to compete, push, and challenge themselves. This could be extremely harmful for girls who are at risk or struggling with body image. In contrast, the Work It Out program uses group collaboration through choreography as an opportunity for girls to meet and share with one another. They are not asked to be or move in a particular way, but instead to work with their peers to create a piece that comes from their shared likes, experiences, skills, and views.

Body-Based Ideals

Girls on the Run addresses body-based ideals in relation to so-called "appropriate behaviour." Instead of focusing explicitly on weight management or coveting beauty ideals, the Girls on the Run program frames body image in a broader sense, linked to Barker's idea of the

girl box. To Barker, this box signifies the ways that girls are conditioned to act in a particular way; around adolescence girls begin to perform the tropes of their gender through recreation, social mannerisms, and appearance. Barker created Girls on the Run to assist girls to identify their personal desires. For Barker, her venture into the girl box during middle school primarily resulted in her quitting running, an activity she loved but that did not fit into the demure image of a girl that Barker subscribed to at the time.

Girls on the Run addresses body-based ideals in much the same way as Work It Out. In both programs, body image is predicated on the aspects of femininity girls idealize. This approach results in a more diverse understanding of what it means to be female. Moreover, it helps girls to relate their emotionally-driven body image to the social influences of culture that surround them. In this way, Girls on the Run is successful in creating a space for girls to engage with body-based ideals as an individual and in relation to society. However, the framework of the program as focused on a solitary activity like running impedes the amount of time girls interact with each other about their thoughts on body image. The collaborative nature of the choreographic process in Work It Out enables more active interaction between girls.

Concluding Thoughts

Conceptions of the self and body image are inextricably linked. This is especially true for females who have been conditioned to believe that their value is tied to the beauty and abilities of their bodies. Together, these understandings signify the prominence of a mentality where "women's bodies can never be quite right, and can always be improved. This improvement becomes an imperative of identity and happiness for young women due to the complex relationship between self and body" (Aapola, Gonick, and Harris 2005, 137). The existence of body image programs exclusively for girls supports the idea that young women grapple with

significant issues in finding and maintaining a positive relationship with their bodies and, by extension, themselves. Moreover, the conceptualization and popularity of "girl power" in media has created a platform upon which such programs build. The success of these programs, however, is dependent on the issues they address, how they provide ways for girls to connect meaningfully with others, and the creation of a nonjudgmental and noncompetitive environment.

The creation of a completely girl-centered body image program is a significant task. This is due to the complex and diverse relationships girls have with their bodies. For this reason, the Dove Self-Esteem Project, Girls on the Run, and Work It Out share the same struggle of attending to multiple needs in one classroom. Referring back to my framework of the fundamental concepts for building positive body image (i.e., body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals) aids in making clear the successes and pitfalls of each program. The Dove Self-Esteem Project focuses on cultivating positive body image. Its finite focus on representations of beauty in media has successfully helped girls to recognize critically the sales tactics of beauty suppliers in advertisements, and to cultivate a more positive relationship to images of female bodies. However, with no active component and a highly prescribed set of discussion prompts, the Dove Self-Esteem Project does not encourage body functionality or belonging. Conversely, Girls on the Run places great emphasis on body functionality and belonging but ignores body-based ideals. Its tactics for teambuilding (e.g., icebreakers and group training) and inclusion of a physical activity help girls to focus on the abilities they possess over the aesthetics of their bodies. However, as previously mentioned, its sole focus on running as the main activity could result in negative associations with the body due to competitiveness and difficulty reaching the 5 km goal.

Work It Out is similarly prone to some of the same potential pitfalls of other body image programs. Specifically, the main concern I have encountered in my programming is taking the inherent oversexualization of particular body parts into account. Whenever I asked girls to split the parts of the body into sections and identify descriptors and actions that can be performed with those parts, there was always the potential for negative responses. While the overall goal of the program is to help girls recognize all of the movements they are capable of creating with their physiques, in the moment, I instructed young girls to evaluate their relationships to their bodies. There is no solution that I have found to date that deters girls completely from commenting on certain body parts, such as the chest, backside, or thighs, in a way that does not mention a sexualized comment. However, the nonscripted format of Work It Out enabled me to address such ideas when they come to light. Opening up and directly facing sexualized or self-deprecating language as a group facilitated collective discussion and understanding.

Together, the curricula of the Dove Self-Esteem Project, Girls on the Run, and Work It Out demonstrate a trend within girlhood today. The creation and acceptance of the self is at the center of this pattern in girls programming, and the body provides the vehicle to discuss the formation of identity. However, with their questionable sponsors, narrow or nonexistent use of the body, and potentially self-objectifying discussion prompts, there remains more work to be done. As dance and creativity tend to be more inclusive, the Work It Out program, with its curriculum fusing open discussion and physical, artistic movement, enables girls to explore their personal concerns in a different way. At the heart of this discussion is an account of "power through and control over one's own identity invention and reinvention. The idea of girl power encapsulates the narrative of the successful new young woman who is self-inventing, ambitious, and confident" (Harris 2004, 17). In other words, if we truly wish to foster a sense of

empowerment for girls, we need to listen to them, allow them to express their ideas, keep them connected with one another, and let them create their own definitions of success.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The overall methodological framework for my research is participatory, informed by the principles of education-based Action Research. Action research investigates a primary research question through live action in the classroom. The basic principles of this type of research are accredited to the work of Lewin during the 1940s. Specifically, Lewin is credited with, "coining the term 'action research' to describe work that did not separate the investigation from the action needed to solve the problem" (McFarland and Stansell 1993, 14). One of the first researchers to apply Lewin's methodology to questions in education was Corey at Columbia University in the 1950s. For Corey (1953) the value of using action research in education was that "the consequences of our own teaching is more likely to change and improve our practices than is reading about what someone else has discovered in his teaching" (70). Researchers using this method endeavour to provoke social change through innovations garnered by interactions with their participants. Researchers in education have used Action Research, specifically as part of the "teacher-as-researcher movement that was characterized by school-based curriculum reform" (Lykes and Hershberg 2007, 336). Generally, it is a methodology where the classroom serves as the research lab, the researcher examines the curriculum/course/pedagogical framework taught, and students' reactions (e.g., level of understanding, student engagement) reveal results. The presumption here is that there remains room for further improvement of the pedagogy in question. Any changes to pedagogical approach can be explored at an individual, school, or district wide level.

My methods in this project were fuelled by a desire to spark social change in the classroom to more effectively address the issue of poor body image in the classroom. I endeavoured to investigate how my own practices in the Work It Out program affected students'

responses to their bodies and relatedly to my teaching. Although I used my individual teaching as the basis for generating insights into effective body image programming the overall goal of my work was to discover and understand what factors influence students' body image. In this way, the findings of this research are geared towards gathering information about teaching rather than in quantifiable results. Remaining in line with the principles of Action Research the success of my programming was assessed in relation to new insights learned about how girls understood and were affected by body image issues.

In this chapter, I begin with a description of the key characteristics of Action Research I used and describe how each of these features factored into the formation of the Work It Out program and my doctoral research. I then discuss the organization of each research site in which I ran my programming, concluding with a description of the methods for data collection and analysis. What is most important to note throughout this dialogue is that although teaching practices are governed largely by written documents such as curriculum expectations or pre-existing program manuals, from my perspective, educating is, at its core, an active vocation. The active aspect of schooling I refer to is the interaction that teachers facilitate between themselves, their students, and the subjects being taught in the classroom. Investigating the quality of the relationship between students, dance, and their bodies garnered by teaching in a particular way is the point of this project and the gap I wished to fill in the current offerings of body image programming. In this way, taking a participatory approach to action research that is informed by the principles of Action Research, supported the central goal of my work.

As a method, Action Research shares some of its characteristics with Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR is also a popular choice for educators interested in positively affecting how certain subjects are approached in classrooms. Those using PAR do so by involving

students in all aspects of the research process. This includes the generation of research questions, tools for collecting data, and in some cases the analysis of that data. In this way, for a project to be considered PAR the role of research participants must be central to the entire research process. My work in this project required students to actively engage with my programming and provide feedback on our classes but did not involve them in any other aspect of the research. I chose the subject matter, questions, and tools for data collection. For this very importatnt distinction, my project is more adequately placed within the methods of Action Research than in PAR.

I chose Action Research as the basis for my methodological approach due to its pedagogically sensitive characteristics. Specifically, these characteristics are: (a) practice-based inquiry and an interactive delivery, (b) a social change orientation, (c) an ongoing insider positioning and critical self-reflection, and (d) an acknowledgment of the classroom as the lab space. Collectively, these features cater to the creation of the inclusive, body-positive dance classroom. In the case of my particular project, my aim was to improve the current extracurricular offerings available to adolescent girls (e.g., commercial programs, physical education, girls-only clubs and teams) that address body image issues. This can be achieved through collaboration between students and educators to create socially charged dance pieces about body conceptualization. By engaging with the creative process in this way, the classroom becomes a lab space where positive results can be rendered, inspiring change in the pedagogical approaches currently used to teach dance and body image programming.

The hands-on approach of Action Research connects directly to my project and programming. In Action Research, "the emphasis is 'practical,' that is, on the interpretations teachers and students are making and acting on in the situation" (Kemmis, McTaggart, and

Nixon 2014, 11). More important to my project is that Action Research "is not problem-solving in the sense of trying to find out what is wrong, but rather a quest for knowledge about how to improve […] Action research is not about learning why we do certain things, but rather how we can do things better" (Ferrance 2000, 2). As a result, the process of Action Research is based on a "non-linear pattern of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting on the changes in the social situations" (Noffke and Stevenson 1995, 2) that result from running multiple versions of an approach to teaching.

Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon (2014) provide readers with a broad but informed understanding of how and when Action Research is most effectively employed. They give the example of tracking the formation of a student-run recycling program at Braxton High School. In this example, the research began with a student focus group aimed at revealing "students' views of what engages/disengages them in their learning, what helps/prevents them from being agents of change in their own and others' lives, and what creates/corrodes an inclusive school culture" (7). After collecting student ideas via a school-wide survey, it became clear that many students were concerned about the effects of greenhouse gases on the environment and wished they knew more about how to prevent further damage to ecosystems. As a result, the school science teacher assisted the school's student council to create learning modules teaching how and what to recycle. In so doing, the students began to interact with one another, finding new ways to solve and serve their collective concerns about the environment. Notably, while the science teacher assisted students throughout this project, she acted more as a supportive guide and not a dictator of ideas.

I see two key areas of comparison between my project and the Braxton High School example: the collaboration between students and teachers and the social change orientation of the

endeavour. While the research on Braxton High aimed to generate a positive school culture in general, the response students gave was very specific to their personal concerns. Although having an environmentally charged movement in the school may not seem to connect student engagement with academics, it resulted in students' positive association with their peers, teachers, and the school. By acknowledging the students' expressed ideas, teachers at Braxton High created a situation where the students could come together and address a social issue in a positive way. In doing so, the students felt empowered in their classroom environment and were more willing to partake in other aspects of their academic life at the school.

Building upon this example, my program called girls to come together to create dance pieces that reflected their concerns about body image. Like the teachers at Braxton High, I served as a guide and support for students to speak with and answer questions, though students governed the creative process. The focus was on their ideas, concerns, movements, and expressions. Secondary to this expression, the program aimed to find more positive ways of framing the girls' relationships with their bodies. As such, I encouraged the students to embody what Herbert (2005) refers to as "owning the discourse: seizing the power!" (as cited by Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon 2014, 5). In Action Research, theoretical inquiry may begin the study but becomes secondary to the practical application and action resulting from ideas that emerge throughout the research process. The 'doing'—teaching the students—informed my ideas about dance and body image. The applied element was key to my method. It assisted me in leading each separate session of my program in an exploratory way to see what worked and what did not. This project was about testing the effectiveness of my dance classes while engaging actively with students both in conversation and in physical practice. The most valuable way I

achieved my research goal was to run my program multiple times, see what happened in the classroom, and use Action Research to help me make sense of the results.

Positioning myself as an insider in my research field was another important consideration solved by using Action Research. As a method, Action Research "rejects conventional research approaches where an external expert enters a setting to record and represent what is happening," which supports "a new understanding of relationships between theory and practice, and between 'theorists' and 'practitioners'" (Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon 2014, 4-5). One of the most important aspects of this type of research is that it "rejects the notion of the 'objectivity' of the researcher in favour of a very active and proactive notion of critical self-reflection — individual and collective self-reflection that actively interrogates the conduct and consequences of participants' practices, their understandings of their practices, and the conditions under which they practice" (Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon 2014, 6). This critical evaluation of practice affected my research approach in three distinct ways: (a) by identifying my stance as an insider to dance education as positive, (b) by enabling students to be more reflexive of their participation in the program, and (c) by allowing me to evaluate my own involvement critically but not objectively.

In Action Research, my stance as an insider to both the dance and elementary school classroom served as a positive feature of the research. In fact, the principles of Action Research in education are based in recognizing classroom teachers as researchers. Whereas in other frameworks being an insider presents challenges in regards to held biases, in Action Research the researcher works with participants to investigate the effectiveness of a practice by which they are affected. In this way, the researcher should be an insider to the population or practice they investigate, since this type of research "creates the conditions for practitioners individually and

collectively, to transform the conduct and consequences of their practice to meet the needs of

changing times" (Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon 2014, 6). In my case, this meant responding to

the reactions and needs of each group of girls with whom I worked. Recognizing the need for

change to a given practice occurs if the researcher deems it to be:

> Irrational: the way participants understand the conduct and consequences of their practices are unreasonable, incomprehensible, incoherent, or contradictory, or more generally because the practice unreasonably limits the individual and collective self-expression of the people involved and affected by the practice.

> Unsustainable: the way the participants conduct their practices are ineffective, unproductive or non-renewable either immediately or in the long term, or generally because the practice unreasonably limits the individual and collective self-development of those involved and affected

> Unjust: the way participants relate to one another in the practice, and to others affected by their practice, serves the interests of some at the expense of others, or causes unreasonable conflict or suffering among them, or more generally because the practice unreasonably limits the individual and collective self-determination of those involved and affected. (Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon 2014, 6)

My experience as a dance educator and body image scholar fuelled my research as it

related to my leading questions. I created the Work It Out program in response to the unjustness

of the traditional dance classroom and irrational/unsustainable nature of current body image

programming options. Customarily, the dance classroom trains the body to perform particular

movements and exhibit certain aesthetics. This ideal dancing body that dancers and teachers

strive towards is, for many, unrealistic to obtain. The result of this tactic in dance sets

unreasonable goals upon students, which can negatively affect their body image and overall

engagement with dance practice. Existing programs that address body image issues with

adolescent girls attack this issue by discussing media, defining disorders resulting from

representations, and providing reflective journaling opportunities for girls to use in resolving

their personal perceptions of their bodies. What body image-centered programs and traditional dance classes do not do, however, is harness the power of embodied creativity and self-expression to open pathways between a girl's sense of self and perceptions of her own body, as my program aimed to do.

Action research's recognition of practical/personal experience as valid to the research process further supported my investigation as a researcher. This sentiment was important to me as it coincided directly with the pedagogical innovations I believe are necessary to enhance dance education in the classroom. For my program to work, the girls needed to engage with self- and group reflection. They pulled apart their ideas about the female body and expressed those thoughts through the dances they created. As the researcher, I facilitated those reflections and observed their dancing as a thoughtful audience member. Furthermore, there was no place for objectification of movements or bodies in this program. As the purpose of this program was to develop positive body image for girls, to evaluate the work created and performances as an object would have been contradictory to the goal. In Action Research having a self-reflexive viewpoint extends to the researcher's own practice as well. As a method action research is carried out over multiple sessions or lessons. Researchers are encouraged to take in the responses of their students and alter their approach to teaching in hopes of eliciting more positive results. When moving to new sessions of Work It Out I took the feedback of my previous participants into account. This resulted in my making modifications to both the program and my approach to teaching it in every scenario. By remaining self-reflexive about my teaching practice I was able to more critically see how slight changes to Work It Out affected girls' participation. Thus, the cyclical nature of this research methodology helped me to recognize many different factors that

influence how students respond to lessons. In this way, Action Research's stance as a reflective and contextually sensitive approach suited this project and its goals.

Work It Out: What's This All About?

The creation of a program for girls—Work It Out—was at the center of this project. This program employed a methodology that aimed to account for the performative nature of gender (Butler 1990) and prevalence of beauty sickness (Engeln-Maddox 2005) in adolescent girls. In adopting this new teaching tactic, I endeavoured to apply the inherently expressive nature of creative dance and choreography to assist girls in conveying their experience of girlhood and how it affects or relates to the body and body image, drawing on my expertise and experience in dance fitness, dance instruction, body image, and curriculum teaching. This program was teacher-guided and student-led. Participants engaged with their moving bodies, reflecting, creating, and commenting on the many uses and perspectives they held about their bodies. In contrast to other popular body image-centered programs (i.e., the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run), Work It Out did not give students particular lingo, statistics, or ideals to counter negative body image. Instead, it used self-reflexive journaling, group dance, and creative dance to allow girls room for personal and artistic expression. In this way, I did not direct the students to a particular conclusion about their bodies, but instead guided them through the program, which by encouraging self-reflection and inquiry, led the girls to recognize their skills through their dancing. Although not the first program to use dance practice to foster student engagement, to draw upon shared movement strategies, or to explore the choreographic process with young dancers, this program was the first to do so with a focus on body image.

As a trained contemporary dancer, certified elementary school teacher, and fitness instructor, I have a vast, diverse, and personal relationship with educating the moving body. My

background played a role in the development of my program and was represented through the synthesis of academic teaching practice (i.e., guided learning, prompting students, and consideration of multiple perspectives and different needs in the classroom's population). My history as a preprofessional dancer and fitness instructor provided me with a solid understanding of safe physical practice and ample skills within the technical aspects of dance practice—the movement itself.

My experience running body image-centered programming stemmed from my time as an elementary school teacher. At each school where I have taught, the staff has chosen to run a girls-only group. These groups tended to focus on intermediate grade-level girls (i.e., grades 5 to 8), and typically concerned body image and its connection to girls' self-esteem. Some were entirely teacher-made, while others used hired programs (e.g., the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run). What became incredibly apparent to me was how general these programs were in how they understood girlhood and the body, and how specific the activities were (i.e., little to no creative exercise). This observation led me to create my own program to address the gaps left by those currently offered in schools.

The idea to focus on body image, and to use dance to do so, stemmed from my previous research experience. In my master's research, I examined how and why regular engagement with dance fitness (i.e., Zumba) affected adolescent girls' confidence and leadership skills. I did this by running weekly Zumba classes at multiple schools and tracking trends in the explanations students offered in each session as to why our classes were different than other dance experiences. One of the most popular admissions of my participants was that because Zumba is a form of exercise, it made them feel good that they were working to control their weight. Notably, the girls' interpretation in this context highlighted that most of the information they learned

about the value of dance in school revolved around their perceptions of beauty and their body. I received responses such as:

> *I think Zumba is good because it's like exercise.* (Kayla 2013)

> *We do Zumba at school because it's important to be healthy and Zumba helps us to do that.* (Diamond 2013)

> *If I didn't do Zumba then I would be sitting down at my desk. I sit a lot of the time at school and so moving helps me to feel better and not get fat.* (Melody 2013)

This reaction effectively glossed over any assessment of their intellectual or emotional capacities and worked against the initial goal of my project and of their teachers. Girls connecting their involvement in my dance lessons to exercise and weight loss was a recurring theme throughout my research on dance fitness. More importantly, it was the only prominent reaction that encouraged girls to take part in my classes but did not directly foster leadership. For this reason, I felt that this area of girls' body image programming was lacking and needed to be addressed further.

The Work It Out program uses dance as a communal experience. While the inspiration for this tactic resulted from my work with Zumba, I did not use the music or movements from that exercise regime. Work It Out was an entirely new program. In my classes, I adopted a motto, which I encouraged all students to adopt. When faced with a confusing step or sequence, I told them to remember, "When in doubt, shake about." I taught all of the student participants this saying on the first day of class. At first they giggled at it, though they soon came to memorize and internalize it as a method for self-encouragement. This "shake about" mentality is one of the key principles of my programming. Most notably, this saying encourages inclusivity and diverse people to find their comfort zone within what could otherwise be a very unfamiliar and therefore uncomfortable framework.

Another key feature of this programming is the inclusion of self-reflexive activities geared towards body image. Throughout the class, students were called to journal and discuss their body conceptualizations. Students accomplished this by separating the body into sections (i.e., upper body, mid-body, lower body) and dealing with one body segment at a time. Having a journal to write down the movements or ideas they had when thinking about their bodies allowed the girls who were uncomfortable with sharing their thoughts publicly to create a body image dialogue with themselves. Group discussion worked to solidify relationships between participants as the girls learnt about shared ideas, experiences, likes, and dislikes. As part of this evaluation, I asked the girls to complete a "Body Brainstorm" worksheet, which I adapted from body satisfaction scale (BSS) surveys (Cash and Henry 1995; Dalgard et al. 2008) to suit the age level of the girls with whom I worked. I further discuss the modifications I made to more traditional BSS surveys and my reasoning for making these changes later in this chapter. By approaching the body in a reflexive manner, the girls created a running record of their ideas. In this way, their journals served as a "free space" where they could write, draw, or list their ideas at any time. Moreover, the use of journaling encouraged the girls to consider critically not only what they thought, but also the relationship between their ideas and their dancing. This approach brought mindfulness to a body-centered activity—something that the current dance and body image offerings in schools have not been able to accomplish.

Lastly, I designed this programming to support student understanding using a scaffolding learning approach. To scaffold in a pedagogical approach describes "certain kinds of support which learners receive in their interaction with parents, teachers and other 'mentors' as they move towards new skills, concepts or levels of understanding," and recognizes the "temporary, but essential, nature of the mentor's assistance as the learner advances in knowledge

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and understanding" (Maybin, Mercer, and Stierer 1992, 186). While this gradual approach is commonly used in education, the current formation of the dance curriculum and offerings in dance do not support this ideal. In this way, students are less inclined to engage with dance practice in the classroom, as they are unsupported in their learning. In contrast, the body image programs taught in schools use what I call a "tell to teach" methodology. Rather than leading students slowly through a series of reflexive exercises, they provide students with concrete definitions, information, and ideas about the body and its conceptualization. This minimizes the opportunity for students to engage critically with their own body image perceptions while concurrently erasing the ability for students to gain new and positive relationships with their bodies.

Scaffolding in my program was achieved in two ways. Firstly, I organized the program in five units, which gradually took students through the parts of the body and their movement potentials: the Elements of Dance (weeks 1-2), Upper Body (weeks 3-4), Mid-Body (weeks 5-6), Lower Body (weeks 7-8), and Whole Body Dancing and Culmination (weeks 9-10). Secondly, each lesson built towards student independence through a three-part lesson: (a) discussion/reflection (influenced by Vinent and Fernandez 2016), (b) shared movement (influenced by my Zumba experiences and McNeil 2008), and (c) creative movement/reflection (as described by Henley 2014). Below, I further explain these three sections and their rationale.

The discussion/reflection section of my three-part lesson introduced that day's key body-centered themes. Vinent and Fernandez (2016) began their research sessions with "practice/research," which involved interviewing students. I adapted their approach by choosing to begin my classes with shared discussion rather than a formal interview, thus beginning on a less formal, more reflexive note. During this first section, the girls completed their "Body

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Brainstorm" worksheets and had the opportunity to share their thoughts voluntarily with one another. I chose to use the survey and shared discussion to activate the girls' critical thought and reflection process before asking them to move. If I had begun with movement (as in a regular dance class), the focus would have shifted towards the mastery of dance moves rather than internal dialogue with their bodies in relation to their body image. This discussion then set an intention and framework for the girls to enter into the action section of the class that was both emotional and physical (Giguere 2011; Hanna 1999; Henley 2014; Stinson 1997). Furthermore, the small group setting aided in establishing the classroom as a "safe space" for expressing ideas.

The second section of class, shared movement, included a warm up and collection of group dances inspired by, but not taken from, the Zumba class model. This departed from the traditional dance class, as it did not focus on the acquisition of particular skills or technique. Instead, participants collectively learned and performed prechoreographed dances by following along with the instructor (me). In this setting, "prechoreographed" refers to a collection of dances that are choreographed in advance to be repetitive, simple, and performed in unison. The students learned these dances through modelling in the first weeks and then practiced them throughout the ten-week course. Although the group choreography remained the same over the course, the body segment focused on changed from week to week. In this way, student engagement with their body conceptualization was also scaffolded, as we moved through the body over the course of the program. The teacher (me) verbally and gesturally focused attention to the body segments while moving. In particular, I asked the girls to focus on how their body parts moved and invited them to explore physical ways of altering the quality of those movements. The goal in this section was to bring awareness to those body parts and their movement potentials. This shared movement section also provided the girls with the opportunity

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to become gradually comfortable moving alongside their peers in preparation for their small group choreography assignments. Students succeeded in this section of the program through engaged participation rather than technical mastery. I gave the girls direction, though they could also choose their movements and how they performed them, allowing for a more inclusive and body-positive environment.

The scholarly literature supports a shared movement approach to dance pedagogy (McNeill 2008; Nieri and Hughes 2015), as has my own experience working with women and girls as a Zumba instructor. As a fairly new fitness form, Zumba has not been subject to much scholarly study. In the only published scholarly article on Zumba, Nieri and Hughes (2015) report that the party-like atmosphere led their female participants to perceive "Zumba to prioritize fun over work and process over outcomes; value individual autonomy and personalization rather than strict conformity; and engage the participant as more than just a body to be shaped" (2). It is important to note that this research did not successfully determine whether these outcomes derived from shared movements or were side-effects of participants viewing Zumba as "exotic" or "Latin," given that the "party-like atmosphere" is associated with Latin-American dances and cultures in this practice. This is an important point to note because other research (Shay and Young 2003) has revealed that by engaging with dance forms from outside of their own culture, women, namely Americans, gain a sense of embodied liberation through self-exotification. In relation to Work It Out, it was important to note that there are many reasons why dance in particular inspires people to move. It is possible, then, that for some of my participants, dance provided them with an opportunity to play with self-exotification.

McNeill (2008) is more helpful in explaining the positive social and emotional effects that shared movement practices have on participants. McNeill (2008) asserts that when groups of

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people march, dance, and physically engage with one another, the shared action renders emotional connections within the group. The result, then, is positive affiliations with one another and a sense of collective accomplishment. As a certified Zumba instructor, I have seen this same body-positive reaction to shared movement in class. For these reasons, I argue that moving together during the warm-up and prechoreographed routine created a sense of community for the girls, giving them a safe space in which to explore, express, and move. Establishing that bond prepared them for the third section of my lesson, where they applied their ideas and created their own movements and choreographic pieces.

The final section of my lesson plan, creative movement/reflection, draws from the work of Henley (2014), who emphasizes the intellectual and emotional aspects of dance. Henley (2014) views dance and dance education as part of a "perceptual-motor-emotional-world" (95)— a perspective that departs from the traditional technique-focused dance classroom. As an advocate for dance pedagogy in the classroom that provokes critical thought, Henley (2014) asserts that "perception, action, and emotion accessed through… [dance helps] students understand how movement conveys meaning" (96). For example, the choreography that the girls created using their bodies encouraged them to think about, move with, and express ideas they had about themselves. It challenged them to convey the feelings and ideas they had about their bodies through dance and, in doing so, convey meaning. In undergoing the process of choreography, whilst being mindful of the elements of dance discussed early in the program, the girls learned to make movements meaningful.

Building on Henley's ideas, in the final part of each lesson, I asked the girls to create short pieces of choreography that focused on that day's body section. Working in small groups, the girls began by comparing their journal ideas and choosing as a group those that were most

true to them as a source of inspiration. The list they created helped them to generate movement for choreography and provided them with an opportunity to explore their ideas about their bodies kinaesthetically. Each week, the girls added to and edited this choreography, using the new ideas they generated through journaling as well as the new body segments we explored. The composition exercise focused on playing with movement, combining ideas with peers, and facilitating the exploration of their body and its meanings.

Putting Things into Context

My research project was comprised of three sessions of the Work It Out program. I completed each of these sessions with three different cohorts of girls in three different settings: one at a public elementary school, another in a private elementary school, and the last in a voluntary community program. Running my course in these different settings allowed me to compare how the girls' involvement as either voluntary (community setting) or mandatory (school setting) affected their engagement with the programming offered. It also enabled me to compare how the setting of the program (i.e., classroom, coeducational or girls-only) affected the girls' engagement, and how girls from different social and cultural backgrounds conceptualized their bodies. Together, these three sessions provided me with a broader spectrum of female participants and a greater understanding of how girls conceptualize their bodies and how dance and movement can be used to promote positive relationships between the girls and their body image. Participating girls ranged in age from 11 to 14.

In all groups, I taught the girls for a seventy-five minute lesson. In the schools, my programming ran once per week for ten weeks. In the community setting, I ran the program for four weeks. I made modifications to the program to adapt to the context of each setting as well as in response to participants' feedback. The girls' legal guardians provided permission for the girls

by signing an informed consent form. The names of all students, teachers, and schools remained anonymous and, in this writing, have been replaced by chosen pseudonyms.

Setting 1: Public Coeducational School

The first site of my research was a public school just outside of Toronto. I had a preexisting relationship with this school as I had run programming there prior to this project. Although I knew the teacher I worked with, I had not met or taught any of the students who participated in the program. The students I worked with were in grades 5 and 6 (aged 10 to 12). As part of the York Region District School Board, this school's students came from multiple cultural, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The diversity of student backgrounds was significant to my interest as well as the programming I taught in this school.

Language is an important consideration in the classroom. With a largely South Asian and South American population, this school hosts a significant number of English language learners. While none of the students I taught had serious issues communicating with me, some did have difficulty writing their thoughts down in the journals. The main obstacle for these students was fear of spelling words incorrectly on the page. I dealt with this by either assisting them to sound out their desired word and/or highlighting the nonjudgmental nature of this program. As with the dances, I was not concerned with correctness but, rather, expression. For this reason, many students wrote and later looked words up in the dictionary.

Another significant factor in working in this school was the limited experience most students had with dance prior to my programming. While involvement in technical dance training was not a necessity for this program, I had to ensure the students felt comfortable moving to music. As new experiences can be intimidating, I needed to generate excitement and encourage them to participate fully. A final and important consideration for this group was the

coeducational environment. Since my program was incorporated into the regular school day, the male students could not be separated from the female students during our lessons. While I was initially apprehensive about this organization, I soon saw it as an opportunity to see how the girls related to one another when the boys were present. For the purposes of the study, all of the girls submitted informed consent forms, and I only focused on the girls' journals and surveys in my review. The male students who took part my lessons were given an alternate informed consent form. I did not monitor their participation in Work It Out in the same way as the girls (e.g., no one-on-one interviews or analysis of their surveys), though I reviewed their video-recorded participation in class. In concluding this session, I noticed one area for improvement. While the students spoke with one another about their choreography, they had difficulty doing so. This was due to the coeducational organization of the classroom, which heightened students' awareness of gender roles. Girls and boys gravitated to same-sex groupings and were less vocal in expressing their ideas about body image.

Setting 2: Private All-Girls School

A private all-girls school in Mississauga comprised the second site of my research. While the school uses the Ontario curriculum, it functions as a separate entity within the education business. Students at this school pay a tuition fee for attending, illustrating the high socioeconomic status of their families. At this school, I taught the grade 5 and 6 students as well. However, following feedback from my first session, I made one significant adjustment to my approach. For this group, I worked to homogenize the classroom. This was achieved with the single-sex organization of the class and the use of one song for the choreography component. I chose a popular song ("I'm a Lady" by Megan Trainor 2017), which students knew and coincided with the program's message of positivity and confidence. In this way, the various

groups could engage in dialogue more meaningfully about their creative process and the choices they made, and observe shared approaches or feelings about each other's work.

Setting 3: Community Program (Type 1 Diabetes)

I ran the final session of the program with a special interest group—girls with T1D. These classes took place at York University in the dance department's studios over four weekends in the spring of 2017. This setting differed greatly from the previous two in that it was a voluntary program for which all participating girls registered. Due to this organization, many of the girls who participated had not met each other prior to our class time together. This meant that aside from sharing the common experience of living with T1D, the participants had no preexisting relationship.

This final setting presented some difficulties. Firstly, I had to recruit participants by advertising the classes as an event. Here, I enlisted the help of a local organization that caters to organizing activity-based events for children and adults living with T1D. I had done work with this organization in the past and they were happy to assist me. Another consideration was recognizing that the voluntary nature of this session created the potential that participants would not come to every class. Only two students attended multiple classes, with the majority dropping in for one lesson over the session. In such an event, organizing groups and working on one piece of choreography for multiple weeks might not work. For this reason, I made another alteration to the programming: I decided that the choreography section of the class would work towards creating a single dance. I split the girls into groups and gave them a section of a song to choreograph, after which they taught their steps to each other. At the end of the session, we put all of the sections together and presented our collectively choreographed dance. Here, I aimed to

encourage the largest amount of movement creation and group interaction I could in a shorter span of time.

This setting also garnered some interesting insights into body image and girlhood. As a chronic illness, T1D is a great strain on those who have it. While technological advancements in insulin therapy have vastly helped in more accurately managing blood sugar levels, maintaining control over blood sugar while being active remains a large task for these girls. In this way, the girls have a different relationship to their bodies where control is linked to a chronic illness. Moreover, for the T1D girls, their physical difference sparked a desire to pass as healthy in the dance classroom. Throughout their discussion and actions in our classes, the girls spoke to each other about the struggles they faced in dealing with T1D and expressed these issues in their dancing. A collective desire to hide their diabetes from others in order to fit in was the leading struggle these girls faced.

Capturing the Moment: Data Collection in the Field

The goal of this project was to create and test the Work It Out program. In order to assess the success of my programming effectively, I collected a variety of qualitative data. Because of the focus of my programming on body image and body conceptualization, using qualitative data was more appropriate as the success of my work was defined through acknowledgement of particular behaviour and expressions shared by participants. The data included the girls' "Body Brainstorm" worksheets, video recordings, written documentation, and ethnographic notes from participant observation.

The frame for developing my Body Brainstorm worksheets was taken from BSS surveys in body image research (Alleva et al. 2015; Slade 2014; Slater and Tiggemann 2002; Varnado 2016). I adapted the BSS survey in several key ways while retaining much of its general

structure. I chose to alter my survey's structure because of concerns I had about how my participants might respond. Traditional, the BSS survey asks participants to ascribe numerical values to score their level of satisfaction with individual body parts. While the BSS is a commonly used survey for researchers dealing with body image and body concept (Alleva et al. 2015; Slade 2014; Slater and Tiggemann 2002; Varnado 2016), I did not feel its numerical scoring made sense for my participants as I viewed this type of quantitative approach as contrary to my goal of cultivating positive body image. By asking girls to give a graded value to their body parts, I believed I would encourage the very self-objectification to which my program is directly opposed—that the body is understood to be "good" or "bad." For this reason, I adapted the survey in several key ways.

I split the Body Brainstorm worksheets into two parts (refer to Appendix A). The first part retained the original format of the BSS survey, separating the body into segments (e.g., arms, legs, torso, head, etc.). In the second section, I asked the girls to connect descriptors and actions to each body part, using words instead of numbers to evaluate and help them discuss their bodies. The second section of the survey turned the girls' attention to abilities rather than appearances, providing them with not only a collection of movements to use in choreography, but also a framework through which to view their body as a tool with many capabilities, thus positively reframing their body conceptualization (Alleva et al. 2015). I administered the Body Brainstorm worksheets weekly, and students had the chance at the end of each unit to revise their previous responses in a different-coloured pen. In addition, at the end of the course, I encouraged the girls to look over all their responses and make final alterations to their answers, again in a different-coloured pen. This data gathering strategy revealed if and how their body conceptualization was affected by their engagement with the course and over time.

I also used video recording to capture the activities within each lesson. Noticing very quickly how much of a distraction cameras are to students, I chose to use a more discreet method of filming. All students were aware that I would be filming our sessions, however the presence of a camera was extremely distracting to students during my first few classes. Examples of altered behaviour I noticed were making silly faces at the camera lens or strategically placing themselves in the room either to be seen or not seen by the camera. I kept the music I played on my laptop, which also has a video recording application. For each lesson, I placed my laptop at the front of the room with the video recorder turned on. This provided a more discreet method of recording, as the recording screen was minimized and not noticed by students. Students provided informed consent for all recordings prior to our classes. I chose to use video recording for two reasons: (a) to make the research aspect of my time there less evident, as I did not have to write observations down feverishly; and (b) to record the girls' discussions, movements, and interactions. I compared the data collected on film with other data gathered each day, such as field notes and students' journals.

Following each class, I took field notes on what happened throughout the lesson. I completed these notes after class so as not to draw attention to myself as a researcher or make students feel watched. I also obtained copies of the girls' weekly journals, but only from those who gave consent for me to do so. The girls indicated their willingness to share their journals with me on the front of their journals. This complied with ethical practice and also provided the girls with a feeling of control and authorship over what they shared with me. Each session concluded with a party where the girls shared their dance creations with each other and with parents and teachers. Afterwards, I provided the teachers and parents with an opportunity to share feedback about the program via a guestbook that I placed at the door to the classroom

where the program took place. In this book, teachers and parents voluntarily wrote down anonymous comments about their perceptions and observations of the program. This provided me with further insight into how the girls spoke with other adults about the work they were doing.

Making Sense of it All: Methods for Data Analysis

Using critical discourse analysis of documents and recordings (i.e., notes, journals, feedback, and video discussions), I focused on finding commonly expressed themes. As a mode of data analysis, critical discourse analysis operates under that notion that "discourse is shaped by social groupings, culture and constructs, and has the power to limit our knowledge and beliefs" (Grbich 2013, 251). In my project, I drew from Fairclough's (1993, 2000) model of critical discourse analysis, which identifies the interaction of three factors: (a) the text (the words used in conversation and journals), (b) discursive practices (the behaviours, social norms, and identities expressed by my participants), and (c) broader social contexts (the dance classroom, the girls' personal lives, and consumed media) (as cited in Grbich 2013, 251). Applying this model to my project, I searched for frequently expressed sentiments by the girls and their parents specifically pertaining to bodies and body image, especially how they described their bodies in relation to the cultural constructs they resided within as girls in Western society.

I then employed content analysis in relation to the girls Body Brainstorm worksheets. Specifically, I drew from what Grbich (2013) describes as "ethnographic content analysis." This approach takes into account the numerical patterns of data along with "culture and context" so that "enumerative and thematic analysis can be undertaken" (Grbich 2013, 189). As such, I employed a method for quantitative data collection that accounted for the social context in which the information was collected. In this way, I viewed the words used by girls on surveys as part of

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an ongoing conversation they had about their bodies with themselves, media sources, and one another. The work of Garfinkel (2008) in conversation analysis proved helpful here as well, namely viewing the process of social interaction as integral to understanding how people make sense of the world. According to Garfinkel (2008), studies under this form of content analysis "should illuminate not only the micro level of interaction but also the broader social systems which are in place and which constrain or enable our behaviour" (as cited by Grbich 2013, 230). In my programming, the Body Brainstorm worksheet responses identified patterns in how individual girls thought about their bodies, how they thought about them in relation to one another, and how those ideas were reflected in the more general context of our dance class.

I collected and reviewed the Body Brainstorm worksheet data after each class, with special attention given to any changes the girls recorded in a coloured pen. Each of the ten weeks corresponded with a particular colour so I could identify at what point throughout the course the girls made changes. I then analyzed the surveys using a more content-driven approach. I coded their word choices based on positivity and negativity in relation to the different sections of the body. I focused on change over time, and hoped to see greater positivity as the weeks progressed. It is important to note that although the nature of the survey was more quantitative than other materials I collected, I aimed to find commonalities among the girls' responses that were meaning-driven rather than numerical.

My third method of analysis was critical dance analysis. I used this method to assess the girls' shared movement experiences, small group choreographies, and the creative process. Traditionally, critical dance analysis draws on Laban movement analysis (Newlove and Dalby 2003) or dance criticism practices (Giguere 2011). In both of these instances, the meaning resonating from the choreography being analyzed is predicated on outside observation. My use

of critical dance analysis coincided with conventional dance analysis practices in its attention to the Laban concept of "effort/energy." In this project, I understood effort/energy in relation to the size, speed, and liveliness with which a girl performed a movement, where the amount of effort used when dancing was read as a measure of expressed positivity or negativity, sometimes in relation to a particular body part. However, I did not take these performances as isolated evidence of the girls' ideas about their bodies. Rather, I cross-referenced the videotaped dancing with the journal entries and Body Brainstorm data from that day in class.

My approach to critical dance analysis departed from conventional approaches in my desire to focus on the dance makers' (i.e., the girls') understanding of the meanings behind their movement. The work of scholar Giguere (2011) served as a starting point for my distinct approach to critical dance analysis. Giguere (2011) aimed to understand the "cognitive practices that emerge from children's dance making" (5). She did this by running a dance choreography workshop with students while monitoring the methods students used to generate and edit movement. Giguere recognized these tools for children's dance making in films of the choreography sessions as well as in journals and group interviews she conducted with students about their process. What I found particularly useful in Giguere's work was her transcription and analysis of classroom activities such as films of student choreography sessions, in which she identified what she calls "categories of meaning" (12). I adapted Giguere's (2011) categories to focus on physical demonstrations of sentiments related to body image and body concept. My categories were: (a) body language (words used during the choreography sessions describing their body); (b) body monitoring (moments of self-monitoring a body part, e.g., pulling in of the stomach); (c) aesthetic appeal (reasoning for how to improve a movement or pose); and (d) playful pleasure (expressions of enjoyment and pleasure). In my analysis, I documented each

weekly class using separate charts for each girl. In three columns, I recorded the girls' Body Brainstorm results, categories of meaning identified in videos, and ideas expressed in their journal entries. Examined together over the course of the program, these documents provided me with an understanding of how my participants responded to the material and how their perceptions about body image changed over time.

The methodology behind this research signals an opportunity to use dance or, more specifically choreography, in a new way. Beginning their choreographic process with journaling, the girls personally reflected upon their lived experiences and chose sentiments they wished to express through the dances they created. Moreover, they used their bodies, the very aspect of their being that had been objectified by poor body image, to negotiate their ideas about girlhood and about themselves as girls. This approach to teaching dance made the girls feel supported in their process of growing up, hopefully fostering positive body image.

Chapter 4: Case Study 1– Body Image in the Coeducational Classroom

Talking about my body is kinda weird. It's not something I do a lot cause it's private. (Emma 2016)

I don't share in class when we talk Miss, cause I don't really feel that comfortable to, like, tell those kinds of ideas to the whole class. Plus, I mean if people think what I say is not right maybe they'll make fun of me or something. (Kate 2016)

I mean there are BOYS in our class. Like, they don't wanna hear about girl body stuff. They're boys so they don't get that. (Megan 2016)

Students have been taught dance in Ontario schools for over fifty years. As a subject of study, the public education system has incorporated dance in a number of ways. In some cases, classroom teachers have delivered dance instruction as part of the government-mandated curriculum. In others, artists or specialized programs have been hired to teach dance to students as an extracurricular activity. In this first case study, I tested the Work It Out curriculum in a public coeducational school setting (School A) in the classroom. I volunteered as a guest education expert in dance, and the program was offered as part of the students' extracurricular programming. My work at School A began in October 2016 and concluded in December 2016. For a span of twelve weeks, students spent seventy-five minutes each week discussing, dancing, and choreographing with me.

In this chapter, I discuss the initial session I ran of the Work It Out program at School A, particularly focusing on the impact of the mixed gender setting on the girls' participation. The leading issue I faced at this field site was whether girls' body image could be addressed when in a coeducational setting. In light of this setting, I made modifications to Work It Out in order to increase girls' body image while satisfying the program's fundamental concepts (i.e., body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals). Here, I faced two significant challenges: (a) the amplification of gender difference due to the inclusion of male students, and (b) the significant

impact of these gender differences on the cultivation of belonging. To unpack these challenges, I begin with a description of my experience at School A, outlining the social context and pedagogical considerations I took into account in this setting. I then discuss the role of gender as a social construct in the classroom. Using Butler's (1990) idea of gender performativity as the basis for my analysis, I demonstrate how societal norms about femininity and masculinity affected the behaviour of my participants and their understanding of dance as an activity. Next, connecting body image to gender, I consider the work of scholars on body image (Feingold and Mazzella 1998; Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004; Olivardia 2002) and the gendering of the body through dance (Blume 2003; Bordo 2003; McHale, Crouter, and Tucker 1999; Schnitt and Schnitt 1987; Shapiro 1998). I then compare and contrast the pros and cons of coeducational versus single-sex physical education classes, focusing on research on the effects of the environment on female student participation (Daalen 2005; Downey 1997; Ennis 1999; Lenskyj 1994; Naik 2010). Lastly, I review the three fundamental concepts of my model (body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals) in relation participant responses at School A. Overall, this case study shows that in the coeducational setting, the girls could not effectively build a sense of belonging due to the presence of male students.

Setting the Scene: Public School Setting (School A)

The coeducational public school setting raised a number of cultural and pedagogical considerations for my research. Specifically, the presence of both boys and girls created a diverse social climate. Within the confines of our classroom, the participants in this session of Work It Out experienced challenges when exploring and expressing their ideas about body image. Indeed, the presence of males and females made discussions about body image more difficult, for while ideal physical aesthetics affected both boys and girls, the specific characteristics they

strived towards were very different. With the amplification of gender roles came students'

apprehension about expressing ideas on how idealized female or male bodies influenced their

body image. In this section, I explain the classroom's social climate, examining how the school's

setting affected the girls' participation in my program particularly in relation to student

organization within the classroom, how students chose group members, and how and when the

students were most actively engaged. I further discuss how I chose to present myself and guide

students in this session.

School A came to be part of my study through a preexisting relationship I had with one of

the staff members. Having given a guest presentation at the school during the previous year for a

physical education ceremony on fitness, the school was familiar with me both professionally and

personally. The school's principal decided the program would occur once per week with the

grade 6 students. Due to lack of available space, all classes took place in the school's library,

which was sizable after moving the desks and chairs to the sides of the room. I was allocated

seventy-five minutes of active teaching time with the group each week, and could conduct one-

on-one and/or group interviews with the girls as needed after each session in the library.

At this school, the student population contained students from various cultural

backgrounds and ability levels. In all, twenty-seven grade 6 students attended my lessons

(seventeen girls and ten boys). At this school, there was one grade 6 class and two split-grade

classes that included sixth graders. The students who attended my lessons were a mix of the

separate homerooms. Although the students were not all in the same homeroom class this year,

they did all know each other. Most participating students came into my classroom with little to

no studio-based experience with formal technical dance training. As a result, most girls described

dance to me as a familiar social and creative activity:

Oh Miss, can we do some salsa or merengue dancing? I do that with my family all the time. I'm a Latina you know. (Isabella 2016)

I make up dances all the time, Miss. Like, just to songs I like on the radio with my friends and stuff. It's fun. We really like Justin Bieber's new song. (Karen 2016)

I dance all the time. I dance at parties with my friends. Sometimes I kinda dance around my room or when I'm walking. It's my own stuff. (Emma 2016)

Although the girls at School A did not have experience with dance as a specified technique, they regularly partook in dance. Their understanding of dance as a fun, social activity further spurred their willingness to participate in both the physical and conversational aspects of Work It Out.

The socioeconomic status of students at this school was another important factor to consider. Many students at School A came from working class backgrounds or were recent immigrants to Canada. As a result, the majority of students' extracurricular activities were based at the school or at local community centers. This greatly impacted how the students and homeroom teachers viewed me—as a guest in their school offering a new program. The teachers at the school saw my dance expertise as a replacement for teaching the dance curriculum. Many of the school's teachers were uncomfortable with the prospect of teaching dance to their students due to a lack of personal experience. To them, my program replaced their need to teach dance to their students. This was initially a negative reaction as teachers were disregarding their role in favour of other subject areas. However, in seeing how engaged students became in my programming, many of the teachers began to question me on methods for using dance to motivate student participation. While teachers saw my programming as an opportunity for them to learn new teaching methods, students viewed Work It Out as an elite opportunity. The students viewed dance lessons from a trained dancer as something to which they would otherwise not have access. My status as a researcher and dancer fuelled their desire to learn from

me, but also to impress me. Following my first class with the students at School A, I recorded my initial thoughts on their reactions to me:

> *Teachers and students kept mentioning how excited they were to have the "chance to dance" at school. Girls were especially enthusiastic and danced at the front of the room making their access to me (for conversation) easier. They asked many questions about how I was a "professional dancer" and how long I had been dancing. Collectively, there was a feeling of appreciation and excitement.* (2016)

I interpreted students' views of my programming as an "opportunity" and of my status as a "professional dancer" as significant to their understanding of Work It Out as elite and special. This reaction initially concerned me, as I feared the students would become distanced from me due to my history as a trained dancer. I was concerned that because of my training in technical dance forms, I would appear superior to students, affecting their relationship with me. I dealt with this in two ways. First, I chose to be called "Miss Deanna," which is less formal than how students address classroom teachers. Second, I encouraged students to show me movements they knew from outside experiences or had made up, so as to inspire a sense of body functionality.

Another consideration of the students' reaction to Work It Out relates to the central concern of this chapter—the problems inherent to enhancing girls' body image in a coeducational setting. At School A, the administration enforces a policy that extracurricular activities must be made available to all students equally. This means that sport teams, student clubs, and school trips must accommodate both genders. Following this rule meant that I could not make Work It Out a girls-only program. Additionally, the school could only provide one time slot per week to run this program. In order to have students from School A participate, I had to combine boys and girls' instruction in one class. Participating boys and girls received the same instructions throughout my programming. However, because my research focused on girls, the student responses I speak to here are from the girls who participated only. In my informed

consent process, the boys' guardians gave me permission to speak generally about their participation in class but not to conduct more in-depth interviews with them.

The boys' presence in this session of Work It Out raised some pedagogical concerns regarding how to approach body image, as the boys had their own body image concerns that differed from the girls. Hargreaves and Tiggemann (2004) describe and compare the body image concerns of adolescent boys and girls, and how male and female bodies are aesthetically idealized. Hargreaves and Tiggemann (2004) relate these mediated images of bodies to the tenants of social comparison theory (Festinger 1954; Suls and Wheeler 2003; Wood 1989), suggesting that appearance-related social comparison is the mechanism through which media exposure affects body image. I interpret Hargreaves and Tiggemann's work as demonstrating a point of common struggle for the male and female students at School A—the ways that media influences their understanding of male and female bodies. However, the specific idealizations of the body that males and females encounter differ greatly.

In this coeducational setting, I approached body image as collectively tied to appearance and weight. While adolescent girls' poor body image has been associated with the desire to look like unrealistically thin models, boys deal with a completely different set of idealized physical characteristics. Pope et al. (2000) state that for men, the ideal body has a "well-developed chest and arms, with wide shoulders tapering down to a narrow waist" (30). Men should be both lean and highly muscular (Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004). As young growing boys, none of the males who participated in my classes at School A were particularly muscular yet. However, I did see references to this muscular male ideal appear in the choices the boys made in their choreography, specifically in the poses they chose for themselves in their dances. It was commonplace to see the boys flexing their muscles, play fighting, or standing tall while

broadening their shoulders—what they called a "Superman stance." I interpret these actions as tied to their desire to portray themselves as strong, muscular, and "manly" through their dancing. Although I recorded these behaviours in my field notes, I did not have the opportunity to delve more deeply into the boys' body image issues through interviews during this project. Future research is needed to understand the applicability of this program with boys more fully.

Understanding Gender in the Classroom

The performance and influence of gender identities is central to understanding this case study. In this setting, the girls did not feel completely safe to express their ideas about body image and, therefore, could not successfully address their personal issues with it. In this section, I draw from Butler's (1990) work as a basis to understand how and why culturally-constructed notions about femininity and masculinity affect individuals' social behaviours. I then connect body image to Butler's ideas on the disciplined body. I further discuss the gendering of body image issues, highlighting how popular culture idealizes female and male bodies. Using the research of scholars on adolescent body image (Feingold and Mazzella 1998; Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004; Olivardia 2002), I explain how the performance of gender has both emotional and physical effects on girls and boys. Lastly, I discuss the use of the body in regards to the gendering of dance as a physical activity. I draw from research in sociology (Bem 1993; Bordo 2003; McHale, Crouter, and Tucker 1999; Messner 1998; Serbin, Powlista, and Gulko 1993) and critical dance pedagogy (Blume 2003; Schnitt and Schnitt 1987; Shapiro 1998) to demonstrate how the feminizing of dance practice affects student involvement. Throughout this discussion, I integrate examples from my work with students in this session of Work It Out.

At School A, students' tendency to perform in a way they felt expressed ideal femininity or masculinity was important to their dance making. Butler's (2004) idea of gender

performativity is applicable to students' responses at School A as it draws attention to the ongoing negotiation between the biological aspect of sex, and the emotionally- and socially-constructed performance of gender. As one of the foremost scholars to theorize gender as a social construct, Butler's work acknowledges how socially-held ideals about femininity and masculinity promote individuals to behave in particular ways. The choices boys and girls make in their dress, physical gestures, and choice of recreation further enables this performance (Blume 2004). The performative aspect of Butler's view of gender stems from how the satisfying of gender norms undoes an individual's personhood. When performing gendered behaviours, individuals deny their own character in favour of what they feel is expected of them as males or females. Butler (2004) explains the power of these gender norms as made "more complex by the fact that the viability of our individual personhood is fundamentally dependent on these social norms" (2). In other words, gender behaviours are so embedded in culture that they have become naturalized. The desire to gain recognition by others as accepted or as "socially viable beings" (Butler 2004, 2) further amplifies these behaviours.

Butler's ideas align with my experience of teaching Work It Out in a coeducational classroom, namely in how the boys and girls chose and performed their choreography. Given that their dances would be shared with the class at the end of the session, the students were concerned with how peers would view their performances. Indeed, in line with the pervasiveness of gender norms in dictating social behaviours Butler establishes, idealizations of femininity and masculinity affected the boys and girls' participation.

Students' music selection provides an example of this gender division. In total, there were five choreography groups, which students chose themselves (three all female and two all male groups). The male students chose clean versions of popular rap/hip hop songs (e.g., Drake's

"Hotline Bling" 2016, and Rae Sremmurd's "Black Beatles" 2016). The girls chose songs in the pop music genre sung by female stars or teenage heartthrobs (e.g., Demi Lovato's "Confident," 2015, Megan Trainor's "Me Too" 2016, and Major Lazer's "Cold Water" featuring Justin Bieber 2016). When asked about their song selections, the girls explained their choices in ways that aligned with idealized notions of adolescent femininity and heteronormativity, specifically being sassy, girly, or love struck:

> *Well Miss, I really love Justin Bieber. He's SO cute and that is his new song so we all liked it and wanted to use it.* (Eliza 2016)

> *Demi Lovato is my favourite pop star, Miss. She has such a good voice and this song is really sassy and strong and confident. She's like a girl power kinda singer, you know?* (Rebecca 2016)

> *Well "Me Too" is new so we like it still. And Megan Trainor always does fun girly songs. You know like the one about butts? It's just fun and we're all girls so we picked it.* (Tracy 2016)

Conversely, when male students justified their song selections, they linked the songs to ideas of competitiveness, toughness, and professional success:

> *Drake is so cool, Miss. He's got to be the richest rapper right now and his songs are so popular. He tops all the charts. He's just the best. We all really like him and this new song. Plus, there's a dance move that goes with it so we're gonna do it too.* (George 2016)

> *Miss, don't you know about the Mannequin Challenge? We love it!!! You are supposed to move and then freeze and hold it so that you look like a mannequin. People are posting them all over YouTube. "Black Beatles" is, like, the official song for it so we're gonna do the mannequin freezing at the end of our dance. It's really hard to stay so still but I'm really good at it Miss. You'll see.* (Brent 2016)

These responses demonstrate participants' desire to align themselves with gendered associations with the artist, song style, and music videos, which adhere to normative gender roles. For these boys and girls, the presentation of their choreography to classmates served as an opportunity for them to perform their knowledge of masculine and feminine codes of behaviour,

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which they assumed would receive peer approval. In choosing to dance to songs by "girly" or "sassy" pop icons, the girls could access and embody feminized forms of confidence and swagger without betraying their gender roles. Similarly, in deciding to dance to a song by a "rich" rapper or a song that inspired physical competition (e.g., who can be the best mannequin), the male participants invested in the stereotypically male ideal of being physically competitive with others. Using songs that connect to normative gender roles therefore assisted students in achieving their desire to be viewed by peers as acceptably male or female in their dance performances. I interpret students' song choice as a form of self-expression. Their decision to use particular songs by certain artists was another aspect of their choreographic process that communicated their understanding of gender roles. Choosing songs that inspired competition for boys or coincided with mediated ideas about "girlie" behaviour showed how these students chose to portray themselves in performance. Although the act of choice assisted students to feel more comfortable, in some ways it interfered with individual experience. As such, performing stereotyped norms impeded the expression of personal thoughts needed to cultivate a sense of belonging in the classroom.

Music selection was more important to encouraging students' participation in Work It Out than I had initially accounted for. My initial approach was to direct and support student's choice making but not dictate to them. I thought that by allowing students to self-select their groups and musical accompaniment I would be encouraging a sense of ownership for them over their choreography and make Work It Out more student centered. However, I now see that in not being more involved in both their choice making I missed a pivotal teaching opportunity. When I allowed students to sex segregate I enhanced the distinction between male and female students and their choreography. This noticeable tension between gender and performance lead to their

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selection of familiar musical accompaniment which also satisfied students' understandings of femininity and masculinity. Manning and Massumi's (2014) idea of "enabling constraints" explains how encountering unfamiliar material or unexpected challenges leads to building new insights between practices and participants. Applying Manning and Massumi's (2014) idea to Work It Out I wonder what would students have done if I make their groups mixed gender and chosen their music? Moreover, how would students' discussion, sense of belonging, and choreography have changed if their groups included both boys and girls? At first the boys and girls might have been uncomfortable with the arrangement but would have worked together to produce a piece about body image.

Another way to understand the role gender played in the classroom is to frame students' behaviour in relation to "sex-typing" (Bem 1993; Bigler 1997; Martin 1993; Signorella, Bugler, and Liben 1993). Where Butler's (1990) work speaks to the ways individuals enact gender, sex-typing pertains to the sorting of certain activities into male or female categories (Bem 1993). Researchers have examined this form of gender categorization to understand better the progression of how children and adolescents come to understand the body and its relationship to gender. For example, McHale, Crouter, and Tucker (1999) found that middle school-aged children and adolescents have a strong connection to the sex-typing of particular activities. The most prominently sex-typed actions are those they choose for themselves (e.g., hobbies, recreation, and sport). Similarly, Serbin, Powlista, and Gulko (1993) found that in comparison, adolescents tend to have stronger concerns in regards to satisfying gender stereotypes than younger children. The reason for a heightened concern with gender during adolescence is that the "behavioral, attitudinal, and psychological differences between boys and girls increase after puberty as a result of socialization pressures to conform to traditional masculine and feminine

roles" (Blume 2003, 96). At School A, the participants sex-typed themselves through their understanding of dance as a feminine activity. This was seen in the decisions they made in how to portray themselves in dance and in the ways they spoke about dancing. The girls were generally much more positive about their skills in our class, while many of the boys expressed not knowing what to do. Their heightened awareness of what constituted appropriate male and female behaviours affected what, how, and if they shared personal ideas about body image.

As a scholar, I understand gender as a continuum rather than a binary. However, the participants explained gender in a very finite way—as either boys or girls. I attribute this reaction to the school environment, where the distinction between males and females is a common practice. For example, the school divides sport teams for girls and boys, separates students during health class, and commonly uses the greeting "good morning boys and girls." Collectively, these social practices teach students to see and express gender as either male or female. As a guest in this school, I respected the social climate and rules enforced there. I did not assume, however, that all participants identified as strictly male or female (some could have been part of the LGBTQ community). It was not appropriate to solicit that kind of information within the program.

For the girls in this session, dance presented an opportunity to exhibit physical ability through dance. During our first class, I asked all students to fill out a personal profile. Included in this worksheet was a section where students could list their favourite activities. This could be a club they belonged to, a sport they played, or a recreational hobby. This information provided insight into students' previous experience with physical activity. When reviewing the responses of my female participants, 90 percent of the girls referred to partaking in some form of dance practice. Most typified their involvement as "making up dances with friends," "dancing at family

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parties," or "learning steps from music videos and YouTube." Conversely, none of the male students mentioned dance on their worksheets. Instead male students' chosen activities mostly related to playing on sports teams at school or in leagues.

In this scenario, combining sex-typing with gender performativity reveals the specific ways physical activity and gender are linked. Classifying a particular activity (such as dance) as either male or female dictates how students will engage with it. Messner (1998) and Bordo (2003) further speak to how bodies are disciplined and respond to gendered associations with activity. Both root their analysis in the ways that the attainment of social status for males relates to particular actions and body types, with the understanding that "sport is considered physical capital for boys, while beauty is considered physical capital for girls" (Blume 2003, 97). Earlier in this chapter, I explained how students' choice of music connected to the performance of gender. Bringing the idea of attaining capital into this discussion further highlights the impact of this setting on gender. The participants made choices in choreography in order to acquire cultural capital. The binary organization of gender in their coeducational school made the embodiment of masculinity and femininity a key way for students to gain that capital. As a result, students' choices in the music and movement included in choreography created an opportunity for students to express their knowledge of gender. Taking this into consideration, the female participants viewed dance as supportive of their performance of femininity. As a form of feminine physical activity and not a sport, dance practice conformed to the recognized gender role for the girls, but not necessarily for the boys. However, since Work It Out aimed to enable female participants to move away from thinking about their bodies in relation to feminine ideals, dance in this setting was problematic. Having boys participate amplified gender difference and conformity, making

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dance more about performing a social role than exploring multiple methods for self-representation.

In connecting gender to dance pedagogy, Work It Out calls for a more critical approach to dance teaching that moves away from traditional gendered perceptions of dance in the Western school system. Blume (2003) sees engendering dance as female as harmful to the position of dance practice in schools. Blume explains critical dance pedagogy as a self-reflective endeavour where students resist the objectification of the body in relation to gender. Instead, students should focus on self-expression. Blume uses Shapiro's (1998) three goals of critical dance pedagogy for teaching adolescents as a roadmap for how to help students in overcoming their concerns with gender in the dance classroom:

1. *To support embodied knowing.* Students may begin by talking or writing about the effect of media images on their own bodies and then creatively dance that vision. In this example, a dance that embodies 'thinness' or 'beauty' can become a starting point for girls' and boys' discussions of gendered constructions of women's bodies.

2. *To understand that we live in a world of human actions.* Through dyadic movement activities, students may be helped to see that we have effects on others. By improvising with a same-sex and/or opposite-sex partner, dance can physically demonstrate human agency, interdependence, and emotional relatedness.

3. *To explore movement related to students' real life concerns.* Students may create movement improvisations related to issues generated in classroom discussions, such as 'feeling pressure to have sex before one is ready.' Dances to express this concept might involve being pushed or pulled across the room by a partner, or by moving quickly or slowly. (Blume 2003, 99-100)

While Blume's (2003) ideas are compelling, I question how realistic they are in the live classroom. The three-part lesson plan of Work It Out speaks directly to Shapiro's (1998) outline. However, the responses of my participants at this school demonstrate how aware students are of gender roles when in the coeducational physical education setting. Frequently, the girls and boys asked me how a certain movement looked. They wondered if the move went with the beat of the

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music or if their choreographic choices were "stupid" or "silly." They were very concerned about how their bodies would be read in their final performances. Having both boys and girls present further amplified students' awareness of and desire to present themselves in accordance with shared ideals of attractiveness, coordination, and rhythm. Moreover, the influence of the sex-typing of dance and gender performativity proved stronger than the desire to express and perform. Putting the body on display through dance therefore runs the risk of amplifying gender roles and shutting down choice for girls and boys. In order to overcome this issue, students need to feel comfortable socially in the classroom. The creation of a classroom that is a "safe space" has become extremely popular in educational discourse. Boost Rom (1998) pulls apart usage of this term, explaining "the 'space' is 'safe' when individuals and groups know that they will not face criticisms that would challenge their expressions of identity" (407). Applying Boost Rom's understanding to the students at School A, all students needed to feel comfortable with the way they presented themselves through movement. This meant feeling that their peers would appreciate their abilities on both a physical and artistic level. Students needed to feel that they were "good" dancers but also felt pressure to distinguish themselves from one another as a male or female in this setting. As a result, their focus was shifted from body image and self-expression to concerns about self-representation. My choice to include group discussion and a warm up in Work It Out aimed to ease students into sharing and dancing alongside one another gradually. However, the culturally-constructed ideals associated with masculinity and femininity were deeply embedded in these students' understanding. As a result, it was extremely difficult to make our classroom a safe space for self-expression about the body.

Getting Physical: Coeducational Versus Single-Sex Classrooms

Should physical education classes be coeducational or single sex? This question has been the focus of many researchers interested in increasing young girls' active participation in physical education. While decreased activity for all youth is a concern in Canada due to the increasing incidence of childhood obesity, adolescent girls in particular are the least active demographic (Naik 2010). With only 5 percent of girls meeting Health Canada's recommendations for daily physical activity, concerns about how to improve girls' engagement with movement as a regular activity have risen (Naik 2010). Some research has pointed to girls' lowered participation in physical education as the result of the competition-based teaching tactics of gym teachers (Couturier, Chepko, and Coughlin 2007; Johnson 2003; Kientzler 1999). Other studies have found that girls' inactivity is a response to the heavy influence of sports in the current curriculum, which do not interest them (Bathes and Battista 1985; Downey 1997; Lenskyj 1994; Naik 2010). One theme permeates the literature on how to enhance girls' participation in class: the negative social influence of male students in the physical education classroom.

In this section, I discuss how the coeducational classroom compares to the single-sex setting. Specifically, I draw from the work of scholars focused on how coeducational physical education classrooms affect girls' willingness to participate. Trends within the physical education classroom setting are particularly relevant due to the active component of my programming. Combining excerpts from the current curriculum with research conducted on girls' movement preferences (Daalen 2005; Ennis 1999; Naik 2010), I begin with an analysis of the structure of the current physical education curriculum itself, while demonstrating the merits of girl-centered physical education. I illustrate how the current physical education curriculum

favours male students' preferences for movement and the overall effect of having males present during physical activity on the level of adolescent female participation.

In 2005, the Ontario Ministry of Education added a daily physical activity requirement for all schools. This initiative made classroom teachers responsible for ensuring that students receive at least twenty minutes of physical activity throughout the school day on top of their regular gym classes and recesses (Ontario Ministry of Education 2015). The physical education curriculum document was rewritten in 2010 and again in 2015 to reflect new approaches in teaching games in ways that emphasize inclusion. Accompanying the new document was the Ontario Physical Health and Education Association's (2010) document, which included lesson plans, exercises, games, and guidelines for teachers to use in delivering the new play-based physical education curriculum for grades K–12. In emphasizing play-based learning, educators moved away from traditional models of education that emphasized competition.

Competitive teaching tactics negatively influence girls' motivation in physical education. Ennis (1999) examines how the sport-based coeducational classroom affects adolescent girls' participation. She argues, "no curriculum in physical education has been as effective in constraining opportunities and alienating girls as that found in coeducational, multi-activity sport classes" (32). The type of class that Ennis (1999) speaks to here is the traditional physical education class, where the rules and skills for a particular sport are taught and then practiced multiple times in teams. Ennis (1999) reports that such an approach was used for decades in curricula across the country, and that in some cases, it was effective. However, overall, "the curricular structures utilized by the model require teachers in coeducational classes to intercede continuously, advocate for low-skilled players, and overtly control the level of competition and the tenor of social relationships" (32). Ennis notes this competitive nature as the primary reason

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girls shy away from partaking in physical activity around male peers. While girls are interested in being physically active, they do not feel safe to do so around boys because of how aggressive boys are during play.

Daalen (2005) echoes Ennis' findings in her research on physical education in schools. Daalen (2005) conducted research from the viewpoint of a school nurse who has delivered the health component of many physical education programs. Daalen (2005) and other researchers (e.g., Biscomb et al. 2000) report a noticeable decline in female students' enrollment in physical education classes beyond the compulsory credits. In speaking with some of her female participants about why they had decided to stop taking part in physical education, Daalen (2005) notes that the classes were "a source of constant shaming regarding their athletic ability and eventually themselves" (47). The negativity they felt resulted from "forced competition, degrading evaluation, and sexuality- and size-related harassment by both peers and teachers" (47), which were prevalent in the pedagogical approach and social environment of these classes. Daalen (2005) ultimately highlights the need to reorganize how we present physical activity to students in schools. Using activities that encourage competition and narrowly define success as winning discourages girls from participating. If games do not serve girls' interests, then what does? Furthermore, how and in what ways can we meet their needs to get them moving and enjoying movement?

Naik (2010) provides further insight into what might entice girls to participate in physical education. Naik identifies the organization of the gym space as a primary influence on girls' willingness to engage with their physical education classes. The Ontario Ministry of Education allows schools to choose whether physical education will be a coeducational or same gender class, while stating that coeducational classes provide favourable circumstances for students as

they represent "real world social interactions" (Naik 2010, 5). However, when it comes to girls

engaging with the programming offered, Naik (2010) argues, "girls within coed classes would

still rather not play. This leads me to believe that coeducational classes have become more

idealistic than realistic and alternate programming needs to be investigated" (5). Naik identifies

fear of peer scrutiny as the main detractor for female students' participation. This argument is

further supported in the work of Hays (1999). Hays' "somatopsychic" approach aims to

understand the physical and emotional link between an individual's performance and overall

engagement with exercise, taking into account how individuals' perceptions of physical

performance affect thoughts, feelings, and the building of esteem/positive body image.

According to Hays (1999), the quality of these reflections depend upon the movers' perceptions

of their aptitude as well as what Hays refers to as the correct "person-to-exercise match" (xiii).

Hays explains that when a person finds a form of physical activity they enjoy they are more

likely to engage in it continually. The more a person practices a certain type of exercise, the

better he/she will physically be able to perform in it. As a result, personal esteem is boosted as

the individual begins to notice his/her enhanced skill and therefore feels better about themselves

and their performance. The collection of scholars I have drawn from here clearly demonstrate

that the current competitive, sport-based physical education curriculum does not match

adolescent girls' preferences for exercise. If we know girls prefer more social and expressive

forms of activity over competitive sports, the key to motivating their participation in gym class is

to appeal to their needs as movers. Dance is a viable option for girls as it is both creative and

social in nature. Naik (2010) states that using expressive activities like dance in an all-girls

setting encourage physical engagement among females. In keeping with Naik, Downey (1997)

similarly states that "as students develop some competence in dance, their self-confidence grows

and with it their enjoyment of dance" (12). Naik (2010) concludes that a single-sex classroom is more effective in engaging girls, as the girls-only setting eliminates male bullying, enhancing socializing and fun.

I have noted similarities between the findings of these scholars and my research setting. For the girls and boys in my classroom, the cultural gendering of dance as feminine worked to the girls' advantage, encouraging their full participation. I see my participants' responses in the coeducational dance classroom as related to Gould's (2009) understanding of "confidences." Gould (2009) explains that confidence can be either "dispositional" (relating to an individual's general concept of their athletic ability) or "state" (situational and based on experience performing in a particular activity/environment; 57). For the girls in this session of Work It Out, the gendering of dance as a female-dominated activity boosted their state confidence. During one of the interviews, I asked the girls what they thought about dance as a physical activity at school. The girls responded with ideas such as:

> *Dance isn't usually a big thing we do in class at school. Like, for studying it. I mean in gym we really play different sports only. So dance is way different cause it's more creative and, like, it's not a game. You can't really win a dance.* (Lisa 2016)

> *We have school dances sometimes like for Halloween and stuff. It's just a social dance though and usually it's only the girls dancing and the boys stand off to the side or run around. Boys don't really dance like girls do, Miss. They just kinda goof off.* (Jennifer 2016)

> *I'm not really a sporty girl, Miss. I mean, I like to play some games but mostly I'd rather not. Mainly cause I am not as good at sports so if I mess up it costs my team. When other people are good they get angry at you if you loose a point for them. So doing dancing where there aren't any points is a good change I think.* (Tracy 2016)

If dance is supposedly female, and sports male, then in my classroom the girls who were uncomfortable playing games alongside the boys felt more empowered. This heightened feeling of mastery led to more substantial involvement in the dance programming physically, though it

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did not necessarily have the same effect socially. When asked about how they felt sharing ideas

before dancing in our class, the girls reported feeling uncomfortable:

> *I like the dancing part, Miss, cause I socialize with the girls but, like, talking about feelings around boys is not so great. I mean you see them right? They don't even listen really.* (Kate 2016)

> *I'd rather just talk with my girl group members. Plus, I like talking to you Miss like this one-on-one. I just think other girls get my ideas and boys just tend to make fun.* (Martina 2016)

These responses coincide with the research on physical activity in coeducational settings. Girls

prefer to interact with each other through social rather than competitive modes of activity.

Moreover, their fear of scrutiny from male peers inhibits their complete participation. My

research here further shows how the coeducational setting heightens gender stereotypes. For the

girls who participated in this session of Work It Out, their subscription to the idea that dance is

for girls encouraged them to engage with my programming physically. Is it a positive thing for

girls to tie themselves so tightly to gendered constructions of identity? Is such an attitude

empowering for them as girls?

Pedagogical Considerations: Accommodations and Modifications

In this section, I describe the pedagogical accommodations and modifications I made to

my lessons to deal with the coeducational setting. As the first session of Work It Out, the

pedagogical concerns that surfaced pertained to the organization of lessons and data collection

tools. I thus explain here the choices I made in the delivery of this program in relation to the

most pressing concerns I faced at this site, which were: (a) how to encourage girls' full

participation alongside male peers, and (b) how to make the girls feel safe to express their ideas

and participate (i.e., increase their sense of belonging). I begin by explaining general pedagogical

decisions I made in leading this session (i.e., the organization of choreography and discussion

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groups). I then break down each section of the lesson (discussion, group movement, and choreography), explaining all modifications in relation to examples of the girls' responses. Overall, my choices aimed to increase the girls and boys' sense of belonging in the classroom.

One of the first modifications I made to Work It Out during the program was to use specified student groupings throughout the class. During our first four classes, students could sit with whomever they wished during the discussion portion of the lesson. This resulted in boys and girls sitting together in random order. Over the course of my first few lessons, I paid close attention to how much the girls participated in the discussion, their behaviour while filling out surveys, and their level of engagement while dancing. In reviewing my field notes following these initial classes, a pattern emerged. Although the girls were extremely active during the dancing portion of the class, they were less vocal during discussions and largely distracted by the boys while filling out their surveys. I asked the girls about this during one-on-one interviews:

> *The boys are just loud, Miss. They just scribble their words down and then they sit there and talk to each other about other things. It annoys me.* (Elanor 2016)

> *It's not that I am shy or anything. But I am more comfortable with my friends so I talk to them about my words when we are making up dances but not to the boys. They just make fun of us.* (Elizabeth 2016)

Taking these responses into account, I asked that everyone sit with their choreography groups during discussion. I also allowed students to select their own choreography groups, which resulted in same-sex groups only. Allowing students to self-segregate would normally be considered pedagogically unsound. This is because structurally, in a coeducational setting the goal is to integrate boys and girls in classroom activities. Given that the goal in any classroom is to encourage all students to interact with each other, my choice to let students remain in same-sex groupings was unorthodox. However, in the context of this session of Work It Out, this

approach served a purpose—to encourage a sense of belonging. It further supported the student-led approach of the program, and helped the girls to feel more comfortable discussing female-specific body image issues openly.

I designed Work It Out as a student-led program. This meant that I functioned as a guide for students to reference, but did not make decisions for them. In order to differentiate our interactions from the usual teacher-student association, I allowed students to form their own groups. If students had chosen to have a mixed-gender organization, I also would have allowed it, however that did not happen. Their choice to segregate by sex fuelled my observation of how uncomfortable discussions about the body are in a coeducational setting for adolescents. Moreover, it supports the findings of the literature (Daalen 2005; Ennis 1999; Naik 2010) on how apprehensive girls are to engage in physical activity with male teammates. All students knew that their choreography would be based on their ideas from the Body Brainstorm worksheets and journaling about body image. This required connecting with group members about their personal ideas and discussing them. I interpret these students' choices as directly related to the gendered aspect of body image and a method for enhancing a sense of belonging within their choreography groups.

After a few weeks, I revisited the topic of choosing single-sex groupings in one-on-one interviews. I asked the girls why they chose the groups they did and how they thought things were going. The girls shared details on how their choreographic process had evolved since we had last spoken:

> *I think our group sort of has a system now. Like, we all fill out our surveys alone. Then, when everyone is done, we go through them and look for things that a lot of us wrote. When we find those things, we talk about them and see if there's a way to use that movement or that describing word in our dance.* (Rosemarie 2016)

I think we use our journals more now. Like, at the beginning, I kinda didn't really fill it all out cause I didn't know what to write about. Now, though, I try harder and, like, talking with the other girls helps cause, like, I can relate to their ideas. (Ginette 2016)

I just like being with my friends. A lot of times our teacher splits everyone up so you don't get to work with friends. So this is more fun cause I get to make up my dance with people I am close to. (Gayle 2016)

I interpret these responses as directly linked to my encouraging a stronger sense of belonging for participating girls. While working in all-female choreography groups proved more effective for helping the girls to link their ideas about body image to choreography, the general context of the classroom still proved difficult for some students to overcome. This was particularly evident in the ways that the girls described the qualities of their movements while dancing. When asked to ascribe an adverb to their choreography, the girls responded with "girlie" (48 percent), "sassy" (23 percent), "graceful" (19 percent), and "cute" (10 percent). These descriptors are highly influenced by normative gender roles. When asked why they chose these descriptors, the girls gave answers such as:

We are all girls and we're strong, so we're sassy. (Erica 2016)

Since it's a girls' group we can be more girlie in the moves we do. So, like, shake our hips and stuff cause we're different than the boys and they wouldn't want to do that. (Chrissy 2016)

Our song is by Megan Trainor and she sings cute songs. She dresses really girlie in bright colours and stuff too, so we kinda wanted the dance to look like something she would do in a video. You know, so they go together. (Kim 2016)

These responses demonstrate how linked idealized femininity, dance, and gender roles were for these girls. Through their dances, the girls chose to perform in ways that satisfied gender norms. Butler's (1990) gender performativity is exemplified in this scenario, as the girls used the choreography of their dances to embody the behaviours they understood as appropriate for females. In relation to body image, these responses point to the major challenge that the

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coeducational classroom setting poses for this type of programming. In an all-girls setting, the discussion aspect of the body image programming is more effective (i.e., they did not share ideas at their tables with male peers around). In contrast, when putting together choreography that they knew would be viewed by male students, the girls tailored it towards satisfying feminine ideals. This led me to question if the girls' openness within their group discussion would continue in their choreography if they knew only other females would view their final products. I tested this idea in the private all-girls school setting and discuss how the single sex classroom influenced girls' participants in the next chapter.

Another factor I considered during the discussion portion was students' language needs, as some students were English language learners. Two students had newly immigrated to Canada and struggled to fill out their workbooks alone. In response, I encouraged all students to sound out words as best they could. Since I was not teaching language arts or marking their work, I did not require correct spelling in order to be as nonintrusive in the students' thought and writing processes as possible. However, for one student who had severe difficulties communicating her thoughts on paper, an educational assistant worked as a scribe. I was against the use of a scribe; I would have preferred the student write in her own language and later have it translated. However, the school refused this option as it felt decreasing her efforts in English within the school setting would set her back. As a guest in the school, I conceded to the use of the scribe.

For the second part of my lesson, group movement, I made accommodations in response to the lesson space. Although School A was sizable, it only had one gymnasium, which was used after school for sports teams. As a result, we used the library. The school administration's choice to place a dance program in the library rather than find a time when the gymnasium was free speaks to their views on the value of dance practice in education. Specifically, the decision to

provide the proper space to sport teams instead of Work It Out aligns with the teachers' initial

reaction towards my programming (i.e. they were relieved to not be teaching dance and instead

focused on preparing for lessons in other subject areas). I interpret this decision as tied to the

ministry's regard of fine arts as secondary in importance to other subject areas. Although

bringing my body image programming was attractive to the school it is the sport teams that bring

the school notoriety when competing in district wide tournaments. While the library was large, it

was not so spacious as to enable students' complete freedom of movement. This meant that the

original choreography I had put together required alteration. I adopted more stationary motions

and upper body movement using levels, so that full body integration did not require as much

lateral space. The altered choreography revealed additional ways that gender roles affected the

students' involvement. Making the movements more stationary led me to incorporate more arm

movements. The use of both lower and upper body made the dances more complicated for those

students who struggled with full body coordination. While many of the girls were extremely

comfortable with this choreography, the boys were not. The girls took two weeks on average to

integrate arm movements with marching feet, while many of the male students continued to

struggle throughout all twelve weeks of the program. The girls commented on their ability

frequently during our one-on-one interviews:

> *Miss, that new dance you did today with the marching is really challenging. At first I didn't think I'd get it, but by the end of the song I picked up on the pattern. I noticed though that none of the boys were doing it right.* (Tori 2016)

> *The boys are SO uncoordinated at dancing, Miss! I can't believe it! They can dribble basketballs and run but they can't dance?* (Alison 2016)

> *I think that the girls in class are better at dancing than the boys are, but when we're in gym class a lot of the boys do better with sports. I'm not a sporty girl Miss, but I really like to dance so it's kinda nice to be able to be good at something with moving. I even showed one of the boys how to do one of the arm things today. It was cool.* (Anne 2016)

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These reactions illustrate enhanced body functionality and the embodiment of gender roles. The girls' understanding of dance as a female physical activity was fuelled by the activities in the coeducational classroom. This reaction was positive in the sense that it sparked girls' continued participation in the classroom, though it solidified gender roles for them. I further discuss this reaction later in this chapter in relation to the concept of body functionality.

In regards to data collection, it was challenging to film the lessons unobtrusively. Due to the small space, the students immediately detected my video camera on the library shelf. The students would wave, make faces, or strategically place themselves to either avoid or be in the center of my camera's lens. Overall, the camera was disruptive in the classroom, a problem I needed to fix. To solve this issue, I turned to the Photobooth application on my computer. This application records videos onto a computer but does not need to be open on the screen to work. By placing my laptop at the front of the classroom, beginning to record prior to students entering the room, and minimizing the application's window, the students could not detect where my camera was. As I also used my laptop as a source for music, it further helped to mask my choice of recording device. All students, parents, and teachers knew our sessions were being recorded, so this practice was within the bounds of the ethics agreement. I maintained this method of recording for all sessions that followed.

Research in Action: Program Implementation and Results

In the following sections, I discuss the reactions of the girls at School A to this session of Work It Out. I focus on how the girls' work demonstrated the fulfillment of body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals, as well as the impact of the coeducational setting and gender roles. Throughout my analysis, I highlight both the positive and negative feedback I received and

explain how this information informed my understanding of how to alter Work It Out

pedagogically for future field sites. The main points of emphasis here are recognizing: (a) that

creative dance for girls is effective in fostering physical engagement, and (b) that the

coeducational setting significantly affected the girls' sense of belonging in this session.

Body Functionality

> *Girls are just good at dancing. We can learn moves faster and we make them up better. I mean, when boys are practicing their sports me and my friends are just dancing to music. Girls are just better at this Miss.* (Nikki 2016)

Body functionality is directly tied to the recognition of ability. As a concept, the body-

positive aspect of a person focusing on body functionality is that the aesthetics of the body are

ignored. The girls at School A did exceptionally well adopting a mentality that appreciated their

physical ability over aesthetics. The girls' enhanced body functionality resulted from two

characteristics of this setting: (a) the nontechnical focus of the program and extracurricular

setting, which helped the students to relax in the lessons without fear of graded assessment; and

(b) the presence of the boys, which drew attention to gender roles. All girls felt that they could

share something with their classmates during choreography. For instance, the girls drew from

social dances they knew, movements from favourite music videos, and sport techniques such as

taekwondo. Given how negatively researchers have spoken about girls' participation in physical

activity in coeducational settings (Daalen 2005; Ennis 1999; Naik 2010), the enhancement of

body functionality here may seem out of place. I interpret the girls' enhanced body functionality

as an example of gender performativity (Butler 1990). Specifically, they understood being

female as directly related to an innate and natural ability in dance practice. This understanding

encouraged them to participate in Work It Out fully as they felt confident in the specific activity

of dancing as females.

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Below, I discuss body functionality at School A through the experiences of two students, Charlotte and Beth. Charlotte's story provides an example of how the nontechnical approach to dance in Work It Out fostered a more inclusive classroom. Specifically, Work It Out's use of creative movement turned choreography into a task where many abilities could be appreciated and added into final performances. Beth's behaviour speaks to the sex-typing of dance practice so prevalent in this setting. She read dance as a girls' activity where she could naturally excel above the boys.

Charlotte, Age 12– Finding Functionality

Charlotte was a grade 6 student at School A. She had no previous dance training but was eager to take part in our sessions. While Charlotte was excited to be led through dances with classmates, she was not comfortable with the prospect of creating her own movements in choreography. For Charlotte, she had full confidence in her ability to follow physical instructions given to her by a teacher (i.e., by me). However, initially, her body functionality wavered in regards to her perceived prowess in generating her own movement. In reviewing Charlotte's journals and interviews, the main roadblock she encountered during Work It Out was being fearful of experimenting with movement. She worried what response she would get when she ventured into her own ideas about movement rather than following along with her peers. Charlotte's struggle with her skills in choreography were inflated by her lack of any formal dance training, as she felt such training would have prepared her better for creative work and made her a more valuable contributor to her group. Thus, at the start of the session, Charlotte's low state confidence (Gould 2009) in the dance classroom setting negatively affected her body functionality.

In order to boost Charlotte's body functionality, she needed to reframe her understanding

of "choreography" and "dance." The Work It Out program broadly defines dance as movement.

There is no specified technique exhibited and, therefore, no identifiable expectations for

movement choices in choreography. Charlotte's mechanism for recognizing her own value as a

contributor to choreography came from acknowledging her body functionality in taekwondo, an

extracurricular activity she was very involved in and knew well. During one of our interviews

Charlotte explained:

> *Miss, I really never thought that doing my taekwondo movements would make sense for a dance. I mean, taekwondo is its own thing and we don't do it to music. But when I tried it to the song we picked, the punches I taught were really good with the beat of the music. My group really liked it too. Maybe I'm a better dancer than I thought.* (Charlotte 2016)

I interpret Charlotte's response as demonstrating how effective a focus on body functionality is

in improving girls' body image and motivation to participate. For Charlotte, using her

background in taekwondo, which she was confident in, helped her to contribute to her group's

choreography. Her teammates being impressed with her ability in taekwondo further made

Charlotte feel more confident in her ability to dance and move.

Beth, Age 11– Girls Rule and Boys Drool

Beth was a grade 5 student at School A. Her experience with dance stemmed largely from

social gatherings with family and friends. For Beth, being involved in a physical activity at

school was a new prospect. She explained:

> *I never sign up for anything, Miss. All this school has are sports and I'm not good at any sport—like, I'm girl, I don't do that.* (Beth 2016).

Given Beth's history as an unwilling participant in school programs, I wondered what inspired

her to take part in Work It Out. Beth explained that to her,

> *Sports are anything to do with throwing a ball or playing a game. If there is a winner and a loser it's a sport and I am not interested in that. But dancing that's something I know*

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how to do and it's just socializing. I can keep beat to music, I am creative and like music. I dance all the time with my friends. (Beth 2016)

Beth was familiar with social dancing, and the noncompetitive nature of the program helped her to enter our classroom with a sense of ability.

Another interesting idea related to body functionality came from Beth's desire to "show what I can do" (Beth 2016). In one of the journals, I prompted the girls to reflect on what they thought about dance as an activity. Beth once again returned to her dislike of sports and confidence in dance, but this time with an emphasis on opportunity:

> *At school, we do sports for gym class. We never just do fitness or stretching and it's always a game. The boys in class know I am not into sports so sometimes they get upset when the teacher puts me on their team and it makes me feel bad. But this time, I am better than the boys. Girls could make fun of the boys because we just do dancing way better than they do. So this is my chance to show what I can do because I don't get to show that off very much. Girls rule and boys drool!* (Beth 2016)

Beth's journal entry speaks directly to how influential body functionality is for improving self-image for girls. I read Beth's understanding as a reaction to both the coeducational setting of her school and her understanding of her ability in dance as tied to her gender. First, her acknowledgement that in other physical education classes she felt inadequate due to her male peers is important. In the traditional gym class, Beth's male peers severely harmed her confidence, resulting in her avoidance of all sporting events at school. However, in the Work It Out program, Beth knew she would be dancing and therefore felt very confident in her ability. Thus, in the Work It Out classroom, Beth attained a high level of body functionality because of its use of dance and her understanding that girls are more naturally talented at dancing than boys.

Beth's reaction is both encouraging and troubling to me. From a positive point of view, Beth's reaction gave her a newfound sense of ability in a physical education setting. For a girl who admitted that she normally does not feel comfortable being active around male peers to be

so physically confident is an improvement. However, the basis for her enhanced body functionality was rooted in culturally-constructed notions of femininity. Butler (2004) states that "the social norms that constitute our existence carry desires that do not originate with our individual personhood. This matter is made more complex by the fact that the viability of our individual personhood is fundamentally dependent on these social norms" (2). I relate Butler's (2004) ideas to Beth in that dance became a marker of femininity in this setting. Moreover, for Beth, her ability to dance was fuelled by her desire to fulfill a version of femininity that may or may not have been of her own making. Beth could have naturally been a talented mover, but she attributed her talent to her gender. If she had told me about past experiences she had dancing or how confident she was in her physical ability, I would not question her ideas. However, Beth explicitly compared girls to boys in her comments. In seeing this reaction, I again question the efficacy of the coeducational classroom for Work It Out.

Belonging: Finding Common Ground

> *I like to work with other girls because they are the same as me. We are all girls, so we just get each other, you know?* (Olga 2016)

Belonging is not only about being surrounded by other girls. At the center of belonging is the sharing of beliefs, aspirations, and concerns. As a concept, I define belonging as tied to the cultivating of a classroom that students consider to be a safe space. Specifically, in the Work It Out program, my aim was to help my participants to find multiple points of commonality with each other. This could be because of having similar interests in physical activity, sharing some of the same ideas about the body on their surveys, or through physically moving together during our warm ups. The recognition of shared ideas and experiences helps students to feel that they will be supported when sharing such personal ideas as those tied to body image. When students feel

that they belong in the classroom, they are more willing to share with each other openly. The

goal of Work It Out was to help students to feel both physically and emotionally safe within the

context of the classroom.

At School A, the coeducational setting of the classes made establishing a sense of

belonging difficult. The presence of male students significantly affected the emotional aspect of

this concept. As previously discussed, body image is different for girls and boys (Hargreaves and

Tiggemann 2004; Olivardia 2002). While both genders face the pressure to conform to an ideal

aesthetically, the specific characteristics boys and girls face are vastly different. As a result, the

behaviours embodied in order to achieve these desired physiques also differ. By providing girls

with an opportunity to discuss their ideas about body image safely and recognize their shared

struggle, belonging can be generated. However, if boys are present (as was the case at School A),

girls are more apt to censor themselves. At School A, this self-censorship was prevalent in girls'

interactions with the whole class (i.e., during class discussions). However, it was less prevalent

when working within their all-girl groups on choreography. When asked to create their own

choreography groups, all girls chose to align with only female students. The girls explained their

choices:

> *The boys won't want to dance like we would want to. They are just so disorganized and it would be a mess.* (Shannon 2016)

> *I don't like the idea of dancing with boys. They don't really dance.* (Melody, 2016)

> *Girls get girls, Miss. You know, we like the same stuff and we are more comfortable with each other. I mean all my group members are my friends. So it's more fun that way.* (Susan 2016)

I interpret the girls' responses as an attempt to find a girls-only space within the coeducational

classroom. Belonging at this research site was about feeling comfortable with peers, which was

largely governed by gender. Girls in this setting further illustrated the influence of gender on their participation through their conversations with me. In my field notes, I noted weekly the comments the girls made in interviews or informally at different times in the class about their thoughts on body image. The girls sought to find a safe space in which to share their responses that the mixed gender scenario did not provide. Their willingness to discuss their ideas demonstrates two important points about the validity of Work It Out in inspiring girls' reflexivity. First, the girls had concerns about body image and wanted to share them. Second, the girls would share their ideas openly but not with the boys present. In the following sections, I discuss belonging through two students' stories, Justine and Daniela. Justine's unwillingness to share her ideas with anyone other than me reveals how essential developing a safe space is for this programming. Daniela's story reveals a secondary consideration about belonging, the impact of T1D, which ultimately led to the formation of the third case study.

Justine, Age 11– Preferring Privacy

Justine was a grade 5 student at School A. She had attended this school since kindergarten and was very proud of being a "lifer" of her school's community. Although Justine was very familiar with her classmates, she seldom spoke up in class. Regardless of whether she was part of a group discussion or working with her girls-only choreography group, she remained quiet. In contrast, when we had one-on-one interviews, Justine would not stop chatting. She would take me through her workbook, sharing her ideas and Body Brainstorm worksheet responses openly. During these sessions, she frequently told me:

> *I am showing you all of this, Miss, because I know you won't go and tell all the boys in class. I mean it's for your school stuff but you aren't going to use my name so that's okay. I care more about my classmates.* (Justine 2016)

During our third interview, I asked Justine why I was the only person with whom she would

share her ideas. She responded:

> *Well Miss, first, you are a girl so you get the ideas I tell you. I would never tell a boy teacher this stuff. Second, when it's just you and me, I know none of the boys are listening. I mean the other girls are cool and I would tell them this stuff but if I say something out loud and one of the boys hear it I might get embarrassed. So I save it for you.* (Justine 2016)

In Justine's case, the presence of the boys impeded her willingness to share with other girls.

Justine was so concerned about sharing her "girl-specific ideas" in class that she refused to do so

with anyone other than me. Her admission that she would share with her female group members

but was afraid of boys overhearing her demonstrates just how ineffective the coeducational

classroom is when dealing with body image issues. If students do not feel safe to express their

ideas to each other, then belonging is difficult to generate. This is because belonging is both

emotional and circumstantial. If students feel they cannot relate to the other students in the room,

then they will not feel that they belong. Their feelings could also be due to them being physically

or socially different.

Daniela, Age 11 – Sweet Ties

Daniela was a grade 5 student at School A. Like me, she has T1D and instantly gravitated

to me when she learned of our shared experience with this chronic disease. Our discovery of one

another as diabetics was accidental, as the teachers at the school did not inform me about her

condition, and I had not disclosed my condition either. While teaching the students one day, my

insulin pump alarm began to sound. Hearing the alarm, the students looked at each other

confused, thinking that someone had snuck a video game or phone into class with them. I

explained that I was a T1 diabetic and my insulin pump was making the noise. The rest of that

class went on as usual, but at the end of that day Daniela told me she also had T1D. I wrote about this interaction in my field notes:

> *I was surprised to learn today that I have a fellow T1D in class with me. Daniela has been a relatively quiet girl so far but she showed no fear, maybe even excitement in telling me about her T1D today. She said she knew what the beeping was because she also wears an OmniPod [the brand of insulin pump]. I told her we will have to stick together being the "sweet girls" in the class and if she ever needs help with blood sugar during our classes she should let me know. I could tell she was content in having someone at school who understands her disease. I am interested to see how this changes our interactions going forward.* (2016)

My work with Daniela and our connection through diabetes helped to increase her comfort level in class. Her teachers were relieved that Daniela was so willing to share her diabetes with me, as she tends to get very upset if it is discussed. She and I established a safety system for letting each other know how our blood sugars were doing during our classes (i.e., "thumbs up" = doing well, "thumbs down" = need help, and "thumbs sideways" = not sure yet). This offered a way to check in and make sure Daniela was okay, and helped to establish our relationship. She called it our "top secret blood sugar language."

It was after our last class that I began to think about how important this interaction with Daniela could be to my research. Following that final class, Daniela and I had a quick conversation. She was very upset that our classes were over, not because of the dancing but because now she was going to be the only diabetic at school again. Daniela's last entry into her journal discussed how our time together influenced her relationship to her body:

> *I am always the diabetic girl in class and I hate that. It's not fun feeling like I have to hide it all the time because it's hard to control blood sugar but I don't want to be different. Having Miss Deanna in class made me not the only one. I knew she wouldn't freak out if I had a low because she knows how to deal with it. Talking to her about my diabetes made me feel not so bad about it. I learned some cool things to help me take care of it and I have been getting good numbers so far. I am going to miss having her here because I liked not being the only diabetic girl for a while. I hope I get to see her again. And I like her cool pump stickers! I got some too!* (December 2016)

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For Daniela, having T1D usually inhibits her sense of belonging with peers. However, knowing and talking to me as another T1 girl made her feel comfortable with her body and within the classroom. This interaction with Daniela was a turning point in my research and led me to a new understanding of my project and motivations as a researcher. While I had always been interested in girlhood, dance, and education, the addition of body image to my research was new. Thinking back, body image came into my work at the beginning of my doctoral studies and five months after my diagnosis with T1D. It is no coincidence that my research shifted towards body image at a time when I was struggling to reconcile my own relationship with my body. In my final field notes from School A, I wrote, "diabetes and body image, building belonging through shared struggle" (2016). My interaction with Daniela and my realization about my interests in body image fuelled the inspiration for the final case study of my dissertation, which focuses on T1D and body image.

Body-Based Ideals: Let's Talk

> *It's kinda cool to know that other girls feel the same pressures as I do. You know, to be girlie and stuff.* (Nancy 2016)

The girls' responses to the Body Brainstorm worksheets, discussions about popular culture, and choreographic choices illustrated the influence of body-based ideals in School A. While the girls spoke about their collective concerns regarding body image when with other female students, they remained quiet during discussions when the boys were present. Through their dances, groups of girls chose songs and sentiments that reflected their emotional battles with body image. However, when showing their work to the class, they did not embody these challenging emotions through their dancing. Instead, they chose to smile sweetly and focused more on getting their steps right. Overall, this juxtaposition in privately expressed ideas and

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public performance illustrates how girls alter their behaviour when males are present. Although most girls openly spoke about their personal concerns with body image with each other, they did not open that discussion up to their male peers. In this section, I discuss how and why the girls at School A struggled to express their concerns about body-based ideals fully. At the center of this discussion is the acknowledgement that at School A, because body functionality was compromised by gender roles and belonging was not properly established, body image was also negatively affected. I use the example of Quinn to demonstrate how Work It Out partially addressed body image at School A. Specifically, Quinn's juxtaposed ideas about body-based ideals and "upbeat, girlie" dance performance reveal the extent to which the coeducational setting inhibited the success of Work It Out.

Quinn, Age 12– Hiding Behind Performance

Quinn was a grade 6 student at School A. Her group, "The Aqua Unicorns," chose to perform to the recently released song "Cold Water" by Major Lazer and Justin Bieber (2016). The group chose the song because the girls were all fans of Justin Bieber, and felt that the lyrics reflected some of their feelings about body-based ideals. Specifically, they choreographed to the bridge and chorus of the song, which says:

> And if you feel you're sinking, I will jump right over
> Into cold, cold water for you
> And although time may take us into different places
> I will still be patient with you
> And I hope you know
> I won't let go
> I'll be your lifeline tonight (Major Lazer, 2016)

During one of our interviews, I asked Quinn why her group specifically chose these lyrics to use.

Quinn explained:

Well, first we all love Justin Bieber. Second, I think because it sort of makes me think of how sometimes I feel sad with all the pressure to do things, or look a certain way. But then my friends get it cause they feel it too. (Quinn 2016).

From Quinn's response, I gathered that the "pressure" she felt was social. Connecting these ideas to the lyrics of the song, she felt they caused her to "sink" at times but wanted and needed the support of friends who would not "let go" regardless of how difficult things get.

In reviewing the Aqua Unicorns' performance, there was no sense of struggle. As they moved, the girls smiled widely, shook their hips, and only reflected the lyrics by holding hands and not letting go at the end. I found this physical performance reflective of idealized feminine personas. Although the girls socially recognized the difficulties they faced at times, their performance hid their struggle behind a smile. Quinn addressed this in a final interview, stating:

Miss, I think we did really good in our dance. You know everyone smiled and made the moves really big and I think we looked great. (Quinn 2016)

Here, Quinn was more concerned about how her peers perceived her than about her own well-being. In performance, Quinn and her group members tossed aside their message about struggling to attain body-based ideals in favour of "looking great."

In the case of Quinn and the Aqua Unicorns, Work It Out served a specific purpose—bringing the girls' ideas together. It was evident that the social context of the session including male students did not inspire public displays of body image-based expression for the girls, or allow them to connect fully with each other. Although the girls shared their ideas within their small groups, the presence of the boys inhibited the girls in class from connecting with each other. As such, at School A, the concept of body ideals was partially satisfied. The presence of the male students influenced the depth of the discussions about body image that the girls had in class and following the final performances. In order to see how effective this programming could

be in satisfying this concept, I needed to make some changes. First, the mixed gender classroom did not work for establishing girls' comfort in sharing their ideas. Additionally, the use of various songs by the different groups made it difficult for students to find commonalities in their use of dance. Moving to the all-girl setting at the next school, I chose to have all groups choreograph to the same song to inspire more interaction between the groups of girls.

Concluding Thoughts

The Work It Out program strives to provide a platform for girls' voices to be heard (Currie, Kelly, & Pomerantz 2009; Pipher 1994). This was accomplished by allowing them multiple methods for communicating (i.e., writing, speaking, and moving). In this setting, however, the girls' voices were somewhat silenced due their inability to generate an adequate sense of belonging. The lead inhibitor to aiding the girls in feeling safe in the classroom at School A was the presence of male students. However, this coeducational school is representative of the most common setting for girls and boys recreational programming. This means that if Work It Out is going to make a positive impact on the issue of poor body image I need to find ways heighten students' sense of belonging with both boys and girls present.

If I was to run this coeducational session again there are some changes I would make in how I approached my role in the classroom. Specifically, with this group I was more passive than proactive in regards to choice making. For example, I assumed that in order to increase students' agency in choreography they needed to be in charge of all decisions. I allowed students to choose their own groups, the music they danced to, and the movements they performed. The result of that choice was the segregation of males from females in the room and relatedly the heightening of gender performativity in their choreography. Moreover, the prospect of having to make their own decisions made some students very apprehensive about how their peers or I would interpret

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their performance. As a result, most groups resorted to familiar and comfortable tropes of femininity or masculinity. Returning to the idea of enabling constraints (Manning and Massumi 2014) I believe that placing some limitations on students' choice making would have helped to increase their sense of belonging in the coeducational classroom. There are two specific innovations in regards to choice making I would try if I were to run this program again in the coeducational setting: (a) mixing boys and girls in choreography groups; and (b) choosing music for students' choreography that is unfamiliar to them. When given the opportunity to select their own groups the students at School A immediately gravitated towards the people and songs that were most familiar (e.g. other girls or boys and popular music). Unfortunately, this choice heightened their awareness of gender and clouded them from fully exploring their artistic expression. If the girls and boys were placed in a scenario where they were asked to create a dance in pre-selected groupings and music the goal of their dance making would be a more collective task. Moreover, this choice might inspire girls and boys to have deeper conversations about exactly what they want to express about body image. The main takeaway from my work in this coeducational setting was recognizing that a student-centered program still needs a teacher's direction. By taking away some of the students' choices I am actually helping them to focus on the main issue at hand – body image and exploring their relationship to the body.

Coming out of this session, I gained a new understanding of my concepts and their relationship to gender. Body functionality was heightened for the girls not only because of the nontechnical focus of the program, but also because of gender roles. The girls' understanding of and willingness to participate in dance activities was fuelled by a naturalizing of dance as a feminine activity. I questioned whether the girls would have had the same feelings if the boys had not been present. Gender affected belonging in that girls did not feel safe to discuss their

personal relationships to body image issues with the boys there to overhear them. As a result, less open discussion occurred within the class, weakening the bond between the girls. Finally, body-based ideals were not completely discussed with these girls because they felt inhibited by the presence of the boys. Without a solid sense of belonging in the classroom, the girls could not completely discuss their personal stresses with body image issues. While I did not research the boys' feelings about body image in this project, I imagine that their ideas were also restricted due to the girls' attendance during class time. Recognizing these limitations supported the need to address body image in a single-sex situation. In the next case study, I discuss how the Work It Out program was received at an all-girls private school.

Chapter 5: Case Study 2– Comparison, Competition, and Currency

Miss, is this move good? I mean, am I doing this turn right? I can't see because there aren't any mirrors and I want to be sure I look good doing it. (Luna 2017)

All those girls are the dancer girls. I mean they take dance outside school. I don't do that so I could not be part of their group. I just don't know how to move that way. (Jen 2017)

Aiding students in dealing with the pressure to achieve is a prevalent concern in schools today. The predominance of standardized testing and emphasis on product over process in traditional modes of education have been specifically linked to severe stress among elementary school-age students (Cimpian et al. 2007; Gunderson 2013; Hamachek 1978; Mueller and Dweck 1998; Stoeber and Rambow 2007). Moreover, the emphasis on receiving outside approval through grades has created a generation of students who are perfectionists (Stoeber and Rambow 2007), afraid of making mistakes (Moser et al. 2011; Mueller and Dweck 1998; Nussbaum and Dweck 2008), and competitive with peers (Huggins et al. 2008). Although striving to learn more and do better can yield academic successes, this obsessive pursuit of perfect performance impacts students' emotional well-being.

Concerns about perfectionist attitudes in academics also apply to the dance classroom. In dance, achieving "perfection" is tied to the evaluation of the body both in its demonstration of ability and in its alignment with aesthetic goals. Here, the influence of a coveted ideal body (Foster 1997) merges with a desire for approval from peers and teachers. When dance students receive praise from teachers for their movements, they feel validated as "good" dancers. However, students who also meet aesthetic criteria more frequently receive validation than those who do not. In the second session of Work It Out, the participating girls echoed this need for validation.

This session of Work It Out took place at an all-girls private school (School B). With the feedback from the first group in mind, I entered this second field site hypothesizing that having a girls-only classroom would enhance participants' sense of belonging. While I found that the girls were generally more apt to share ideas when in a single-sex classroom, I also found they were more obsessed with "doing well." Receiving positive feedback from superiors and peers served as the marker for the girls' achievement as movers. Expressions such as, "Miss, can you look at this?" "does it look good?" or "wow, she's really good at that move" were commonplace throughout the lessons. This type of evaluative language demonstrated the girls' fixation on a specific type of achievement, one centered on the degree to which their choreography corresponded with their physical ability and aesthetic appeal.

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of this case study, focusing on how the attainment of the fundamental concepts of body functionality and body-based ideals connected to beliefs regarding achievement. This is pedagogically important because girls who are unable to achieve their specific physical goals are prone to a distortion of their body image. Work It Out aimed to dispel such body dysmorphic tendencies. In using dance as a nontechnical, inclusive activity, Work It Out worked to subvert girls' attention to look or move in particular ways. The central question in this chapter is: can dance, as presented in the Work It Out program, help girls deal with perfectionist attitudes towards the body and achievement? The pedagogical intervention I made here underscores the need to encourage students to value the process of learning over the final product. Such a view on education is known as a "growth mindset" (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007; Kamins and Dweck 1999; Mueller and Dweck 1998; Nussbaum and Dweck 2008; O'Rourke et al. 2014).

A growth mindset directly opposes the pursuit of perfection. Students who approach learning with a growth mindset view intelligence as a skill to be developed over time, and understand education as a process rather than focusing on achievement linked to grades (Dweck 2007). Although they may not be knowledgeable or skilled at a particular activity in the moment, students with a growth mindset understand that with effort, they will get there one day. The result of this approach is a more meaningful engagement over time with learning tasks, as students view mistakes as stepping-stones towards achievement; they believe in the power of "yet" (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007; Dweck, 1999, 2007).

I begin this chapter with a discussion of how student achievement has been theorized in schools, focusing on perfectionism and learning (Bellamy 1990; Hamachek 1978; Stoeber and Otto 2006; Stoeber and Rambow 2007; Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt 2009). I provide a basic review of how perfectionism can take positive and negative forms in the classroom. Here, the work of Hamachek (1978) on the behavioural characteristics of "neurotic perfectionists" serves as a basis for understanding the many ways students react to a fixation on achievement. These characteristics relate to the expressions of my female participants in regards to body image at this field site. I next describe the private school's social context and the modifications and accommodations I made in delivering the Work It Out program at this site. I then discuss the three fundamental concepts of my model (body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals) in relation to the girls' reactions. Overall, I demonstrate how the all-girls private school setting amplified girls' attention to achieving perfection.

I view the encouragement of a growth mindset as a method for preventing student perfectionism in the dance classroom. When working in School B, I noticed an increase in participants' competition with other groups. The main focus of their competitiveness was how

impressive their dances looked in comparison to their peers. As a result, the girls became more concerned with the type of praise they would receive for their final performances than expressing their views on body image. In this scenario, the girls objectified themselves in relation to their performance. This directly opposed the inclusive and body-positive environment I wished to create through Work It Out.

Pedagogically, the encouragement of a growth mindset helps to alleviate students' coveting of praise via graded recognition. Dweck (2014) speaks to the power of praise in affecting how students see themselves within the classroom. Dweck (2014) explains that "when we praise kids for the process they engage in for their hard work, their strategies, their focus, their perseverance, they learn [the value of] challenge seeking; they learn resilience" (3:45). Dweck further warns that more traditional models of schooling, which validate talent and intelligence through grades alone, leave students emotionally vulnerable. The private school I ran Work It Out in followed this traditional model for recognizing student achievement. Teachers and the administration frequently referenced how highly their school ranked in regards to student grade point averages. This, in turn, was boasted as the reason many parents send their children to the school. The students referred to the importance of grades as they described projects and tests they were working on in other subject areas. Discussions we had about their academics always gravitated towards a display of graded achievement, something they regarded as extremely important to being part of the private school's community.

In this setting, the girls were challenged to accept a new way of viewing success in Work It Out. The single-sex setting made the classroom much more homogenous than in the coeducational public school, but also increased the girls' desire to be noticed by teachers. The students in this setting had learned to differentiate themselves from their fellow female peers

through the acquisition of lettered grades. As a result, when faced with the task of creating a dance, the girls initially gravitated towards the pursuit of outside approval. This behaviour occurred most notably in frequent requests for me to watch their choreography and tell them what I thought of it. They needed to get my feedback as the person teaching the program in order to decide if their performance was good enough. This approval seeking also extended to the girls' group members; the girls would ask each other if a pose they had chosen was flattering or not, albeit less frequently than seeking my approval. Within the context of Work It Out, the goal was for students to engage with the choreographic process as a social endeavour, not an academic one. There was no right or wrong way to move or express; the choreographic process was valued over the product—there was no "perfect" goal to be attained. I further discuss the specific pedagogical approaches I took to aid girls to let go of their pursuit of perfection later in this chapter. The most important consideration to understand in this all-girls private school case study is how body functionality and body image correlated to students' understanding of achievement. While the girls-only setting increased the girls' sense of belonging, it also increased the competitiveness between the girls.

Setting the Scene: Private All-Girls School (School B)

Private schooling is associated with higher levels of student achievement, a lower teacher to student ratio, and increased career and social opportunities after graduation (School B 2017). Traditionally, private schools have distinct class and race associations, though many schools, through alumni-endowed scholarship programs, are actively seeking to be more inclusive. The high cost of tuition to attend private schools fuels the purchasing of equipment, maintenance of facilities, range of extracurricular activities and trips offered, and employment of athletic and academic specialists; resources that are often not available in the public school setting. As a

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result, the leading impetus for parents to send their children to private school is the hope that in doing so, they will provide their child with a superior education and greater social mobility.

The idealization of achievement is central to understanding this case study. Indeed, it is a leading sentiment expressed by the school's staff and students. On the school's website, for example, this fixation is made clear in the first tab of the site's directory, which is entitled "Excellence." On this page, the school boasts of its 100 percent graduation rate and that 100 percent of graduates go on to pursue their first choice for postsecondary education. I interpret this as demonstrative of the school's selling point to parents, expectations of students, and expectations that led to the girls' competitiveness in Work It Out. In this section, I describe the social climate and demographics of School B. I explain the negative impacts of the single-sex private school setting on participants' body functionality. I observed a clear correlation between the school's enhanced focus on academic success with interpeer competition, the effects of which have recently been linked to body dissatisfaction for girls and women, even more so than results from the influence of the media (Ferguson, Winegard, and Winegard 2011; Muñoz and Ferguson 2012). Collectively, the reactions of my participants demonstrate how and why the private all-girls school setting was successful in enhancing a sense of belonging, but was a difficult context in which to increase girls' body functionality. Specifically, the school's overt obsession with student excellence inspired a competitive mindset for the girls who participated in this session of Work It Out.

I was connected with School B through a friend of mine who is a staff member at the school. The lessons I taught at School B took place once a week for seventy-five minutes with the grades 5 and 6 girls. The two grade levels were combined in this scenario due to the small class sizes (i.e., there were sixteen students in my classes; half the size of the one class I taught at

School A). The lessons mainly took place in the school gymnasium but moved on a few occasions to the school's dance studio. School B's having a dance studio was notably different from School A. The parents of girls who take dance lessons outside of school funded the creation of the dance studio. The school's dance team, a student club that performs at school and sporting events, typically uses the dance studio space. I chose not to use the dance studio for all lessons as the mirrors could not be covered and the space was significantly smaller than the gym.

As a private all-girls school, the demographics of the student population and available facilities noticeably differed from School A. No students at the school were new immigrants to Canada or English language learners. The high cost of tuition to attend this school meant that students' families were from upper- or upper-middle-class socioeconomic backgrounds. This affected the way the girls viewed my lessons and influenced their behaviour in school. Eighty percent of the girls participating in Work It Out at this school had extensive experience with dance studio or gymnastic training. Some even left school early on a regular basis to attend private training sessions and told me about their studio training:

> *I dance four times a week, Miss. I compete too in jazz and acro[batics], so that's why I am so good at flips and stuff. I will show you later.* (Vienna 2017)

> *I'm going to be away next week, Miss, because competition is coming and I have to go to a practice for my solo at my studio early so that I am ready.* (Maria 2017)

In this way, while the girls appreciated my presence as a dance teacher, they did not view it as an educational opportunity in the same way as the girls in School A. Instead, the girls at School B saw my lessons as a chance to show off their abilities acquired during outside studio training. Moreover, the opportunity to use their skills as trained dancers to impress a guest teacher and their nondancer peers was enticing to girls who had dance training. This focus on showing off skills worried me, as it opposed the goals of the Work It Out program.

Upon entering this second session of Work It Out, I expected the girls-only classroom would result in completely positive changes. While the girls felt more comfortable sharing ideas in this setting, they were also acutely aware of each other's physical strengths and weaknesses. Once again, the ideal body (Foster 1997) affected girls' participation. However, this time, the girls created their own ideals in comparison to each other and in relation to the idea of achievement in dance. At School B, the girls on the dance team exemplified the ideal dance body. School B hosts a wide array of student teams and clubs. The dance team performs at school assemblies and some of the sport team's games. Acceptance into the team is by audition only and is reserved for intermediate and senior grade levels. The school's website advertises the dance team on their website through a promotional video. In the video, one of the team members speaks about her background as a competitive dancer. As her voiceover describes her dance training, footage of the girl performing a contemporary solo and balletic movements in her school uniform flashes on screen. Her video ends with the tagline, "School B – Be the Real You and the Best You." This video gives a sense of how dance is tied to achievement at School B. Dancing for fun or for expression is not mentioned in this girl's video. Rather, competition and a focus on mastering technique alongside academic subjects is the focus. The tagline encouraging girls to be the "best you" reinforces the idea that at this school, students must achieve.

The extreme focus on academic excellence was immediately noticeable when entering School B. The school's foyer is lined with plaques, trophies, and honour roll lists. Being the first thing visitors see when entering the school marks these awards as significant, and I noted their prominent placement in my field notes:

> *I am greeted by a collection of achievements. Some are academic, others are athletic, and a few were in regards to student leadership. For such a small foyer it sends a strong message—students who go to this school are winners. If this is any indication of how*

schooling is approached here, I think I am about to meet some very serious young girls. (2017)

The girls' focus on achievement was also evidenced in the form of awards and praise from teachers. They understood that being students at this school meant they needed to excel and impress. Given that my program was an extracurricular offering (i.e., they did not receive a mark for participating), I was initially confused by their overt need to please me. However, after reviewing the school's handbook and website, the girls' intense motivation for being assessed as "good" made sense to me. As previously stated, on its website, the school boasts a 100 percent success rate for students attending the university of their choice. The school refers to itself as a "university preparatory programme" with a "curriculum [that] is tailored for girls who are given every opportunity to develop and excel in the way they learn best in order to achieve optimal academic success" (School B, 2018). The school's stated objectives were central to the development of a fixed mindset for participants in Work It Out (Dweck 2010; Moser et al. 2011; Nussbaum and Dweck 2008). According to Dweck (2010), students who operate at school with a fixed mindset severely limit their capabilities for meaningful learning, as they view educational tasks as problems with a singular answer. They are less concerned with the process of acquiring skills and information than with getting the answer right. As a result, they require praise and recognition for their efforts from teachers and believe that such accolades only come if they avoid failure.

At School B, student achievement is ascertained through quantifiable results. Whether a grade on an assignment, the percentage of students who go to university, or winning a sporting event, girls at this school are expected by administration and their parents to excel. The problem with this approach to learning is that it cultivates an environment that promotes performance

anxiety and competition. Indeed, the girls spoke about having concerns about their performance during group interviews:

> *Miss, my parents pay a lot of money for me to go here. I know that they do. I mean, it's a private school. So I want to make their paying worth it. You know, make them proud and get good grades.* (Alice 2017)

> *I'm a dancer, Miss, so I should be really good at this program. Almost all the girls in my group dance too, but at different studios. I just want to make sure I do as good as my group members cause with all our dance training, we really should make one of the best dances you'll see in our class.* (Louise 2017)

> *I hope we're doing good, Miss. I mean, we work hard and stuff but, like, the teachers and us all want you to like us here. It's cool that you come and do this program with us. We like it.* (Lindsay 2017)

I interpret these responses as indicative of the girls' fixed mindsets. Rather than value their participation in lessons as part of a learning process, they chose to concern themselves with what grades their work would receive. The girls constantly compared themselves to others in the hopes of outdoing their peers and stressed over how their teachers and parents would view their results. The danger inherent to such thinking was in how it impacted the girls' willingness to try new things for fear of failure.

Mistakes are part of the learning process. Moser et al. (2011) examine how the brain functions when students encounter errors while problem solving math equations. They report that students' attitudes towards getting correct answers greatly affect how their brain fires. Those students who express a finite desire to get the right answer show less brain activity when faced with difficulty. However, students who express interest in playing with the numbers to find the necessary steps for solving the equation show a lot of brain processing. Moser et al. (2011) attribute this difference to students adopting a more relaxed but still motivating growth mindset. When students do not fear failure, they engage more deeply with the task. They want to find out

how to do something new rather than just receive praise for a correct answer (Moser et al. 2011). The link between Moser's work and mine at School B is in recognizing how the highly academic setting altered girls' relationship to learning. For girls in this setting, while their participation in Work It Out was extracurricular, their mindset remained focused on graded assessment. This drew their attention to the body functionality and body-based aesthetics aspects of their dancing (i.e., what the moves conveyed in terms of ability and coolness, and how they looked during performance) and away from the playful enjoyment of choreographing. This focus was problematic as the goal of Work It Out was to provide the girls with an environment free from graded scrutiny. The fixed mindset these girls developed in attending this private school also impeded their ability to be creative and free in their choreographic choices.

The most surprising aspect of this setting was how it expanded my understanding of belonging. From a social point of view, belonging in this context was much more successful than in the coeducational setting. When filling out their worksheets and journals, the girls would ask each other about what they wrote and openly share their ideas with their peers. During choreography, groups interacted with each other and with other groups, sharing their work. Overall, making the class girls only was extremely positive in regards to the sharing of ideas in all parts of our lessons. This led to more in-depth discussion about how the girls viewed their bodies both aesthetically and functionally. It also allowed the girls to find similarities and differences in the ways their body image had been shaped by the media, their physical activities, and their relationships to each other. In some ways, this yielded positive reactions:

> *I found out that another one of my group members likes Taylor Swift too, Miss. We both like her blonde hair and totally wish we were blonde too. I never would've thought she didn't like her hair because she has really nice long hair. Kinda cool that other girls think like me too, eh?* (Mary 2017)

Miss, I am so not a dancer. I play sports here but I'm not on the dance team or cheerleading or anything like that. So doing this class was a bit scary for me at first, especially that we would have to make our own stuff up. But my group doesn't have any experienced dancers in it (some of them are on my soccer team) and we were all nervous about it. We talked about it in class one day. Made me feel better than I did before cause we're all kinda figuring it out together. (Brianna 2017)

Girls benefitted from the all-girls classroom by connecting socially with their group members. The single-sex classroom erased the issues I faced with gender difference at School A, and the girls were more willing to share ideas. Being less inhibited allowed these girls to speak openly about personal issues regarding body-based ideals and body functionality and to find common ground. They also felt more comfortable with these issues and realized they were not alone in their thinking.

However, this single-sex environment also opened my eyes to the ways that body functionality affects how girls cultivate a sense of belonging within their groups. In this setting, the girls often compared themselves and their performances to each other. Most of this comparison rested on negative assumptions about their body functionality or body-based ideals:

Miss, I can't do this step. The girls in my group want to put cartwheels into the dance and they can all do it and I can't. I don't know what I'm gonna do. It's terrible. I should've done gymnastics when I was little. (Vienna 2017)

I was going to do a high kick for my solo spot in our dance but then another girl did one and it was way better than mine. I mean, I kick high too but her legs are super long and skinny so when she does it, it's more impressive. We decided she should do that move and instead I'm doing a jump. (Maria 2017)

These examples demonstrate how body functionality was negatively affected in this setting. Although the girls socially connected more easily as a whole at School B, they also became acutely aware of how their bodies looked in comparison to other girls. The way girls dealt with their concerns was to pair themselves with girls who had similar dance experience for their choreography groups. In this way, they felt comfortable sharing both their movement ideas and

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personal thoughts on body image in all parts of our lessons. To address these issues, I incorporated pedagogical modifications as outlined further below.

Changing Our Minds: Perfectionism and Learning

The focus on achievement and body functionality is central to understanding the implications of this case study. More specifically, this case study explains how the all-girls private school setting negatively affected body functionality by encouraging girls to compete with each other through their choreography. My observations are supported by Muñoz and Ferguson (2012), who state that "body dissatisfaction [is] influenced by peer competition with other proximal women rather than distal depictions of women in the media" (383). While Muñoz and Ferguson (2012) discuss adult women, their findings about women comparing themselves to others are applicable to the girls at School B. Tying their findings to my own with Work It Out, the all-girls setting amplified girls' attention to body functionality in a comparative way. This meant that although the girls felt more comfortable socially in our classroom (i.e., no gender divide), they became more critical of their physical performance.

In this section, I discuss the girls' competitive attitudes in relation to perfectionism. Beginning with a discussion of the dimensions of perfectionism (Hamachek 1978; Rice, Ashby, and Slaney 1998; Stoeber and Rambow 2007; Stumpf and Parker 2000; Terry-Short et al. 1995), I explain how perfectionist tendencies lead to both positive and negative outcomes for elementary school-age students. At the center of this discussion is the realization that such thinking promotes a fear of failure. Hamachek's (1978) behavioural characteristics of neurotic perfectionists demonstrate the many ways that such thinking directly impedes the development of a growth mindset. Overall, this discussion demonstrates the ways that the school setting

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inspires perfectionism in students and explains how these ideas influenced my participants' body functionality and body image in Work It Out.

Academic achievement is the leading marker for indicating the quality of student learning in schools. Whether on report cards, standardized tests, or assignments, graded assessment carries weight in the classroom and in students' assessments of themselves. This focus on receiving particular grades leads to students developing perfectionist tendencies. Research on the psychology of academic achievement commonly mentions the "dimensions of perfectionism" (Hamachek 1978; Rice, Ashby, and Slaney 1998; Stoeber and Rambow 2007; Stumpf and Parker 2000; Terry-Short et al. 1995). How these dimensions are defined depends on the criteria of the study. In some cases, they relate to the impetus for a student's motivation (Huggins et al. 2008; Stoeber and Rambow 2007), to social interaction (Bellamy 1990; Hamachek 1978; Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt 2009), or to a specified task at school (Stoeber and Otto 2006). Regardless of how researchers have framed the pursuit of perfectionism in students, all studies have found that perfectionism is debilitating to students' confidence.

Stoeber and Rambow (2007) highlight how the pressure to achieve in school affects students' motivation, achievement, and emotional well-being. The researchers state that there are two dimensions to perfectionism: (a) positive or "adaptive perfectionism," which inspires students to work hard at school continually; and (b) negative or "maladaptive perfectionism," which causes adolescents to self-criticize harshly, exhibit a fear of failure, and avoid trying new things (1380). Stoeber and Rambow (2007) explain how and why students exhibit either type of perfectionism in the classroom. Those participants who exhibit adaptive perfectionism work towards goals in order to please themselves (e.g., studying hard in particular subjects to prepare for a desired career path). In contrast, maladaptive perfectionists take on schoolwork in order to

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satisfy other people's expectations of them (e.g., pursuing a certain career to please parents). In this way, Stoeber and Rambow (2007) suggest that overcoming the negative effects of perfectionism depends upon students working to please themselves instead of their teachers, families, or peers.

Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt (2009) alternatively define the dimensions of perfectionism. In comparing perfectionist behaviours among students in gifted, arts, and public schools, the authours found that perfection relates to personal expectations. Instead of aligning perfectionism to positive or negative social influences, Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt (2009) delineate that the dimensions of perfectionism are more emotionally and individually driven. They use the terms "self-oriented" and "socially prescribed" to differentiate the types of perfectionism in students (160-161). In both cases, the student's desire to be perfect is rooted in assumed expectations. Self-oriented perfectionists hold extremely high standards for themselves, whereas socially-prescribed perfectionists assume that others demand perfection from them. Students who do not meet their standards often experience anxiety and/or depression (Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt 2009). Collectively, Stornelli, Flett, and Hewitt (2009) and Stoeber and Rambow's (2007) work illustrate that the type of perfectionism students exhibit is largely based on standards set by the perfectionists themselves. While socially-prescribed perfectionists are concerned about how others view their performance, the specific expectations that lead to stress are based on assumptions and not explicit standards (i.e., curriculum expectations or a specified grade).

In my work with the girls at the private school, I observed these scholars' ideas about perfectionism. Specifically, the girls desired approval from peers and saw the acquisition of praise as indicative of a functionally "perfect" performance. As a result, they set expectations for how their bodies needed to move in order to achieve their goals. The exact standard they

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established was different for each girl but was generally tied to concerns about how "good" their choreography was. I talked to the girls about the idea of being good during class and in one-on-one interviews. In asking what they meant by "good," the girls responded with answers such as:

You know, like, we would get an 'A' if you marked us. (Sandy 2017)

It was entertaining to watch and we all did the steps right. No one messed up in the dance. (Carolynn 2017*)*

We had some really cool tricks or moves that you liked. (Leah 2017)

When reviewing the comments of all participating girls to this question, 56 percent mentioned receiving a hypothetical "A," 32 percent spoke about "good moves" or "tricks," and 12 percent discussed the absence of mistakes. While the specific quality of performance girls mentioned varied, they revealed the criteria for perfection in the dance classroom. I interpret their responses as demonstrating a new dimension in perfectionism—performative perfectionism. Under this dimension, perfection is achieved through demonstrated physical ability and gaining praise from peers. According to the girls, achieving performative perfectionism was based on their ability to perform complicated steps, not make mistakes, entertain their audience in order to reach their expectations, and gain the approval of their teacher. It was not enough to just move or express if they did not receive approval from others in the form of applause, grades, or the acknowledgement of "cool" choreography. Performing then became linked to exhibiting ability and, in doing so, achieving status in the classroom.

In order to achieve in the classroom, the girls set goals for their performances. Goal making is another key factor researchers discuss in regards to the influence of perfectionist tendencies in students. Bellamy (1990) investigates the prevalence of perfectionism in male and female students in public and private schools. Her comparative study aims to discover if publicly

or privately educated students were more prone to issues with perfectionism. She also examines whether boys or girls in either school system show greater anxiety. Using surveys (i.e., the Self-Oriented Scale) to collect data, Bellamy (1990) randomly selected equal numbers of boys and girls to interview. The results of this investigation reveal that neither school setting inspired a higher instance of perfectionism. Bellamy (1990) also discovers that in both environments, female students had a higher instance of experiencing negative emotional stability relating to their perfectionism due to body image issues. Many of her female adolescent participants report feeling depressed or "burned out" in regards to their attainment of specific physical goals. For some, this was linked to a particular sport or extracurricular activity, whereas others mention their desire to attain certain beauty ideals (Bellamy 1990). My findings working with girls in coeducational versus the same-sex environment contrast Bellamy's (1990) findings. In the session in School B, the girls became competitive instead of "burned out" or unmotivated. Like Bellamy's (1990) participants, my students had specific physical goals in mind for their bodies but pursued them in an active manner. In this scenario, the nontechnical focus of Work It Out helped the girls to try and appreciate their individual abilities. In the end, all groups presented dances that showcased their talents. For some groups, this meant using very elaborate tricks, while others focused on using interesting formations and interpreting the words of the song. Although all girls chose and presented their movements, the resounding issue in this setting was comparing physical ability to one another. While the framework of Work It Out supported girls in creating choreography, their mindsets remained steadfast in coveting receiving praise for their physical talents. This was difficult for those girls who did not have extensive dance backgrounds.

Bellamy's (1990) work relating to my experience at the private school is particularly relevant in regards to body image. I define body image as how girls idealize their own bodies.

Included in this definition is an attention to what behaviours girls use in order to attain their individual ideals. For both Bellamy's (1990) participants and mine, the girls focused on performance as a method to reach a physical ideal. One of the sites in which Bellamy (1990) conducted research was a professional ballet school. These elite adolescent dancers frequently tied perfection to the size and shape of their bodies. In particular, Bellamy (1990) recognized the attainment of a "goal weight" as a collective objective for the dancers. They believed that putting effort through training and dieting would eventually lead them to be better dancers. Similarly, the main mechanism through which my participants graded their bodies was in the performance of "tricks" (e.g., gymnastics, lifts, and spins). In my case study, I gave time each week for students to work on their choreography. During these times, I circulated throughout the room, encouraging and observing the girls. I recorded my observations of their choreographic process including any questions they asked me about their dances in my field notes. The following excerpts illustrate this process:

> *Today I was asked to help two girls learn to do a cartwheel. They do not have a gymnastics background but want to put it into their dance. I told them they can do any movement they like so if a cartwheel is what they want to do then we can practice together. They said they want to do a "trick" because it will "look cool."* (2017)

> *We were sent down to the school's dance studio today because the gym was being used. It is a small room but is fully equipped with mirrors and a sprung floor. The girls immediately took their shoes off and began stretching on the floor when we entered. I had seven students want to show me "what they learned at their dance studio this week." I saw splits, pirouettes, and jetes. The desire to impress me through showing off complicated movements continues.* (2017)

> *All of the final groups incorporated some form of gymnastics or dance technique into their choreography. Cartwheels, lifts, jetes, and high kicks were common throughout. These girls were clearly focused on "showing off" or out-doing peers. I was impressed at how creative they were but wonder how body functionality is affected by this tactic.* (2017)

Looking back on my notes, I see the links between body image, body functionality, and achievement among these girls. Much like Bellamy's (1990) participants, the girls in this session of Work It Out believed that physical training would lead to achieving their physical goals. For my participants, this meant impressing their teachers, their peers, and me by performing difficult steps perfectly. This frame of mind cultivated an environment where the girls worked hard but for the purpose of competition. This made recognizing body functionality and personal ability extremely difficult for them.

Hamachek (1978) provides a list of characteristics tied to neurotic perfectionists. These behaviours serve as a basis for understanding and recognizing whether students engage with a challenge in a healthy way (i.e., to learn more) or a damaging way (i.e., to avoid failure or to please others). Of the six characteristics Hamachek (1978) describes, two relate particularly to my participants: (a) shame and guilt (i.e., not being able to fulfill their own or others' expectations of them); and (b) self-deprecation (i.e., putting themselves down before others can). In the following paragraphs, I explain how each of these behaviours related to my participants with a focus on body functionality, body image, and achievement.

Shame and Guilt

Shame and guilt behaviour results from students' perceived failure to reach expectations. Such failure could be the result of not meeting their own ideals or not acquiring what they believe others expect of them. In the Work It Out classroom, the girls were concerned with how their teachers and peers viewed their performance. The girls were in charge of their choreography and, as a result, tailored the movements they created to meet their own ideals. However, the most pressing concern for the girls in this session was not about making their ideas about body image heard, but instead about impressing others through their movement choices. In

the following paragraphs, I provide examples of girls who indicated in their journaling and interviews that they experienced feelings of shame or guilt. I gathered these responses after our final class and elicited them by prompting the girls to reflect upon their final performances and choreographic processes.

For some girls, body functionality was a leading concern in performance, and they had personal goals of being able to do particular steps. While initially I saw this as indicative of a positive mindset (i.e., learning new movement abilities), I later changed my view. Instead of working to perform a new movement for personal growth, girls in this setting did so to please others. Some wanted to impress their teachers, including myself, while others wanted to "measure up to the other girls." A pattern emerged in regards to who girls' acquisition of new skills aimed to impress. Specifically, the girls who had extensive dance backgrounds aimed to please their teachers, while girls with less or no experience sought approval from the "dancer girls." Thus, a hierarchy of peer-to-superior and peer-to-peer approval emerged. For example, Theresa, one of the dancer girls, often asked me to watch her perform a new move she had learned or give her tips on how to improve a step. Overall, she was extremely confident in her physical abilities (i.e., body functionality) and demonstrated comfort in the dance classroom (i.e., belonging), however she constantly needed outside approval. To her, the ideal body was one that could perform technical dance movements "perfectly":

> *Miss, I train lots every week and even at home. I have to nail my pirouettes because they are in my solo at the studio. If I don't do them perfectly, I won't win. So same goes for our group dance here—if we all dance together, it won't look right.* (Theresa 2017)

For the most part, Theresa was successful in receiving praise from her classmates and teachers for her dancing. However, during their final performance, she stumbled out of a step. She carried on with the performance, but in her final reflection spoke negatively about it:

I didn't do the turn right in the end. It sucks because I did it right all the other times. I hope I didn't ruin the dance for my teammates. They seemed happy but I am not sure. (Theresa 2017)

Although Theresa's group was pleased with their performance, Theresa was not. All she could focus on was how she looked in the eyes of others when she missed a step. She felt ashamed of her very minor mistake and instead of focusing on how well she met the challenges of the choreography and how she recovered from the misstep and kept going, she dwelled on how she performed compared to her peers and whether she had met their expectations.

Self-Deprecation

Theresa's behaviour is also an example of self-deprecation as a method for self-preservation. This concept applies to students who put themselves and their abilities down openly and in front of others. Putting themselves down is, in their view, preempting putdowns others would make about them. By acknowledging a mistake before someone else can, students maintain power over the social situation. However, in so doing, they become extremely critical of themselves, which may eventually harm them emotionally (Hamachek 1978). In this session of Work It Out, self-deprecation was common for girls with less dance experience. With the presence of dancer girls who were more technically advanced, other students felt they would inevitably fail at meeting performance expectations. These expectations were not set by the program, but by the girls' desire to be competitive with their peers. In a second example, Sally was an avid soccer player at the school. She had not studied dance as an extracurricular activity before. While she was confident in her athleticism, the prospect of dancing alongside girls who trained in dance concerned her. In one of our first interviews, Sally explained:

Miss, I play soccer so I know I'm fit but when those girls start making up steps, it's like they're speaking another language. I don't even know what to say, so I don't. Plus, some of the moves are really hard and I don't think I'll ever be able to do them. (Sally 2017)

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I hoped that over time Sally would come to understand that all kinds of movement were welcome in this program. Moreover, I encouraged her to speak up and teach her group members a movement from soccer—perhaps a certain kick, jogging motion, or formation would be interesting to share. However, her self-deprecating attitude towards her body functionality and body image prevailed:

> *Before you say anything, Miss, I know I didn't do the arms and the legs for the dance. I couldn't keep it all straight so I tried to focus on doing what I could. I know I wasn't as good as the other girls but, I mean, I'm not really a dancer. Was it okay?* (Sally 2017)

Sally was concerned with how I saw her performance. More specifically, she was fearful of how her performance compared to her group members. Given how negatively she saw her body's capacity to perform dance movements, she decided to try and reframe my view of her achievement by pointing out her mistakes. More importantly, she wanted to point them out before someone else did.

In both of these examples, the students adopted behaviours in direct opposition to a growth mindset. Students with a growth mindset take on tasks as a learning opportunity and view concerns about others' expectations as secondary. The primary goal in meeting a challenge with a growth mindset, then, is to learn something new and to gain personal insight and satisfaction from the experience. For Theresa and Sally, they aimed primarily to gain approval from peers and teachers. They did not focus on the social connection choreographing with friends built, what they learned about body image, the new skills they gained, or what skills they could contribute to the process of dance-making. Supporting these findings, research on the growth mindset has examined student motivation for achievement, asking students how they deal with failure (i.e., what do they do to help themselves accept a grade they do not like?; Blackwell,

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Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007). In response, some students have said they would cheat the next time so they could pass (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007; Moser et al. 2011; Nussbaum and Dweck 2008). Others said they would find someone who did worse than they did to feel better about their own performance (Nussbaum and Dweck 2008). Notably, the research shows that students avoid the unfamiliar because they fear failure (Moser et al. 2011). In this case study, the girls with dance experience like Theresa attributed the value of their contribution to activity in technical ability and to their dance knowledge. Therefore, if they made a mistake, they failed. For girls like Sally without any prior dance experience, involving themselves in dance practice was unfamiliar and therefore carried a high likelihood for failure. The fear of not doing well in front of peers and teachers prevented these girls from fully engaging with their group members through choreography. If these girls had been able to see our classroom as a lab space where they were free to experiment with movement, perhaps they would have moved past their preconceived and unchanging ideals about their own body functionality and body image. In the following section, I discuss how I tried to accommodate the competitive and perfectionist attitudes of these girls pedagogically to create an atmosphere of experimentation.

Pedagogical Considerations: Accommodations and Modifications

In this section, I discuss the specific pedagogical accommodations and modifications I made to Work It Out in the all-girls private school setting. In making changes to lesson format for this second session, I took feedback from my work at School A into consideration. Coming out of my first session with the program, my leading concern was about cultivating an improved sense of belonging for girls in the classroom. I assumed that having a smaller single-sex class would alleviate the tensions that the coeducational classroom created. Secondly, I noted the need for more student collaboration in choreography sessions. While individual groups at School A

worked well at connecting movements with their ideas about body image, they struggled to find points of comparison with other groups, as the groups were largely independent from one another. The only time they saw each other's choreography was at the final performance. As a result, the students could not fully explain or interpret what they viewed in other groups' work. Additionally, differences in song choices and themes further limited students' ability to relate to their peers' expressed insights in the coeducational setting. In this way, some of their ideas were lost in translation due to the absence of a specified point of similarity, which affected the building of belonging between students. Once I began to work with students in School B, unexpected issues came to my attention. As noted above, I first noticed the competitive attitude the girls had with each other, as well as the focus on academic achievement and perfectionism. In this section, I explain some general pedagogical considerations (e.g., classroom space) and then address each section of my three-part lesson (discussion, group movement, and choreography) in terms of the modifications that I made. I include throughout the responses of participating girls from interviews, surveys, and field notes, which demonstrate how my choices changed girls' reactions to Work It Out in this setting.

School B had an abundance of available space. The school's administration connected me with the gym teacher, who was extremely excited to have dance programming brought into the school. She knew that the program would not be a part of the girls' physical education mark but looked forward to having another activity brought into the gym. In my initial discussions with the gym teacher, I was given the choice to use either the school gymnasium or dance studio for my lessons. I chose to use the gym not only because of its size, but also because I feared going into a more formal dance space would place the girls in a technical dance mindset. I wanted them to feel free to move in any way they wanted without the influence of a studio mirror. My choice

to remain in the gym received mixed reactions. For those students with extensive dance or gymnastic training, the idea of a dance class alone inspired the use of formal techniques in choreography. Given how focused these girls were on showing off their abilities in dance, choosing to be in another space did not mute their use of dance technique fully. However, I did notice that when in the gym, these girls' technical focus was slightly less prominent. On two occasions, I was asked to move my lesson to the school's dance studio. In the formal studio space, the girls with dance experience immediately began stretching, spinning, and assessing themselves in the mirror. In this more formal dance space, the girls who had little or no dance experience stood further away from the front of the room and avoided glancing in mirrors. This reaction was even more pronounced when I compared the spacing choices girls made in the gymnasium.

For example, Shelly, a sixth grade student, was a competitive soccer player at the school. Although she was not experienced in dance, she was extremely confident in her physical ability. She knew she was coordinated, loved to move, and would stand at the front of the room during group dancing. However, I noticed that both times that we held the session in the dance studio, Shelly was far less engaged. During one of our interviews, I asked her which classroom space she preferred to be in. She responded:

> *I like the gym, Miss. It's bigger so we can spread out. There're no mirrors to look in and I find mirrors awkward. I mean, I don't need to see myself to move right? I'm also not a dancer so I guess it kinda feels more dance-y or dancer-like to be in a studio. Just makes me less confident than the gym does.* (Shelly 2017)

Shelly was not alone in her feelings about the classroom space. April was another sixth grade student at School B who, unlike Shelly, had extensive dance training. When I asked her the same question, she replied:

The dance studio is way better, Miss. I mean, how do you really know what your moves or formations look like when you don't have a mirror? I know you asked us not to use the mirrors, but it's just easier when you're making up the dance cause then you know you look good. Also, the floor is better for doing spins and jumps. (April 2017)

In comparing Shelly and April's responses, pedagogical concerns about the selection of the physical space for Work It Out came to light. Their reactions pointed to how body functionality and belonging can be acutely affected by the lesson space. The girls who were not trained dancers saw the studio as a foreign place where their abilities were called into question. For those who were trained dancers, the studio inspired them to fixate on technique and aesthetics rather than creativity. As a result, I requested for the remainder of our lessons to take place exclusively in the gym.

Another modification to the program in this setting occurred in relation to being a girls-only group. School A was a coeducational public school where I could not present my programming as an extracurricular activity exclusively for female students. However, at School B, this issue was erased. After running my first session including male students at School A, I saw an immense difference in the way that girls shared ideas when in an all-female setting as they were in School B. This change was most noticeable during the discussion portion of our classes. The girls worked more collaboratively on all aspects of the program. They compared ideas from their Body Brainstorm worksheets and journals more openly with the whole class. This led to more in-depth conversations about when, how, and in what ways they had come to understand their bodies in regards to body image. I understand this change in behaviour as directly linked to the single gender environment at School B. Researchers in physical education have extensively debated the detriments and benefits of separating the sexes where physical activity is concerned (Bathes and Battista 1985; Couturier, Chepko, and Coughlin 2007; Downey

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1997; Johnson 2003; Kientzler 1999; Lenskyj 1994; Naik 2010). Bringing my work at School B into this debate, the pedagogical focus became how and in what activities the girls felt most comfortable to participate. Naik (2010) argues, "girls do enjoy exercise, but they find the activities and teaching format unenjoyable" (8). Although the social interaction girls engaged in while choreographing supported Naik's (2010) findings, the competitive way girls approached body functionality did not. Without male students, the girls definitely were more open about sharing their ideas about body image, but physically the comparisons they made against each other enhanced competition between them. I interpret my work at School B as strongly supportive of the positive effects a single-sex classroom has on socially sensitive lessons. The main difference being that at School A, the vast majority of girls shared their ideas with me only in one-on-one interviews or in their journals, while at School B, in each lesson almost all girls openly spoke about their body image surveys, choreographic choices, and personal experiences dealing with physical struggles.

The most prominent change I made to this session of Work It Out related to the choreography section of the lesson. At School A, all groups chose their own songs. While this allowed each group to create an individual piece, it also impeded their ability to relate to each other's work. I wanted to help the girls to make more concrete connections between the ways they expressed and interpreted the idea of body image in their dances. To do so, I chose to have all groups choreograph to the same song ("I'm a Lady" by Meghan Trainor 2017). I chose Trainor's song for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was popular at the time, ensuring the girls would be familiar and even excited by the chance to create a dance to it. From my past work with adolescents, I found that using music that they know and like helps to entice students to participate. The more enthusiastic girls are about choreographing to a song, the more likely they

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are to take part in the activity willingly. Secondly, the overall message of the song (i.e., being

confident in yourself) coincided with the message of Work It Out. Trainor's song builds and

breaks down stereotypes about femininity. In the first verse of the song, Trainor sings:

> I talk with a mouth full (uh-huh)
> But I couldn't be sweeter
> Yep, I'm a cutie in my own way
> I won't play follow the leader (Trainor 2017)

In this first verse, Trainor presents juxtaposing ideas about feminine ideals and empowerment.

She speaks to the idea of being a leader while maintaining that she is still a "cutie" who

"couldn't be sweeter." The juxtaposition of bad manners (talking with one's mouth full) with

"sweetness" creates an opening for contradictory behaviour. This theme of satisfying and

contradicting gender roles continues into the bridge and chorus of the song:

> [Bridge]
> And I don't look like them (but I ain't worried about it)
> I don't talk like them (but I ain't worried about it)
> I know I'm a gem
> I ain't worried about it, I ain't worried about it
> Cause I'm a lady
>
> [Chorus]
> Cause I'm a lady
> Come on! I'm a, I'm a lady
> All my girls, show them you're a lady
> Tell the world, say that you're proud to be a lady (Trainor 2017)

This song choice aimed to help girls talk about what Trainor attempts to define—what it

means to be a "lady." The behaviour implicit in being a "proper" lady suggests Butler's (1990)

idea of gender performativity. Butler (1990) argues that social norms dictate that particular

actions are associated with maleness or femaleness. As a result, people take on particular roles

and behaviours in an attempt to satisfy societal expectations as male or female. Butler's ideas are

both supported and contested in Trainor's lyrics. Although there is a particular look and way of

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speaking to be a lady, Trainor is not worried about satisfying either. She is a "leader" while at the same time being a "cutie." While I acknowledge that Trainor's lyrics are questionable in regards to the stereotypical and narrow view they provide on femininity, they evoked interesting responses from the girls.

I asked the girls to reflect on what exactly it meant to be a lady. I received a collection of different responses, which all related back to two distinct characteristics: aesthetics (the way a woman looked) and demeanor (her overall behaviour). In regards to aesthetics, popular descriptors included a woman who is "pretty" (23 percent), "young" (37 percent), and "cute" (40 percent). The girls' association of being a lady with being young is an idea I found particularly intriguing. I interpret their ageist ideas as another response to mediated images of women and girls. They see pop icons like Trainor who are young women singing about what it means to be a lady. As a result, the girls internalized the notion that to be considered a lady, a person needs to be of a particular age. Furthermore, when paired alongside the other two descriptors ("pretty" and "cute"), the girls' idea of a lady is tied to Western beauty ideals, especially the idea that in beauty standards, youth is an asset. In regards to demeanor, the girls defined a lady as someone who is "proper" (33 percent), "strong" (18 percent), and "nice" (49 percent). I interpret the girls' responses as expressing similar sentiments to Trainor's song. Specifically, they aimed to take on characteristics typically linked to masculinity while satisfying characteristics associated with traditional notions of femininity:

> *In our choreography, we wanted to be really strong like the song says. So when she says "lady" in the chorus we punch our arms up and do a kick to the front. At the end, though, we pose. It's kinda like strong and tough at the beginning but then still pretty at the end— like a girl power move.* (Nicole 2017)

I interpret this quotation as exemplary of how girls played with what they deemed to be feminine and masculine traits. By choosing to punch and kick aggressively, they communicated their strength. At the end of that movement, though, their decision to pose in a pretty way announced their femininity. Together, this communicated that they were powerful girls to the audience. I encouraged them to address these themes in their choreography and in their discussions with each other throughout the session.

Research in Action: Program Implementation and Results

In this section, I present the reactions of the girls at School B to this session of Work It Out, focusing on the fulfillment of body functionality and body image. The ways that the all-girls private school setting promoted perfectionism and competition for girls is the central point of this discussion. I highlight both the positive and negative ways my pedagogical approach affected the girls' experience and learning. Most notably, the all-girls setting enhanced belonging and social comfort for participants. At the same time, it negatively affected body functionality, promoting competition and comparison among the girls.

The idea of perfection and product over process weaves through this entire case study. As discussed, each of my fundamental concepts (body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals) connected to the girls' focus on "doing well." Indeed, doing well was the leading sentiment that impeded the girls' ability to recognize their body functionality completely and achieve improved body image in this setting. In the following section, I discuss how each of my fundamental concepts relates to this setting. Participants' responses demonstrate how the all-girls private school setting influenced the reception of Work It Out.

Body Functionality

Recognizing the value of body functionality happens over time. As a concept, body functionality becomes apparent as a person improves a specific skill through practice (Alleva et al. 2015). At School B, many girls entered the program with extensive experience in formal dance training. Some had even competed against each other at organized events outside of school. Those girls took on the task of creating dances as an opportunity to show off their skills and to validate their body functionality in comparison to the other girls as dancers. On the other side of the spectrum, some girls did not have any dance training. In seeing the abilities of their peers formally trained in dance, girls with no outside dance experience suffered lower body functionality. Their inexperience and perceived inability in comparison to their dancer peers affected their willingness to contribute choreographic ideas. This variance in dance ability and experience significantly influenced the girls in this setting when selecting group members for their choreography. The girls with experience tended to pair with other trained dancers, while those with less dance experience chose to work with each other.

In this setting, body functionality negatively correlated to the school's academically competitive environment. The school's goals, focused on achieving high grades, affected the girls' understanding of how to find value in their activities at school. In this session of Work It Out, participants looked at their bodies and their capacity for movement as indicators of success. As an extracurricular offering, Work It Out was not a part of the girls' academic work. This was made explicitly clear to both students and teachers verbally and in their workbooks. Within our first few lessons, I reiterated that their participation in all parts of this program was only for their enjoyment and that neither their gym teacher nor I would mark them on their performance. However, I soon noticed that the girls did not see my programming as recreational. Their focus

on body functionality entirely aimed at getting the steps to our group warm up right and to choreographing an entertaining dance. In the first three weeks I taught at the school, I documented ten different girls asking me to explain steps from our group warm up to them. This was significant because that portion of the class aimed to prepare their bodies for movement physically and to foster a sense of freedom in their choices of movement. Although I modelled choreographed movements for the warm up, I was clear at the beginning of each class that the goal of the group dances was to focus on moving the whole time without worrying about what they looked like. This direction proved difficult for the girls to comprehend in this setting.

Below, I discuss body functionality in relation to one student's experience. For the choreography groups, I allowed students to select their own group members. The student I discuss in this section, Valarie, struggled specifically with cultivating a sense of positive body functionality and her group selection was extremely influential to her experience in Work It Out. As the only "nondancer" working in a group of competitive dancers, Valarie had a difficult time figuring out how to contribute to her group's choreography. She worried about how she would look when performing movements in comparison to her group members. She ultimately came up with a way to organize her group's dance so that she could show off her individual talents. Her experience demonstrates how the nontechnical focus of Work It Out can help students to find new ways to move. The ability to approach dance tasks creatively helped Valarie to establish a sense of ability within her group.

Valarie, Age 11– Creative License

Valarie was a grade 5 student at School B. Although she did not have formal dance training, she chose to be in a group where all the other members were avid competitive dancers. As a result, her group members took on the task of choreographing a dance with a desire to show

off their technical skills—skills that Valarie did not possess. For Valarie, comparing her physical abilities to her peers harmed her body functionality. In her early journal entries and interviews, Valarie used terms such as "uncoordinated" and "inexperienced" to describe herself as a mover. In order to reinstate her body functionality, Valarie needed to figure out what her contribution to her group's dance could be and mitigate their tendency towards including technical dance steps.

When speaking about Valarie, it is important to make note of her high dispositional confidence (Gould 2009). Although she doubted her physical abilities in the dance classroom, Valarie was generally a very social student. She was not afraid of speaking in class, loved to make her peers laugh, and was an active member of the school's drama club. Applying her penchant for the spotlight in social situations and drama club to her group's choreography was the key to unlocking her body functionality. Here, Valarie proposed the use of solo moments to her choreography group. This meant that they would move together in short sequences but then give each person a chance to show off a favourite move while everyone else froze in a pose. Valarie (2017) explained her idea as "something that I did in drama club where we made tableaus to tell a story. I was really good at it." Her group took on this idea and made it the basis for their choreography. While each of her classmates showed off high kicks, pirouettes, and leaps, Valarie decided to do a move of her own making, "The Unicorn." Placing her hands together to form a "horn" on her forehead, Valarie took tiny steps in zigzagging patterns across the floor. Her move was enjoyed by all of her peers, who clapped and cheered for her louder than any of the other solo moments.

For Valarie, assuming creative license reinstated her body functionality. While she initially based her ability on a comparison to her group members, Valarie eventually looked to her own skills and experience to engage in the choreographic process. For her, body functionality

was more about finding ways to contribute to her group's work and to move away from more formal movements in favour of theatrical performance. She allowed herself to adopt a growth mindset in that she acknowledged the process of choreography as an exercise rather than as an activity not applicable to her because of her lack of formal dance training.

Other girls also expressed this goal of exhibiting individual body functionality through certain movements. Students from School B worked diligently to show off any and all skills they had in their choreography. Cartwheels, leaps, and large sweeping motions characterized all groups' work. Most groups emphasized unity and practiced so that everyone could perform the movements. When asked about this choreographic choice, I received responses such as:

> *We want to look good when we do the move, Miss. If we practice, I think we should have it perfect by the end.* (Lauren 2017)

> *I know we aren't being marked for this but I still want to do good. You know, I want people to like our dance.* (Christina 2017)

> *I don't normally get to pick what moves I do in dances and so I really want to show off my favourites. You know, Miss, show what I can do.* (Olivia 2017)

Collectively, these responses reveal how important ability and resulting praise is to students' involvement. The students prized receiving positive feedback from classmates and teachers on how well they performed a task. However, the Work It Out program operated with the understanding that "meaningful learning tasks need to challenge every student in some way. It is crucial that no student be able to coast to success time after time; this experience can create the fixed-mindset belief that you are smart only if you can succeed without effort" (Dweck 2010, 17). A traditional school mindset focused on grades continually infiltrated the students' engagement with the program. However, over time, they came to accept they would not be

marked in this class. This encouraged creative freedom to explore their movement potential and boosted body functionality.

Belonging

At School B, belonging became synonymous with achievement. At School B, the primary goal is to excel in all subjects academically. The school encourages girls to "Be the Real You" and "Be the Best You" in their mission statement. As a sales tactic, this statement appeals to parents' wishes to see their daughters thrive. However, for the girls who go to the school, this idea places immense pressure on them to be the best. The girls frequently spoke about this:

> *Miss, I play on the soccer team and coach says we are going to be the best in the league. The team won our division last year so they were so good. I think if we keep training we'll be as good too.* (Emma 2017)

> *Our dance is okay, I guess. I mean it goes with the music but it's not the best one. I watch the other groups sometimes and see the stuff they are doing. I think we need more tricks or, like, just to be more organized.* (Taylor 2017)

It was not enough for the girls in the case study to simply try. They could not just play soccer games or create a dance without assessing themselves in relation to their peers. Rather, they took part in these activities with an explicit goal to be the best. Teachers also reiterated these ideas when dropping off or picking up students from our lessons:

> *Are they behaving well for you? Cause it they aren't, I will deal with it. We don't tolerate misbehaviour or fooling around at our school. The girls know this. They need to show respect and be good students.* (Teacher 2017)

> *They are really getting good at those group dances. I mean they are all doing the moves together and it looks just like how you do them. I am not surprised though—our girls are hard workers. They know they need to be good students for you.* (Teacher 2017)

This focus on achievement at all costs is central to School B's culture. As a result, the teachers and students who are part of School B's community collectively endeavour to fulfill these perfectionist expectations. I questioned where their motivation came from for pursuing such a

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high level of achievement. When girls wrote about what achievement meant to them, they responded with "good grades" (43 percent), "getting compliments from the teacher" (17 percent), and "winning an award" (40 percent). What all three of these responses share is their dependence upon external appraisal. The girls' understanding of achievement was solely based on how others viewed their performance. Work It Out encouraged the girls to take part in dance as a nonacademic and nonjudgment-based activity. However, the environment of the school and the tone its administration has established made it impossible for girls to dance freely without some degree of self-assessment.

The example of Maria below further demonstrates belonging's connection to achievement in performance. For Maria, dance was an unfamiliar activity. However, her close friends were extremely confident in dance. When faced with the choreography component of our class, Maria chose not to work with her closest friends. Her choice was entirely dependent upon her perceived degree of dissimilarity with her friends in relation to their shared capacity to excel at dance tasks—she did not want to "stand out" or "look silly." The group she elected to be in shared Maria's inexperience with dance. This helped her to feel more comfortable working with them and prevented her from impeding her friends' capacity to succeed. Her strategic selection of group members not only alleviated Maria's concerns about her dance ability, it also helped to encourage a sense of belonging for her. Feeling like she fit in with her group members was something she saw as key to her success in Work It Out.

Maria, Age 11– Strategic Selection

Maria was a grade 5 student at School B. Maria did not have formal dance training but had close friends in our class who did. Despite her clear bond with these other girls, Maria chose to work with another group of classmates. In her group were girls she knew well as peers but did

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not "spend a lot of time with […] outside of schoolwork" (Maria 2017). Maria explained her

choice to work with girls outside of her close group of friends:

> *Because all my friends are serious dancers and I just don't do that. I knew if I worked with them I would not be able to really be part of the group so I chose to be with other girls who I know from school sports and with my sister. They're like me. They aren't dancers.* (Maria 2017).

In Maria's case, she made her decision based on her perceived lack of belonging with her friends

specific to dance ability. She also chose this group to be with her older sister (Sally), whom she

had a close preexisting relationship with and who was also part of our session in School B.

In Maria's case, we see again how influential the perception of skill is in achieving self-

esteem and body positivity. While Maria's sense of belonging in the classroom was not boosted

by recognized dance skills, being in a group where she knew her ideas and abilities would be

equivalent and appreciated increased her belonging. In the context of our classroom, Maria

placed herself in a social situation where she could perform physical tasks to the same level of

ability as her peers, where she felt supported emotionally by her sister, and where she could

perform the dance just as well as her other group members.

In connecting growth mindset to enhancing a sense of belonging for girls, pedagogical

considerations in the kind of praise given to girls is important. In order to encourage girls to

adopt a growth mindset to their work, teachers need to give feedback that recognizes strategy and

effort over success or mastery of specific tasks (Dweck 2010). This inspires students to find new

ways to reach personal goals that create a more inclusive classroom. In this program, letting

students choose their own groups, commenting on how collaboratively they worked with others,

and praising the creative ways they put movements together increased students' efforts while

emphasizing their role in contributing to an inclusive and supportive dance classroom.

Maria's desire to fit in with her group also highlights how important belonging is for the Work It Out program to succeed. In this session, removing the male students helped, though belonging is not reliant on gender parity. With concerns about male criticism eliminated, the girls worried about other aspects of socializing with each other. For some, their dance ability led them to choose to separate themselves from preexisting friendships. Participants needed to find similarities with other girls outside of their immediate social circles based on ability, collective interest, life experience, and culture. Moreover, the high-pressured academic environment was detrimental in cultivating a welcoming environment for girls to be physically expressive. I took into account these considerations in my third case study, which focuses on recreational dance in a population of girls with T1D.

Body-Based Ideals:

In the Work It Out program, the concept body-based ideals relates to how participating girls see their bodies. This could relate to coveting a particular bodily aesthetic or how they see themselves in relation to their physical goals. Collectively, the girls at School B endeavoured to present themselves as "confident," "sassy," "empowered," and "skillful" in their movements. What is most interesting about their understanding of body-based ideals is how they focused on particular body parts (e.g., hips, chest, and bottom). The girls judged how expressly feminine their dances were in relation to how well their movements used those body parts. In this way, they viewed their ability to portray this specified femaleness through their dances as a personal accomplishment.

Taken as a whole, body image at School B aligned with an idealization of the female form and feminine performative behaviour (Butler 1990). This was especially interesting to me given that this time, no male students were present. I thought that having a single-sex classroom

would lessen the girls' attention to gender. While they were less tentative in regards to socializing than the previous coeducational group, they remained overtly concerned about demonstrating idealized femininity through their choreography. Specific to the girls' perception of body image was an implicit desire to satisfy the characteristics of a hyper-sexualized feminine persona. In popular culture, particular body parts have been idolized as desirable. Jennifer Lopez's bottom, Pamela Anderson's breasts, or Shakira's shaking hips have become commonplace in discussions of the aesthetics of the female form (Fey 2011). Young girls are not oblivious to this:

> *Ewww! I don't like that move—my fat jiggles when I do it.* (Jane 2017)

> *If my legs were longer, this move would look way better.* (Elise 2017)

> *What moves can we do with our chest? Shake boobs?* (Joanne 2017)

Whether students assessed their bodies visually or through movement, the girls were very aware of the many ways media objectifies female bodies. Their choreographic choices to put on a particular persona or move in a certain way reflected their desire to satisfy these culturally-constructed notions of femininity. They wanted to achieve a successful performance as culturally relevant performers in this respect. While not motivated by a letter grade, the choices they made for themselves paired ability with cultural capital. Their individual reflections reveal how influential these idealizations of femininity are in how young girls construct their body image.

In the following section, I describe Rebecca's experience dealing with body-based ideals in the Work It Out program. Rebecca filled out her Body Brainstorm worksheets with more information and ideas than any other student. She wrote more descriptors for each of her body parts than any other girl who participated in the program. With an average of nine adjectives for each body part, Rebecca's surveys communicated a great deal to me about how she thought

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about her female body. What is most interesting about Rebecca's case is how she explained her word choices to me during her interviews. All of her ideas were firmly rooted in a desire to achieve an ideal feminine body. Clearly influenced by popular media, Rebecca believed that as a young girl, her ultimate goal was to grow into the idealized woman. She also took the choreography aspect of our class as an opportunity to exude that feminine ideal through movement. Rebecca's experience in Work It Out illustrates the ways that girls can perceive sexiness and sassiness as confidence rather than sexual objectification. To Rebecca, if her performance was perceived to be "sexy" or "sassy," she had done her job and achieved her performance goal.

Rebecca, Age 11– A Class in "Girl-Sass"

Rebecca was a fifth grade girl at School B. Her teachers described her to me as a "quiet" girl who rarely spoke up in class. While this proved true in our group discussions, Rebecca was very talkative in our one-on-one interviews. In an early interview, we spoke about some of her word choices on the Body Brainstorm worksheets. Words such as "wide," "round," "big," or "squishy" were repeated under the columns for thighs, stomach, and hips. In other conversations with her classmates, they similarly described these same body parts. These responses to the body, and particular parts of the body, reveal a shared viewpoint between the participating girls. In regards to body-based ideals, these adjectives stood in as synonyms for "fat"—an ideal that extremely influenced the girls' body conceptualization, where the ideal Western female is "thin."

The choreographic choices Rebecca and her group made further complicate this idealization of particular body parts. Rebecca's group "G.A.L.S." performed to Meghan Trainor's "I'm a Lady." Throughout the song, Trainor sings about being her own lady and not caring that she "don't look like them" or "move like them" (Trainor 2017). Overall, the intended

message is that being yourself is the most important thing. Rebecca's group viewed this music as "a sassy song. It's really upbeat and fun too" (Rebecca 2017). Their movements included shaking hips, snapping fingers, and hair flipping. When asked why Rebecca's group selected these movements, Rebecca (2017) responded with, "because shaking hips is something I see all the girl performers do and snapping your fingers and flipping hair is girly." In other words, Rebecca performed the commercialized example of confident femininity she saw in pop idols. Rebecca used the very parts of her body she negatively described (i.e., her hips) as a vehicle for expressing positivity through movement, even though emotionally she was uncomfortable with that part of her body. In this case, the Work It Out program provided insight into the many ways girls relate to their bodies. Participants simultaneously viewed their bodies as a site of improvement, a source of empowerment, and a marker of femininity.

Concluding Thoughts

The Work It Out program, in contrast to traditional modes of study, aims to provide girls with the ability to create something without the pressure of graded assessment—an uncommon opportunity in School B. This teaching tactic was initially daunting to some of the girls who struggled to engage with the choreographic process without putting pressure on themselves to be perfect. Additionally, the all-girls setting in this scenario ultimately cultivated an environment of competition between peers and their relative physical abilities as dancers. While all girls found their own ways to deal with their individual concerns, their compulsive pursuit of perfection in the classroom kept them from creatively engaging with the activity and with one another fully. Moreover, the competitive nature of their perfectionist attitudes led the girls to objectify their own performances and bodies. Regardless of their specific concerns (e.g., recognizing their abilities, relating to peers, or representing femininity), all of the girls compared themselves to

their peers in hopes of identifying how they "measure[d] up to all of the other girls" (Melanie 2017). I interpret this reaction as directly related to the girls-only setting, the academic environment, and the high instance of trained dancers in the class.

At School A, the dance aspect of Work It Out served as a confidence booster. By comparing themselves to the boys in the room and aligning with culturally-constructed notions about dance, girls in the coeducational setting felt superior in their abilities as dancers because they were female and felt less awkward taking part in a dance activity. However, in the all-girls setting of School B, the sense of prowess that came from gender was erased. Instead, the girls feared they would be perceived as less able than others. As a result, it was hard to foster body functionality. The private school setting further heightened this reaction. While the programming was extracurricular, the girls could not completely divorce themselves from seeking approval through the student-teacher relationship. They still saw me as a superior and as someone who they needed to impress. Their regular teachers emphasized to the girls the need to be exemplary in their deference and behaviour to represent the school positively. Lastly, the high level of dance experience in the room was difficult for girls who were involved in other extracurricular activities. This led me to question how the girls would react if the session had taken place outside of the school setting. By removing students' need to impress common in academic study, I wondered if this same competitive comparison would occur.

In reviewing the responses of girls at School B I continue to have concerns about how to effectively address body image in the classroom. The central goal of this research is find useful teaching tactics for helping to create a body positive environment for students. Coming out of my work at School A I decided that making some decisions for the participating girls would be helpful. Selecting one song for all groups to use as accompaniment to their choreography was the

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way I did this. However, the reactions of girls in the all-girls setting point to the need to make the creative activity students are engaging in (i.e. in this case dance making) a collective one. Girls at School B used the same sources of inspiration for their dances but ultimately saw their work as an opportunity to compare and compete with one another. This is in direct opposition to my goal of improving body image issues. The question to be answered then is how a teacher can use enabled constraints to inspire a sense of community and collective problem solving in their students. One way I could do this would be to select musical accompaniment that is unfamiliar to students and less leading thematically. The girls at School B knew the Megan Trainor song I selected and were generally comfortable with dancing to the pop music genre it comes from. Moreover, the message of the song (i.e. what it means to be a "lady") leaves little room for girls' personal interpretation. What would happen if I gave the girls instrumental music instead of something with words? Being less descriptive this type of music would encourage girls to work together to interpret what they hear in the music. That could then lead to more collaboration between group members and relatedly a less competitive attitude toward the task at hand.

Finding more ways for girls to relate to each other is another key idea I came away with from this session. Being in a same-sex environment does not lead girls to feel they belong completely by itself. Girls use and experience difficulties with their bodies in many ways. They struggle with being differently abled, coming from different socioeconomic backgrounds, training in certain sports, or are influenced by differing cultural norms. I wondered how girls would react to each other and how their dances would differ if they shared a particular embodied struggle. If they were all experienced or inexperienced dancers, had the same physical difference, or came from the same cultural background, would they feel more comfortable with one another? Moreover, if there are more commonalities in how the girls experience their bodies, would their

choreography reflect those shared ideas rather than a sense of competition? Moving on from School B, I saw value in further homogenizing the population of the Work It Out classroom. The relationships girls had with their bodies at School B were extremely diverse. Some danced, some played sports, and all had a different struggle in relation to their bodies. What would happen if all the girls in the program had a common body-based issue? In the final case study, I worked with girls who were all T1 diabetics. Would their primary body struggle with diabetes trump the concerns girls at School B had with their varying abilities in dance that were so influential? As the school setting is inherently competitive, would girls' fixation on impressing me and doing well be lessened if the program took place in a recreational setting?

Overall, at School B, the girls-only setting was much more conducive to achieving the goal of Work It Out. The competitive attitude evident due to the all-girls setting was an impediment to building body functionality, though it yielded better connections between girls. The key to dealing with competition between the girls was to amplify the creative dance aspect of Work It Out. The heightened level of social comfort the girls felt in this setting allowed them to discuss their feelings more openly than at School A. This improved connection between peers in discussion and allowed the girls to share their feelings about not having experience in dance. Over time, this helped them to find methods to deal with with their concerns with body functionality. Seeing how resiliently the girls collaborated with one another and how candidly they shared their experiences illustrates that dance practice is a productive tool to generate social belonging and self-expression.

Chapter 6: Case Study 3– Dancing with Type 1 Diabetes

> I am proud of the career I had as a ballerina, but my real story is about learning how to live with, honor and respect the self and the body. My story is about living a full life, and not letting obstacles defeat you and dissuade you from following your heart. (Karz 2011)

Her body was screaming for help, but Zippora Karz would not listen. As an eighteen-year-old soloist in American Ballet Theatre, Karz was just beginning to get noticed as a dancer. She was too busy putting her budding career as a professional dancer first and there was no time to do anything except train. The cries Karz's body sent out eventually became louder and very obtrusive. Unquenchable thirst, constant hunger, dizziness, frequent urination, extreme fatigue, and oozing sores under her arms worsened the longer she disregarded them. When these symptoms began to affect her dancing, Karz finally sought medical attention. Only then did she receive the message her body had been trying to relay—Zippora Karz had T1D. Commonly referred to as "juvenile diabetes," T1D is the autoimmune form of diabetes, which causes a person's body to attack the insulin-producing beta cells located in the pancreas. The result of the immune system's confusion renders the affected person dependent on insulin therapy[1] in order to live. Despite its colloquial name (i.e., juvenile diabetes), T1D can surface at any age but most commonly occurs during childhood and adolescence. It is not caused by lifestyle, cannot be stopped, and is incurable at this time (Perkins and Riddell 2006).

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[1] Canadian medical scientist Sir Frederick Banting discovered insulin in 1921 along with the help of his colleague, Dr. Charles Best (McClatchy 2016). Banting received the Nobel Prize for his findings, which were monumental in treating a condition that had previously been a death sentence. While his discovery led to many innovations in treating T1D, Banting was fervent in communicating that there remains more work to be done since, "insulin is not a cure for diabetes; it is a treatment. It enables the diabetic to burn sufficient carbohydrates, so that proteins and fats may be added to the diet in sufficient quantities to provide energy for the economic burdens of life" (1923, n.p). World Diabetes Day is celebrated each year on Banting's birthday, November 14, in honour of his work with diabetes.

Having diabetes did not mean that Karz could not dance, but it did make her different from other dancers. If she wanted to continue to dance, controlling her diabetes needed to be a priority, though it meant taking time to manage her blood sugar—something no other dancers she knew had to do. As Karz (2011) explains, "when the diabetes hit my body went through so many things and my dancing changed. It was such a heartbreak for me" (4). At the center of Karz's story is how having a physical difference like diabetes alters body image. As such, Karz's story adds a new layer to understanding the relationship between technical performance and aesthetics in the dance classroom—how does having a noticed physical difference as a dancer (and in the dance setting) complicate a person's ability to cultivate positive body image?

Understanding the effects of enduring illness on body image is a subject I relate to intimately. In April 2014, two weeks after accepting my offer to pursue doctoral studies at York University, I too was diagnosed with T1D. My diagnosis, much like for Karz, came as a shock. In the days and months to follow, I acquired more information about my body and how it functioned than I had ever cared to know. Multiple self-administered needles and finger pricks became my new normal; food had to be weighed, measured, and calculated to match the ratios doctors estimated would meet my insulin needs. However, much like Karz, the most trying aspect of my new life with T1D was the way it altered the relationship I had with my body. I questioned whether I could continue to dance, teach fitness, and pursue my studies with T1D. While the answer was "yes," it required a great amount of care to manage my blood sugar and deal with my physical difference. Having lived through the initial trials and tribulations of my T1D diagnosis, I can now confidently state that my involvement with dance practice has not been dampened. However, the experience raised new queries in my research on girlhood, body image, and dance education.

In dance, unlike sport, the body is assessed both on technical ability and visual appeal. This means that the pressure to perform for a dancer is not only about the physical mastery of technical movements, but also focused on how the body looks while dancing. Foster (1997) discusses the significance of physical appearance on the success of a dancer's career. For each genre of dance, Foster (1997) explains, there are accompanying corporeal characteristics that form an ideal towards which dancers strive. For example, ballet has a tendency towards long-limbed and thin dancers, where Graham technique requires strong, athletic builds. While Foster admits that the specific features of these ideal bodies partially connect to the movement demands of each technique, her main message in discussing these ideals centers on the link between dance and body image. According to Foster (1997), the attainment of an ideal physique is a difficult—if not impossible—goal for many dancers. This struggle is especially apparent when considering the influence of genetics and puberty, which alter the aesthetics of a dancer's body:

> The dancer pursues a certain technique for reforming the body, and the body seems to conform to the instructions given. Yet suddenly, inexplicably, it diverges from expectations, reveals new dimensions, and mutely declares its unwillingness or inability to execute commands. […] Dancers constantly apprehend the discrepancy between what they want to do and what they can do. (Foster 1997, 236)

Foster's remarks point to an interesting juxtaposition of body image's influence in the dance world. Specifically, she points to how training in a technical dance style calls dancers to seek control over their bodies. This is problematic because there are aspects of their physicality that cannot be controlled. Yes, dancers can manage how much training they undertake, which may lead to performing particular steps successfully. However, Foster's discussion makes clear that regardless of how skilled at movement dancers may become, the aesthetics of their bodies as ideal for their chosen technique is the key to becoming a star. Most important to this research is Foster's admission that there are certain physical characteristics (e.g. body shape, height,

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musculature, genetics, or disability) that dancers do not have control over but could be perceived as combative to success in the dance classroom.

Researchers have discussed this concept of the ideal body as an area requiring improvement in dance pedagogy, particularly due to its effects on the female dancing body. O'Flynn, Pryor, and Gray (2013) report trends in how experience in the formal dance classroom produces gendered conceptualizations of the female body. The authours' interviews with nine young female dancers collectively demonstrate the girls' concerns with being looked at, meeting aesthetic preferences, and monitoring body size. For this reason, researchers in body image (e.g., Alleva et al. 2015; Englen-Maddox 2005; Lambert et al. 2009; Martin and Lichtenberger 2002; Myers and Crowther 2009; Slater and Tiggemann 2002) have identified dance training as a starting point for possible self-objectification.

An objectifying approach to the body's appearance is not exclusive to dancers. Kartawidjaja and Cordero (2013) study trends in college students' negative self-talk, and have found that students who were dance majors did not have higher instances of body dissatisfaction. Rather, the severity of negative body image or what they call "fat talk" relates to the girls' body mass index (BMI) and personal subscriptions to popularized notions of female beauty. These findings add to my discussion of body image and T1D in their acknowledgement that any perceived difference from an embodied ideal influences girls' relationships to their bodies. The further away girls perceive themselves to be from their ideal body type, the greater their feelings of alienation from their bodies.

When looking at T1D and body image, attaining an ideal body as a dancer is a complicated task. Dealing with the challenges of the disease along with culturally-constructed, embodied expectations creates conflicting goals for T1D dancers. A T1D dancer's body image

includes a necessary idealization of health defined in terms of controlling glucose levels, along with how treatment of these health issues impacts body aesthetics. Some of these physical challenges include wearing medical equipment (e.g., insulin pump, continuous glucose monitor); using insulin, which heightens the potential for weight fluctuations; and continually monitoring and controlling blood glucose levels (e.g., testing with a glucometer, fear/prevention of high or low blood sugars). Using worn technology along with insulin enables T1D dancers to have more control medically over their blood glucose levels and to perform better physically in dance. However, these worn devices are not easily hidden from sight and announce the dancers' physical difference to others. Moreover, wearing medical equipment does not fit into any of the idealized images of a dancer's body Foster (1997) discusses.

Beyond Type One, a philanthropic website dedicated to sharing stories about life with T1D, provides an example of the T1D dance-specific body conceptualization. One of the articles on the website, "Insulin Pumps and Princesses" (May 2016), was written by Michelle LeGault, mother to a young T1 diabetic, Winnifred. Throughout the piece, LeGault calls attention to how aware her daughter is of her physical differences, which she fears is influencing Winnifred's body image. LeGault voices the toddler's concerns through Winnifred's observation that "ballerinas and princesses do not check their sugar or wear insulin pumps," which Winnifred informed her mother also meant that she could not become a "real dancer" (LeGault 2016). In this example, Winnifred acknowledges her conflicting concerns about her physical difference (i.e., the need to maintain her health) and her desire to satisfy bodily aesthetics. In so doing, she echoes Foster's conclusions concerning the extreme influence of the ideal body in dancers' body image. Winnifred knows that as she has T1D, she needs to wear her insulin pump and test her blood glucose levels in order to dance safely. However, through popular media (e.g., Disney

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princesses and ballet posters), Winnifred has developed an understanding that only one type of body can be a dancer—one without an insulin pump.

The use of insulin also presents the potential for body image concerns relating to weight gain. Insulin is a necessary drug for those with T1D. Without it, blood glucose levels rise, remain elevated, and can lead to life threatening complications (i.e., diabetic ketoacidosis). If taken properly, insulin helps to keep blood glucose levels within a safe range. However, if a mistake is made (i.e., miscalculated carbohydrates, more or less intense physical activity than expected, illness, or emotional stress), blood glucose levels can drop or rise unexpectedly. High blood glucose levels are treated with insulin, where low blood glucose readings require the consumption of fast acting sugar. If a person with T1D experiences frequent lows, it can lead to weight gain due to eating extra calories. Returning to Kartawidjaja and Cordero's (2013) study, BMI is extremely important to girls' body image. Following this finding, T1D girls often have conflicted feelings resulting from weight gain as a result of treating their disease.

For those with T1D, an unhealthy method for weight loss may be achieved by allowing blood glucose levels to run higher than normal and omitting some insulin use. Allowing blood sugars to be high activates the body's natural response of glycosuria, the purging of excess sugar and calories through the urine. Gonçalves, Barros, and Gomes (2013) underscore the need to treat and recognize T1D-specific body image issues. The authours state that for some T1D girls, engaging in the behaviour identified above—termed "dia-bulimia," a recognized eating disorder (Goebel-Fabbri 2013)—aims to lower BMI, to return them to the weight they were prior to diagnosis and insulin use. In light of these risks, layering bodily aesthetics from the dance world on top of the health ideals necessary for controlling blood sugar places diabetic dancers in a

perpetual state of conflict. In order to dance, they must focus on health (i.e., wearing medical equipment and taking insulin), while grappling with dancers' body ideals.

In this chapter, I discuss the third session of Work It Out, which ran as a recreational program exclusively for T1D girls. My personal experiences with dance and diabetes as well as the previous case studies fuelled my choice to run this T1D session. Specifically, I was impacted by my interaction with Daniela, a T1 diabetic at School A, who expressed her desire to continue with my lessons. The prevalence of competition between girls at School B in regards to body aesthetics and ability further reiterated how strong an effect a perceived physical difference can have on girls' body image. I construct this case study as representing "difference" more generally because diabetic dancers are not unlike other dancers who exhibit a physical difference they cannot control (e.g., dancers of colour, differently abled dancers, or dancers with other health issues). Regardless of what specific physical difference a dancer may have, the common issue faced is the obstacles they encounter in reaching aesthetic ideals for reasons out of their control. Thus, the leading question I address in this chapter is: How can dance help girls who are disconnected from their bodies because of a perceived difference, which makes fulfilling beauty ideals impossible?

Setting the Scene: Type 1 Diabetes and Dance Sessions

In this case study, I needed to think critically about how to approach T1D participants. Specifically, going into this session I paid close attention to methods for cultivating a sense of belonging in the classroom. Moving out of my two previous case studies, I had learned how helpful homogenizing the classroom could be in making girls feel more comfortable to be themselves. When dealing with T1D dancers, this became increasingly important due to their health issues. Outside of the T1D dance classroom, the girls were acutely aware of how and why

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they were different from their peers. In a room full of girls at their regular studios, they were

regarded as "the diabetic girl[s] in the room" (Anna 2017). As a result, the girls had developed

ways to "pass" as healthy in order to downplay their physical differences. However, as I aimed to

learn about their ideas on T1D, we needed to normalize this difference in the classroom. I further

discuss this idea of passing and how I addressed it in the classroom later in this chapter.

In this section, I explain the situational and pedagogical considerations I took into

account when running this session of Work It Out. At the center of these innovations, I aimed to

increase girls' sense of belonging in the classroom to diminish their tendency towards passing.

Here, I describe both the physical and social context of our lessons. Specifically, I discuss how I

came to work with these girls and how the organization of this recreational session differed from

the previous sessions in the schools. This is important as the timeframe and voluntary nature of

this session led to some significant changes in how I approached the three-part lessons and

surveys.

This session of Work It Out took place at York University as a series of four single

classes held on weekends from mid-May to mid-June 2017. Due to the voluntary nature of this

session, participants could drop in for one or more classes. I advertised the classes with the help

of I Challenge Diabetes (ICD), a nonprofit organization founded by Canadian Olympic rower

and T1 diabetic Chris Jarvis.[2] This organization focuses on arranging social events for children,

young adults, and families living with diabetes. It advertised the classes as "Dance Days with

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[2] My relationship with Chris Jarvis began six months after my diagnosis with T1D. I met him at the
Niagara Falls International Marathon, which I had trained for and was running. Jarvis had also trained to
run the race and had posted about his participation on ICD's website. He asked that individuals with T1D
introduce themselves and arranged for a group of people to have dinner together the night before the race.
Since that race, I have worked alongside Jarvis at a number of different athletics and diabetes events. He
is a well-known ambassador for T1D, and having his support to advertise my work was an important
factor in recruiting participants for my study.

Deanna," one of the many events included in ICD's calendar of activities for people with T1D, by sending out a promotional poster to local diabetes clinics and posting event details on ICD's website and in its monthly newsletter. My preexisting relationship with ICD as a counselor allowed me to enlist the help of Jarvis to run these classes and conduct this research.

In total, ten girls with T1D attended my classes. Ranging in age from 10 to 12, the participants had lived with T1D for varying amounts of time and had not met each other prior to the lessons. Experience with dance was common among the whole group mostly as a recreational activity, with a few girls involved in competitive dance teams. Only two of the girls who participated attended multiple classes within the four-week period. As a result, the relationships I established with the girls during this session of Work It Out varied immensely from the two previous groups. The most pressing difference I needed to address in this scenario concerned the amount of time I had to interact with participating girls.

Structurally, this session was much shorter than in the schools. Whereas students at School A and B gradually choreographed their dances over twelve weeks, the T1D participants had a single lesson. This difference was concerning for me: would the girls be able to cultivate the same understanding of the emotional reasons behind their choreography in such a short time? Or, would they be distracted by the need to assemble their movements before the end of class? In order to deal with this difference, I simplified the Work It Out workbook and extended our lessons to two hours in length. Having extra time in a single session allowed us to have more conversation and slow down the speed of our classroom action. My hope was that in doing so, the girls would feel less rushed and therefore have more time to connect with each other and discuss their ideas.

Another important factor in the construction of this session was its setting, the dance studios at York University. Being in an actual dance studio instead of a library or a gymnasium could have heightened awareness of ideal bodies in dance. Considering my program's aversion to being linked to a particular technique, I feared that teaching girls in such a traditional dance setting would hinder the inclusive nature of the program, and encourage the girls to "pass." Although I could not remove all markers of technical dance from the space, I tried to do so. A very important modification I made was to cover the studio mirrors and face away from them while dancing, which discouraged the girls from assessing their dancing by appearance. Using large drapes to cover the mirrors helped the girls to focus on their movement rather than the aesthetic aspects of dancing.

Although I covered the mirrors from end to end, some girls still found ways to access them. We placed all diabetes supplies (i.e., glucometers, lancing devices, low supplies, and water bottles) in the back corner of the room near the mirrored wall. In reviewing the filmed footage of the sessions, I noticed that each time a girl went to check her blood glucose or take a drink of water, she would lift the curtain and look at herself. In total, different girls lifted the curtain a total of twenty times. The girls' glances were quick and almost always aimed at adjusting the placement of their tubed insulin pump or moving clothing to cover any worn diabetes technology. This reaction is interesting as it reveals the girls' deeply held concern of visibility. Generally, the girls were quite open about testing blood glucose levels and talking about diabetes. However, they were still aware their diabetes could be easily seen. I discuss this concern later in this chapter as well.

Another way I tried to deal with the limited timeframe of the classes was to send a welcome email to all participating girls. At the end of each week, ICD notified me of how many

students I should expect. They also provided me with the emails of parents who registered their children. One of the main benefits of having twelve weeks with the girls at Schools A and B was the ability to build relationships with them. In this context, relationship building was difficult. In order to help with this issue, I sent each participant a personal email introducing myself. The email explained that I was also a T1 diabetic and wore a pump and continuous glucose monitor. I told them about my experience in dance and some silly facts about my likes and dislikes (i.e., favourite colour, musical artists, and movies), which I hoped would help to build common ground between us emotionally. The email ended by telling them that I was very excited for our class and that we would have a lot of fun together. Although this approach did not completely make up for the short time I had to get to know the students, it made the girls feel like they knew something about me before our lesson. Upon their arrival at the studio, some girls referred to my email, making statements such as:

> *Deanna, I wear the same pump as you. I have mine on my tummy today. Where is your pod?* (Lina 2017)

> *I really like the Justin Timberlake song from Trolls too. Can we dance to that today?* (Amanda 2017)

> *Are you wearing that shirt today cause red is your favourite colour? I like blue—that's why I chose these running shoes.* (Holly 2017)

These statements collectively demonstrate how important feeling a connection to me was in quickly developing comfort in the classroom. Knowing little facts about me helped the girls to feel as though they knew me prior to seeing me in person. Additionally, knowing that we shared more than just our T1D made the girls feel as though we could understand each other. This helped to build a sense of belonging within the group and reduced their desire to "pass" in front of me.

The Performance of "Passing"

This case study illustrates how having a noticeable physical difference (such as T1D) promotes a desire to "pass" in the dance classroom. Coming from critical race theory, the idea of passing describes "strategic and wholly intentional performances by individuals to mask a hated identity with a less threatening one" (Renfrow 2004, 489). Through behavior or dressing in a particular way, individuals attempt to tone down their difference in an effort to gain acceptance from peers and attain a desired status within society (Delgado and Stefancic 2017). The severity of the potential backlash a person could face due to their difference is entirely dependent upon how counter their physical difference is in relation to the norms of their society. In this section, I apply the idea of passing to the social context of the dance classroom. I first discuss the dance studio as a social space informed by culturally-constructed identities and power relations (Atencio and Wright 2009; Lefebvre 1991; Van Ingen 2003). Foucault's (1983) idea that institutions like classrooms are inherently "dividing spaces" serves as the basis from which I consider how and why dancers are forced to negotiate difference in the dance classroom. Given that passing is not typically used to describe the T1D experience, I use examples of scholarly work exploring its use more generally in gaining social acceptance (Goffman 1959, 1963; Renfrow 2004; Van Ingen 2003), as well as research on race in Western dance classrooms (Archer, Halsall, and Hollingworth 2007; Gillborn 2006; Mills 1997; Rottenberg 2003) and disability studies (Kuppers 2015; Samuels 2015; Brune & Wilson 2013; Sibers 2004; Garland – Thomson 1997; Davis 1995;). I conclude with a discussion of research documenting the prevalence of "peer victimization" or bullying against adolescents living with T1D (Stortch et al. 2004) in order to provide insight into the social stress specific to T1D. The experience that connects the use of passing for dancers of colour to T1D dancers is their common struggle to

meet the archetype of the ideal dance body. Whether that ideal is to be white or to be perceived as healthy/nondisabled, both groups occupy a position where in order to be accepted, they feel the need to pass as someone other than who they are.

The dance studio is a space for learning movement but also social norms. Foucault's (1983) work resonates in this discussion of institutionalized spaces enabling cultural constructions. To Foucault, the repetition of particular discourses leads to the acceptance of those ideas as "truths" in society. In spaces such as schools and prisons where information and daily activities are extremely regulated, individuals are at risk of being objectified as "other." In this way, Foucault views such regulated spaces as environments that employ dividing practices. Linking Foucault to my case study on difference in the dance classroom, a dancer whose body diverges from the ideal or norm of a technique may easily fall into the category of "other." Dance and its prescribed notions about the body serve as the dividing practices here.

Atencio and Wright (2009) discuss how educational settings establish racial, gendered, and class hierarchies. In their view, dance classes that teach Eurocentric or Westernized art forms like ballet are "constructed by and constitutive of social identities, practices, and power relations" (33). The hierarchy established through the continued teaching of such codified techniques results in "the deployment of 'white' attitudes, emotions, practices and institutions that are integral to the long-term domination of Americans of colour" (34). As a result, the ideal that white bodies are superior to black bodies in the dance classroom is spread.

From a dance education perspective, the valorizing of ballet as a superior dance form has resulted in the othering of dance styles and bodies not from the West. Dance, then, can be understood as a divided practice in itself (Foucault 1983). Mills (1997) reports "students of dance in the West learn early that ballet is the pinnacle of the dance world and 'ethnic dance'

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[…] is at the lower rung" (154). Such thinking perpetuates the idea that black bodies who perform African dances or derivatives of such dances are "primitive," "natural," or "ethnic." When compared to the image of the ballerina body, which is linked to artistry and precision, black bodies are understood as highly expressive but lacking in technical ability (Desmond 1991). By linking black bodies to a version of dance that is less worthy than ballet, dancers of colour have been, by association, delegated as outsiders to the dance world. Such ideas hold weight in the dance classroom because they have become so embedded in our understanding of ideal dancing bodies. Many school curricula use Western dances as the basis for their pedagogy, and terms such as "world" or "ethnic" dance to describe any movement form that is outside of ballet (Gillborn 2006). This trend has effectively normalized the alienation of any non-white bodies in the dance classroom, as their race excludes them from ever completely attaining the ideal dance body (Archer, Halsall, and Hollingsworth 2007).

In my research the T1D girls' desire to pass was fuelled by their view that having diabetes meant they were disabled. Moreover, their identification as diabetic dancers announced a specific and uncontrollable way that their bodies differed from the ideal dancing bodies they strove for. Dealing with disability through passing has been discussed by scholars (Samuels 2015; Kuppers 2015; Garland-Thompson 1997; Ginsberg 1996; Davis 1995) in an effort to expand upon the multitude of reasons a person with a disability might wish to hide their physical difference. Samuels (2015) explains that, "while disability is often conceived as both obviously and immediately legible on the body, most disabilities become perceptible only according to context and circumstance" (135). Relating Samuels' ideas to the dance classroom where the body is heavily assessed sets up an environment where having a physical disability is highlighted. Following that line of thought having a noticeable disability in the dance classroom, "is often

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described as evoking a stare of enfreakment, [whereas] nonvisably disabled people who refuse to pass are confronted with the stare of disbelief" (Samuels 135-136). As a result, a dancer living with a physical disability like T1D is subjected to "a diagnostic and objectifying gaze" (Samuels 136) that compares them to ideal dance bodies that are considered healthy. The point to be made here is that the act of passing is specific to a desire to socially overcome a noticeable and uncontrollable difference. Whether that difference is based in an individual's race, religion, sex, or a physical disability the key goal of my discussion is to highlight "the complex negotiations that take place among bodies, perceptions, and social values" (Samuels 137) that influence the ways that people dealing with difference face. For dancers living with T1D then passing relates specifically to their desire to be perceived as not diabetic and relatedly to avoid being perceived as an "other" within then dance classroom.

In order to combat the effects of being considered an outsider, dancers who are physically different employ the use of passing. Van Ingen (2003) argues that physical activity spaces are specifically "linked to the social construction of dominant ideologies and to the politics of identity" (210). The appearance of our bodies and how we use them (i.e., words used, gestures) communicates how we fit into the peer group in which we socialize. Van Ingen's (2003) ideas echo Foster's (1997) discussion of the ideal body coveted in the dance world. For both of these scholars, the activity (i.e., dance) spurs participants on a path to both present themselves in a particular way (e.g. as white or not diabetic). For this reason, in the dance classroom, a dancer's noticed physical difference, in some cases leads to exclusion—unless a person can mask his/her difference and pass as looking closer to the coveted ideal. Goffman's (1959, 1969) earlier work supports this idea in understanding passing as a social tool and performance geared towards managing impressions (i.e., initial interactions, physical appearance) and avoiding stigmatization

(i.e., hiding or masking a difference that holds a negative social stigma). Kuppers (2015) agrees with Goffman and his ideas on passing as a social performance that can become commonplace for a person if practiced overtime. However, Kuppers expands upon the influence of passing through performance by highlighting some artists in dance and theatre who have chosen to openly display their physical difference. She discusses examples such as: AXIS Dance Company, Cleveland Dancing Wheels, and the DisAbility Project all of which are comprised of performers with physical disabilities. In these cases, Kuppers questions how being so open about physical difference affects the perception of these artists. She questions whether they are taken as seriously as able-bodied dancers, if they are considered to be "pretty good" despite their physical difference, or if they are taken as a "side-show" of sorts (Kuppers 2015). What I take away from Goffman (1959; 1969) and Kuppers' (2015) collective views on passing is that the choice to pass is rooted in a person's desire for acceptance. Moreover, choosing to pass is a serious decision that could have emotional and social repercussions on how a person interprets their physical difference.

Below, I apply Goffman's (1959, 1963) ideas to examples of dancers who have employed such behaviours to pass in dance. Unlike the companies mentioned by Kuppers (2015) the dancers I speak about here have chosen to minimize or hide their physical difference in an effort to pass within the dance community. Specifically, I relate the careers of African American ballerinas Misty Copeland and Michaela DePrince to the responses of the T1D dancers who partook in my programming. I do not mean to imply here that one physical difference is more challenging than another in the dance classroom; rather I aim to convey here the diverse ways passing can be employed to deal with difference in the dance setting.

Managing Impressions

First impressions are integral to how people perceive each other's character. Goffman's (1963) understanding of passing initially underscores the importance of "managing impressions." To Goffman, how people alter their appearance or way of speaking to appeal to peers during a first meeting is the starting point for recognizing the value a person sees in passing. Renfrow (2004) argues managing impressions is a passing behaviour that is more quotidian than situational. As such, passing becomes naturalized to those doing it overtime (Renfrow 2004). This is especially true for individuals who continue to interact within social circles where they view passing as key to their acceptance. The career of African American ballerina Misty Copeland serves as a prime example of naturalized or "everyday" passing behavior (Renfrow 2004) in the dance world.

Copeland's rise to becoming the first African American principal dancer in the prestigious American Ballet Theatre Company (ABT) has been characterized in the media as a triumph for dancers of colour. While Copeland's appointment as a principal dancer at ABT has been celebrated, it has also been met with some controversy, specifically in regards to her body type and race. Copeland (2014) speaks to these issues in her autobiography. Copeland was told that having a more muscular frame, long torso, and shorter legs would keep her from a career in ballet. Mentioning her race as a point of difference from the ideal ballet body, Copeland subtly alludes to the lack of racial diversity in the ballet world. With the storylines of most famous ballets being of European decent, the majority of lead female roles are typified as white. With this in mind, Copeland explains that when preparing for a role, "you have to know the appropriate way to adorn each story and character with your body" (8). Using her first principal role as the Firebird as an example, Copeland describes her movements as "exotic" and "creature-

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like." She concludes that throughout that performance, she kept telling herself that she was dancing "for the little brown girls" (12) that night.

Copeland's description of her first performance as a principal dancer connects directly to the concept of passing and the management of first impressions in ballet. Copeland's first impression to the ABT audience as a principal dancer was in a role that built upon held assumptions about the black body's role in relation to the white body in ballet. While she danced the lead role that evening, she danced as an animal and not a human character. Copeland's understanding of her place in various roles since that initial performance was rooted in her experience as "a black woman, […] [who] always had an understanding that I'm an actress when I step onto the stage" (Copeland 2012, 08:17). Copeland demonstrates that she is aware of the ways being black made her different from the commonly seen bodies in ballet. She continues to manage how her audience sees her by performing roles that coincide with racist ideas about black bodies while masking her difference by acting with and through her body.

Passing through performance is a theme common to my T1D participants' impression management. For the T1D dancers, their main concern surrounded keeping their disease private. Although, their close friends, family, and regular dance teachers knew about their T1D, the girls did not want "strangers," "people in the audience at shows," or "judges at dance competitions" to notice their difference. When asked to write in their Body Brainstorm worksheets about how they dealt with their diabetes on stage, 95 percent of the girls said they removed or hid their insulin pumps. The remaining 5 percent were not using insulin pumps but said that they tested their blood glucose levels in the bathroom before going on stage. As this experience was so common, I asked the girls to comment on why removing an insulin pump for their time on stage was different from their regular dance classes. The girls responded:

In my normal dance class, everyone knows about it [T1D] and so I don't worry about what they think of me. Like, they know what it [the insulin pump] is. So I know they won't ask me silly questions about it and stuff. They all know me so I don't think my diabetes will affect how they talk to me or treat me. (Amanda 2017)

I dunno, it's kinda weird to some people that I wear a part of my body outside my body. So people stare at it and, like, feel sorry for me. I don't like it. So, if I take it off, no one sees and no one says anything. I had one lady at a competition keep looking at my pump cause it was on my arm but didn't say anything about it. [It] kinda felt like she was distracted by it and I was embarrassed. (Rachel 2017)

You never know what people will say. I've had some mean things said to me when people see my pump or see me test my blood sugar. Like, one girl said it was gross cause there was blood. Another lady asked my mom if I had cancer cause she thought my pump was, like, giving me cancer medicine or something. (Monica 2017)

In dance, everyone is supposed to, like, look the same on stage. So if I wore a pump with my costume and no one else is, the judges would see it. Kinda throws off the look, you know? I mean I want to be like my group and not the girl standing out for my pump to judges. (Phoebe 2017)

The T1D girls were most concerned about the visibility of their difference to others. Moreover, they were concerned about how the new people they met or the dance teachers that judge competitions would alter their impression of them if they could see their condition—that these people would "pity," "think bad things," or see them as "gross" because they had diabetes. These girls' responses directly coincide with Samuels' (2015) explanation that for many people living with a physical disability choosing to pass is fuelled by a desire to avoid "enfreakment" or stares from peers (136). Hiding their worn technology enables the girls to pass as not diabetic and therefore visually assimilate more easily in with their fellow dancers.

The girls' experience differs from Copeland in that Copeland could not hide her difference as a black dancer in ballet. However, where Copeland's passing relates to the T1D girls is in their common use of stage tactics to soften their difference on stage. For Copeland, this meant dancing particular roles by characterizing the movements and exaggerating them (i.e.,

playing up the exotic and athletic aspect of the Firebird character). In so doing, Copeland crossed "the color line and [gained] acceptance into a race other than one's own" (Delgado and Stefancic 2017, 181)—white ballet—in hopes of gaining higher cultural status within the dance world. For the T1D dancers, their concerns about being perceived as normal (i.e., healthy) stood in for racial discrimination. If a person with T1D can pass as healthy (i.e., not have high or low blood glucose episodes, hide worn equipment, avoid weight fluctuations, and partake in activities like peers do), they can avoid being excluded from certain relationships or activities in dance. In the case of the T1D dancers, their impression management strategies included hiding diabetes when on stage or meeting new people. The dancers passed by choosing how to present themselves to an audience and when to disclose their disease to others. For both Copeland and the girls, idealized notions of dancing bodies (i.e., black bodies as primitive and dancer bodies as healthy) governed their choices in self-representation and their efforts to participate in the dance world without social ridicule.

Avoiding Stigmatization

A highly influential reason to pass for those who exhibit a difference is to avoid stigmatization. For Goffman (1959, 1963), avoidance of stigma relates to behaviours that hide who a person really is. This is not to say that the negative social connotations connected to a person's difference are true, but rather demonstrates the influence of stigma on behaviour. Placing Renfrow (2004) and the concept of everyday passing into conversation with Goffman (1959, 1963) highlights the element of "escaping." For Renfrow (2004), the continual adoption of passing behaviours "offers individuals the potential to escape the expectations others impose on them because of their group membership and its related stigma" (488). Research on a range of stigmatized differences such as homelessness (Anderson, Snow, and Cress 1994), HIV/AIDS

(Weitz 1990), and learning disabilities (Rueda and Mehan 1986) has shown how common the use of passing is, and demonstrated that passing serves as a vehicle for fitting in as well as escaping. The problem with this escapist reaction is that it makes difference synonymous with negativity. Such thinking may cause an individual to feel shame, resentment, and even guilt, suggesting a heightened risk for different dancers who try to pass.

DePrince's experience of stigma is multifaceted. First, her status as a girl with skin pigmentation made her an outsider in Sierra Leone. When she arrived in America and began dance lessons, the colour of her skin continued to be a source of othering. To combat such reactions, DePrince continued to use the name her adopted parents gave her in performance and covered her skin with makeup on stage. In so doing, ballet companies and teachers reading her name for an audition would not know she was black without seeing her in person. When performing, her skin pigmentation was obscured with stage makeup. Another way DePrince

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The life story and career of black ballet dancer Michaela DePrince further illustrates this idea of escaping stigma by passing. In her book (DePrince and DePrince 2016), which she coauthoured with her adoptive mother, DePrince shares how when she was born Mabinty Bangura in Sierra Leone following the bloody civil war, her early life was characterized by death and extreme poverty. Rebels killed her biological parents, leaving her an orphan. In the orphanage, DePrince was called a "devil's child" due to her vilitigo, a condition which caused depigmentation of her skin, and which was not understood by the community. As a result, DePrince was considered an "other" and was treated badly. Eventually, an American couple adopted DePrince and brought her to the United States. Once there, they changed her name to Michaela DePrince and she enrolled in ballet lessons, something she had longed to do for some time.

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attempted to escape stigmatization in the dance world was by altering her costumes to fit the colour of her skin. When on stage with bright lighting, DePrince stood out next to her fellow ballerinas because leotards and ballet shoe ribbons were not made dark enough. Her desire to blend in with her fellow dancers led DePrince to take on the extra work of hand-dying all of her tights and ribbons. In so doing, she could pass by making her costumes fit her body and skin more similarly to her fellow dancers. Wishing to avoid being stigmatized as a black ballerina, DePrince tried her best to blend in with her fellow performers and look as similar to the other white dancers as possible.

Diabetes and the diabetic body encounter their own social stigmas and stereotypes. Such ideas have been created and supported by the media/popular culture and misunderstandings about the disease and its many forms.[3] The girls in this session of Work It Out were very aware of stereotypes about diabetics, specifically how people view diabetics as less able and more idle:

> *Everyone always says, "Oh you must have eaten a lot of sugar and that's why you're so sick now."* (Monica 2017)

> *Some people say I don't look diabetic because I'm not fat enough. People always think that diabetes means that you are fat.* (Rachel 2017)

> *This one teacher at school thought I had to, like, sit out of soccer and gym because of my diabetes. It's like she thought I was just gonna fall over and die in class or something. I was like, "Uh, no, I can play." So annoying!* (Amanda 2017)

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[3] There are three known iterations of diabetes. While all have the common symptom of having to manage blood glucose levels, the causes, treatment, and prognosis for each type is very different. Type 1 diabetes is the autoimmune version of diabetes where the pancreas is rendered unable to produce insulin. Type 1 diabetics are completely insulin dependent. Type 2 diabetes (T2D) is more common in older adults, and results from damage to the pancreas that makes it less able to produce insulin but not entirely unable in all cases. It can be caused by poor diet or lifestyle but can also be attributed to age and genetics. T2 diabetics are not always on insulin therapy and may be able to manage blood glucose with diet, exercise, and other medication. Gestational diabetes is the third form of the disease and is found in pregnant women only. This form of diabetes renders pregnant women dependent on insulin for the months they are with child and usually goes away once they have given birth (Beyond Type 1 2018)

Despite the clear evidence of the girls' experience with stigma, little research has examined the long-term effects of these attitudes among diabetics (Schabert et al. 2013). Schabert et al. (2013) provide one of the few examples of work that acknowledges the role that mental health plays in the continued maintenance of T1D. Synthesizing the work of other social psychologists (Link and Phelan 2001; Major and O'Brien 2005), Schabert et al. (2013) propose that the stigmatization of diabetes in society places those living with T1D in a state of "identity threat." This means that people with T1D are often equated with negative characteristics resulting in feelings of shame, depression, and resentfulness towards their bodies and disease.

In reviewing my participants' responses, the term "identity threat" is not quite right in this research context. Instead, I use the term "difference escapism" to describe participants' reactions, for although T1D is part of the girls' lives, their relationship to it is one that is concerned with making it less visible to others. When asked to describe diabetes on their worksheets, the girls gave answers such as "something I deal with," "a challenge," "annoying," "unfair," and "hard to figure out." The most common response to the question (almost 50 percent of girls) was that T1D is a challenge to overcome on a daily basis. The girls did not seem threatened by their T1D nor did they consider it a personal identifier. However, they did realize T1D is a condition they had, and something others do not have to deal with or would always understand. As a result, the girls wanted to hide or escape from their T1D status by avoiding revealing their difference to peers.

A common experience many used to justify their desire to hide their T1D was dealing with public scrutiny. Specifically, the girls discussed bullying and T1D at length:

> *People in my class have sometimes said mean things to me because I have diabetes, stuff like I'm weird or fat. They don't get it but it still makes me feel bad sometimes.* (Maya 2017)

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There was this one time at birthday party I got really upset about my diabetes. Like, a lot of the time parents won't give me cake or they'll, like, make "something special" for me. But then at this party I went to, kids started to joke that they would share their regular cake with me but I'm diabetic so it would kill me. I know they don't get it cause I can eat sugar but it didn't feel good. (Justine 2017)

Stortch et al. (2004) speak to the many ways children with T1D can be affected by bullying. In examining the experiences of people with various endocrine disorders including T1D, Stortch et al. (2004) explain that "peers may target specific adherence behaviours associated with conditions such as type 1 diabetes more readily than they will physical characteristics of disorders such as short stature, precocious puberty, delayed puberty, and gynecomastia" (785). This is because "compared with youngsters without observable differences [like T1D], children with overt differences may receive greater support and guidance from parents, teachers, and peers compared with youth without an observable feature of their condition" (Stortch et al. 2004, 787). As a condition, T1D is mostly invisible. Unless a person is seen checking blood glucose levels or wears their insulin pump in an easily seen place, there is no way to know visually that they are different. Still, the stigmas attached to the disease are quite common. As a result, children and adults living with the disease often encounter hurtful comments when they disclose their difference to others. Returning to difference escapism and passing, the girls who participated in my class commonly chose to deal with their diabetes management privately by hiding worn equipment and avoiding eating sugary snacks around people for fear of being reprimanded. Like DePrince, who changed her name and used makeup to cover her difference, the girls with T1D attempted to escape stigma by doing their best to cover up their difference in public.

Pedagogical Considerations: Accommodations and Modifications

I made several changes to the format of my lessons in this session. Although I kept all three parts of my lesson format from previous sessions, I altered aspects of each part to suit time limitations. I also made adjustments to incorporate diabetes education and safety protocols into the class. For these girls, body functionality directly connected to controlling blood glucose levels. Therefore, it was necessary to provide instruction time on blood glucose management and make time to test blood glucose levels. With the cultivation of belonging by normalizing T1D in mind, I brought the physical management of diabetes into our class' action. Collectively testing levels or helping each other to treat a low made T1D a point for building belonging as a group. This greatly differed from the girls' experiences in active settings outside of Work It Out.

In this section, I describe the specific changes I made to each part of my three-part lesson (discussion, group movement, and choreography). I incorporate the girls' responses to demonstrate how my choices affected the girls' participation and building belonging in the classroom. Specifically, I focus on how I altered my approach to deal with time limitations while still encouraging the girls' full participation. Key to this pedagogy was finding moments for the girls to connect socially to one another and gain peer support (Adamsen 2002; Murrock, Higgins, and Killion 2009), while capturing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences on dealing with T1D on a daily basis and over the course of our lessons.

I made the most prominent pedagogical change to the program in this scenario in the first part of the lesson, the discussion. In the two previous iterations of Work It Out, participants filled out their Body Brainstorm worksheets and wrote weekly journals focusing on individual body sections. In this session, I could not break the body down into sections in the same way and therefore had to replace the booklet format I used in the other schools (see Appendix A for a

copy of both the booklet and amended worksheet). On the modified worksheet, I assigned the girls only one of the body sections (upper body, mid-body, and lower body), and distributed the sheets randomly throughout the class. As in my original Body Brainstorm worksheets, I asked the girls to list adjectives and activities they associated with the body parts listed for that section. After working on their own, I asked the girls to find others who had filled out the same body section and to discuss their responses in groups, writing their ideas on chart paper. We then hung each group's chart paper on the studio wall, and came together as a class to discuss their ideas about each body section collectively. In so doing, we reviewed the girls' ideas about the whole body. They also engaged both individually and collectively, allowing the girls to express their own ideas and build connections with others.

In the discussion portion of this session, I aimed to develop belonging further through peer support (Adamsen 2002). Involvement in self-help groups specific to particular illnesses can have a positive effect on patients' emotional state and maintenance of self-care for a wide range of illnesses (Adamsen 2002). Focusing specifically on Type 2 diabetes (T2D), Murrock, Higgins, and Killion (2009) used a weekly dance class as the platform for women to come together, discuss their diabetes, and report how they were doing with blood glucose control. In researching the reactions of these T2D women, "emergent themes of focus groups were that a diabetes diagnosis was devastating, and changing eating habits and taking medications was often difficult" (Murrock, Higgins, and Killion 2009, 995). Through the recreational dance group, the women found "camaraderie, enjoyment, and laughter, which fostered attendance" (Murrock, Higgins, and Killion, 2009, 995). Murrock, Higgins, and Killion (2009) concluded that their program generated peer support exclusively for this T2D population, and identified the benefit of engaging actively and socially for those living with chronic illness. The T2D-specific space

allowed the women to build relationships with other people who had the same experiences as them, which ultimately helped them to connect and support each other. Connecting this work to my own, the idea of peer support is synonymous with my use of "belonging." If the social dance class had positive outcomes for the T2D women, it followed that it would as well for the T1D girls in my program.

In these discussions, the girls presented interesting ideas on how they understood the aesthetics and abilities of their bodies. Like the girls at Schools A and B, the T1D girls gave some negative and sexualized adjectives when describing certain body parts, namely their hips, thighs, bottom, chest, and stomach. However, their ideas differed from the girls in other sessions when speaking about their pump and injection sites:

> *My tummy has a lot of little marks on it from giving myself needles there all the time. Same with my thighs. My mom says they look like freckles but I don't think so.* (Monica 2017)

> *I usually wear my infusion sets on my stomach or my low back or my butt. So I try to cover those up cause it just feels like my site is jiggling in the open if I don't cover it up with my body suit.* (Amanda 2017)

Another central topic of discussion was girls' understanding of how insulin affected their body composition. Many described how beginning to take insulin vastly changed their weight after diagnosis and how their bodies looked:

> *Before I knew I had diabetes, I, like, lost a lot of a weight, and then after I gained it back. None of my clothes fit me really so my mom and I had to get new ones. I mean, even if I sucked in my tummy my jeans wouldn't close! Insulin really made me get bigger, but I guess I'm healthier now.* (Alyssa 2017)

> *When I see old pictures of me from when I was diagnosed, I'm like SO skinny. I'm not skinny anymore cause I use my insulin now. But I guess I'm supposed to look like this.* (Rachel 2017)

What I find most interesting about these responses is how they demonstrate the relationship between aesthetics and physical difference. The girls with T1D spoke to many of the same concerns as the girls in other sessions (i.e., the size of their bodies, fatness or roundness of their bodies, etc.), but always came back to how those things related to T1D. Insulin made them "gain weight" or "get bigger," and they had to take insulin because they were diabetic. Assessing parts of their bodies directly linked to how those body parts were involved with their diabetes treatment (i.e., as a pump or injection site). This reaction highlights how aware these girls were of their physical difference and how influential that understanding was in how they saw their bodies. While this reaction demonstrated negative body image in the confines of our classroom, it served as a commonality between the girls. With everyone having T1D, the effects of insulin and recognition of injection marks was something to which they could all relate. Being in a social situation where everyone understood their concerns firsthand generated a feeling of support and belonging within the group.

During one of our classes, two girls discovered a particularly profound point of commonality: when discussing pump site changes, one girl, Jennifer, described recently having a "bleeder" on her leg. This term describes an injection or pump site that bleeds quite a lot. Jennifer described the experience:

> *It was SO gross! It hurt too. My legs are my least favourite place to have my pump site cause it, like, always bleeds. I don't know why it does that. I have to move them around though, you know, so that I don't get hard spots. Still, this one was really bad. Have a scar too.* (Jennifer 2017)

Jennifer's story was relayed as a traumatic experience. She shared her experience with this pump site as a way to connect with the other girls. She found that connection when another girl, Sandy, who spoke up about her own experience with a bleeder on her leg. She too found that it

happened quite often for her and avoided using that part of her body for injections. The girls high-fived each other after that interaction. Their interaction then spurred other girls to begin speaking about how their bodies responded to different injection sites. This led to the girls discovering more shared experiences within the group. This demonstrates how what could be considered a negative experience with the body can be turned into a positive one by finding community. Outside of this program, the girls dealt with the challenge of T1D as the only T1D in their peer groups, leading to feelings of isolation, resentment of the body, and negative body image. However, when the girls saw that they were not the only person dealing with such difficulties, they bonded over their collective T1D experiences.

Another key modification I made to the worksheet was to include a short section specifically on diabetes. This part of the survey asked girls to describe T1D in one word from their experience with it. In this way, I asked the girls to ascribe an adjective to their disease in the same way they assessed their bodies in the survey. The top three responses were "a challenge" (58 percent), "annoying" (32 percent), and "unpredictable" (10 percent). These terms generated further discussion about T1D among the girls and helped them to identify common experiences. Most of girls' stories in relation to these terms pertained to how T1D is more difficult to control than many people think. It is something that, at times, stops them from continuing to do an otherwise fun activity. The girls shared stories about having to sit on the sidelines during a game in gym class, needing to wake up in the middle of the night to drink juice, or frustrating situations where their usual insulin regiment did not work for an unforeseen reason (e.g., illness, extra activity, miscalculated carbohydrates). Collectively, the girls received support from each other. The more they shared their stories, the more they generated a feeling of belonging.

The second part of my lesson, group action, remained mostly unchanged. The warm-up

dances I taught to the girls were the same choreography as the other sessions. However, in an

effort to maintain a medically safe space for the T1D dancers, I had an alarm sound programmed

into my playlist. When they heard the alarm, it meant everyone needed to test their blood

glucose. This ensured that everyone maintained safe levels, while making the process of testing

blood sugar a group action (i.e., no one was singled out). In total, five students had low blood

glucose levels at some point throughout the class. Two had low blood glucose (i.e., below 4.0

mmoL/L), and the other three had readings that were lower than safe to engage in physical

activity. All girls tested and treated their blood glucose on their own. All girls brought their

personal glucometers and some low supplies, and I also brought back-up low supplies in case of

emergency. This further helped to build belonging, as the girls spoke about their favourite

flavours of glucose tabs or treatments for low blood glucose. In this way, the girls connected

with each other through T1D-specific challenges.

The third part of our class, choreography, required further alterations. In previous

sessions of Work It Out, the larger number of girls meant I had to separate students into groups

for the choreography section of the class. With this group, the girls worked collaboratively in

partners to choreograph sections of a dance to Meghan Trainor's "I'm a Lady."[4] Each pairing

worked on a piece of choreography and then collaborated with other duos to create a longer piece

of choreography. This choice addressed time limitations while serving as a means to build upon

the positive feedback I received from the previous session I ran, where the groups interacted

[4] This song was made popular with the release of the new Smurfs movie. Throughout the song, Trainor sings about being yourself, not comparing yourself to others, and being confident. The girls knew the song and were fans of Trainor, which helped inspire their participation while relating to the goals of the Work It Out program. Furthermore, the song provoked interesting conversations surrounding what it means to be and move like a lady in the girls' choreographic choices.

more throughout their choreographic process. In the session before the T1D-specific group, I had all groups choreograph to the same song. This allowed for a general connection to exist between the girls in the class. However, they were not given the opportunity to share their movement with girls outside of their home group. In this third session, I thought it would be interesting to have the girls create, share, and combine their choreographies to make one larger dance as a collective. At the end of the class, we welcomed the girls' parents into the class, and the girls presented their dance to much avail.

Throughout this session, the girls continued to find ways to connect through T1D. First, they took on the selection of their group's performance name as a group. The names selected each week connected in some way to T1D, including "The Sweeties," "The Dex Girls" (in reference of dextrose or glucose tabs), "Dancing Diabetics," and "The Sweethearts." Secondly, the choice to have girls work in pairs, then small groups, and then as a whole group allowed for them to complete a dance collectively. Everyone heard each other's ideas and shared their opinions, providing peer support and a sense of belonging while equally contributing to the dance. As a result, all girls felt they belonged in the classroom socially and played a part in the dance created.

Type 1 diabetes can be a difficult disease to control in the dance classroom. Within the confines of this session, I had the opportunity to work in an exclusively T1D classroom. This made it much easier to cultivate a sense of belonging for the girls because the maintenance of T1D was something everyone in the room had to do. Thus, in the context of this session of Work It Out these girls' were less inclined to try to hide their diabetes or pass as not diabetic. For girls who are usually the only person with T1D in the room, the sense of commonality they found in our dance class was freeing. In typical classrooms, belonging for T1D students can still be

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generated by other means that make them feel welcome. The most important pathway to enable continued learning for students living with a chronic condition is ensuring that they have the opportunity to take care of their health needs within the lesson, and if they wish, to do so privately. This enables students to participate with their peers while managing their condition. More specifically, dance teachers who have a T1D student could support them more effectively by: (a) having low blood glucose supplies on hand in the studio, (b) educating themselves on what a low or high blood glucose is, (c) making water breaks a regular occurrence (which also provides blood glucose testing opportunities), and (d) being mindful of costume selection for performances (i.e., will the T1D dancer be able to accommodate their technology?). These suggestions come from general safety measures for dealing with diabetes as well as the expressed concerns of girls who participated in this session. Feeling watched when going to test blood glucose levels and not being able to hide worn technology on stage were primary concerns of the girls which influenced their tendencies towards passing in other social contexts. These considerations would make T1D dancers feel supported in the dance classroom.

Research in Action: Program Implementation and Results

Participating girls' discussions in this session revealed the strong relationship between body image and T1D. This specialized relationship to the body focused on physical differences that have both aesthetic and physical repercussions. The malfunctioning of the immune system led the girls' bodies to function abnormally, affecting the aesthetics of their bodies (i.e., having to wear technology, gaining weight, or having injection scars). The girls' understanding of their bodies as different complicated their feelings of belonging in the dance classroom, as the T1D body is not an ideal dancing body. My model for generating positive body image in the Work It Out program through three fundamental concepts (body functionality, belonging, and body-based

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ideals) applied to T1D in a distinctive way. Specifically, for this group I focused on generating a sense of belonging in order to combat any discomfort the girls felt due to their physical difference. Enhancing girls' belonging reframed their body functionality positively, while mitigating the feelings of exclusion they had experienced from being different from everyone else in the dance classroom. Due to the physical activity, dance required the girls to maintain their blood glucose levels in order to participate. If they did not take care of their diabetes, they could not take part. Within this session, normalizing checking and managing blood glucose levels helped the girls to feel comfortable within the classroom and with each other, and to manage their T1D medically. This helped them feel less of a need to hide their T1D or pass as normal. In this section, I discuss the girls' responses in relation to each of the three fundamental concepts of my model, focusing on the specialized application of the model to a health context and in relation to social stigma.

Body Functionality

Recognizing what a girl can do with her body over her appearance is at the center of understanding why body functionality is important to body image. For my programming with the T1D girls, the idea of body functionality was much more complicated than in previous sessions. Having T1D means that the pancreas has stopped working. Medically speaking, this means that a T1 diabetic's body is partially broken as it is unable to sustain safe blood glucose levels on its own. In this way, the girls who participated in this session of Work It Out were aware that having T1D was the direct result of their body not functioning as it should. The daily need to monitor and control blood glucose levels consistently, which interrupted activities, further complicated how they conceptualized their bodies' functionality. For this reason, with these girls, body functionality was first about blood glucose control which if maintained would help these T1D

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girls to avoid calling attention to their physical difference by treating a low or high blood sugar reading.

The coveting of blood glucose control to aid in girls' passing through uninterrupted participation in class action presented a conflict. In order to dance safely, the girls needed to control their blood sugar levels. For many athletic diabetics, the use of a worn insulin pump or continuous glucose monitor enables them to manipulate insulin delivery more effectively to accommodate movement. Indeed, diabetes and exercise researchers have conducted extensive studies that support the positive effects of pump therapy on T1D athletes (Perkins and Riddell 2006; Zaharieva and Riddell 2017). However positive an effect wearing this type of technology may have on blood glucose control, wearing these devices is a visible marker of an otherwise invisible disease. For my participants, dealing with their insulin pumps posed a conflict: while it helped them to dance safely and continuously, they did not like how the pump looked on their bodies.

In this session, increasing body functionality served as a stepping-stone towards improving belonging. Below I discuss body functionality through the experiences of Amanda. Prior to attending my class, Amanda had made the decision to go on an insulin pump. She struggled to decide whether she wanted to dance with less blood glucose issues or not wear a pump. Amanda's case exemplifies the conflicting desires of the T1D dancer in regards to body functionality, and the desire pass as a healthy, nondiabetic dancer. Amanda achieved this healthy status in two conflicting ways: by choosing to wear a pump to aid in blood glucose control, and by finding ways to hide that pump from onlookers. Reducing the demands of her T1D in class lessened the attention of her peers to her T1D management. However, wearing a medical device in plain sight made her disease visible to others—something she would rather have hid. As a

result, Amanda continually juggled the medical and aesthetic markers of the ideal dance body against the management of T1D. In Work It Out, however, as T1D was prevalent among the population of this session, using a pump to increase body functionality was common, allowing Amanda to use it openly.

Amanda, Age 12– Pump Problems

Amanda had been an active participant in many of ICD's programs. Diagnosed at age 8, she had been a T1 diabetic for four years and wore an insulin pump. As an avid dance student at a local studio, Amanda and her mother quickly registered for my programming after seeing it in the ICD newsletter. Her enthusiasm for my classes brought her back to multiple sessions, providing me with the opportunity to understand her ideas in more depth. In reviewing my data from Amanda's participation, I noticed a repeated expressed concern: her insulin pump. Having been on her Animas tubed insulin pump[5] for a year and a half, Amanda was well accustomed to the controls and feeling of being attached to a medical device. The decision to go on a pump was fuelled by her desire to remain active despite her diabetes. As she explained:

> *Going on the pump made a big difference for me because it made me more able to control my blood sugars. I stopped having so many lows in dance class, which was really good.* (Amanda 2017)

While the physiological benefits of her choice to wear a pump were undeniable, her emotional reaction towards the device was mixed. In explaining her experiences as a T1D dancer, Amanda gave multiple examples of when her pump "got in the way." She had to figure out how to secure it when dancing, moving and adjusting it at times, and had to refrain from

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[5] Animas was a diabetes technology company that closed operation in Fall 2017. Their pumps were "tubed," meaning the wearer is attached to the device via a plastic tube that feeds into an injected needle or site. Medtronic is another company which manufactures a similar type of pump and is currently still in operation.

learning certain dance steps (e.g., acrobatic movements) for fear of having it fly off her body.

The most limiting aspect of her pump was revealed when Amanda shared:

> *Mostly I can figure out how to hide it [the insulin pump] but in some costumes I can't. It doesn't go with a dance costume and sticks out. That's when I take it off. I'm more comfortable that way.* (Amanda 2017)

In the confines of the dance classroom without an audience, Amanda dealt with her medical device as best she could. However, when performing on stage, she worked very hard to hide her T1D. Her medical device announced her difference from others, and so removing it helped her to pass as a performing dancer (i.e., not a diabetic dancer) when on stage.

Her activity in class further supported my understanding of Amanda's conflict with body functionality and its connection to her need to wear an insulin pump. Frequently, Amanda touched or moved the placement of her insulin pump. This occurred mostly to accommodate moving in a particular way (e.g., rolling on the floor), but at other times was without cause. She monitored her pump further for aesthetic purposes, strategically choosing to pose in a particular way so that her pump would not face the audience. Within this session, I had the opportunity to meet and speak with the girls' parents. In speaking with Amanda's mother following our final class, I learned that prior to attending my sessions, Amanda was unsure whether to continue her dance lessons. Her mother explained:

> *Amanda chose to wear a pump because of how many lows she had been having and because she knew how worried her dad and I were. She made the decision very reluctantly mainly because wearing a device made her feel like a 'robot' and not a dancer. […] Meeting other girls in this context has really helped her to see that she's not the only one who has to deal with this as a dancer. I think she still is a bit worried about showing her pump off but I definitely saw her enjoying herself through all these classes and that's a great thing.* (Amanda's Mom, 2017).

This conversation reveals exactly how Amanda conceptualized her body—as dependent on a device because of a disease she did not want.

For Amanda, going on an insulin pump increased her body functionality. Cast and Burke (2002) explain that "like any other resource, self-esteem can be built up, but when used, it is lost. Here, the reservoir of self-esteem is filled up by successful self-verification and used up when the self-verification process is disrupted" (1043). I understand this mentality as directly connected to how the highs and lows of dealing with diabetes affect the girls' relationships with their bodies and its function. As a chronic and sometimes unpredictable disease, T1 diabetics can have blood glucose readings that differ daily. This means that a person could have steady readings for days and then suddenly have an unexplainable high or low. Following Cast and Burke (2002), the ability to control blood glucose levels with T1D is key to fulfilling the body functionality aspect of my model. With the amount of insulin manipulation that pumps afford T1 diabetics, using one can help control blood glucose levels. However, while pumps satisfy the physiological recognition of body functionality, the aesthetic aspects of wearing this device can negatively affect girls' body image.

Belonging

Increasing a sense of belonging was an extremely important task among my T1D participants, as I aimed to improve their body image by eliminating their desire to pass in the dance studio. The first step I took in garnering the feeling of belonging was to make the classroom more homogenous. Not only were all my participants female, they also all had T1D. My experiences at School A and B as well as research on adolescence and T1D (Di Battista et al. 2009; Murrock, Higgins, and Killion 2009; Rasmussen et al. 2011) informed this choice. In order to boost belonging, I needed to normalize T1D within the studio space. This helped to eliminate the social anxiety among the girls.

The scholarly support for my understanding of belonging in this setting came from both a cultural and T1D-specific lens. Firstly, McNeill's (2008) idea that moving together as a group promotes the creation of a bond among people supported my use of movement to bond girls emotionally. For these girls, I viewed movement in a broader sense than just the dances they learned and performed. While the act of moving and creating together established a social bond, the most significant aspect of this session for enhancing positive feelings of belonging related to the exclusively T1D population of the room. Everyone belonged to the T1D and dance enthusiast communities.

Dealing with social anxiety is the solution to enhancing belonging. After surveying a large number of T1D adolescents, Di Battista et al. (2009) found that fear of being stigmatized, judged, or reprimanded for not having "good" blood glucose levels was common. The social anxiety these adolescents felt in sharing their blood glucose readings was therefore a significant contributor in deciding how they would manage their disease. While some adolescents ignored it, others became hypervigilant, avoided social situations, or dreaded or even lied to their doctors (Di Battista et al. 2009). This research illustrates how important it is for T1 diabetics to feel supported.

Recreational activities such as Work It Out serve as a social coping mechanism for cultivating belonging. Rasmussen et al. (2011) conducted a study of how adolescents with T1D deal with life transitions. For their participants, significant life events were either "life development or adolescence transitions" (school, relationships, first jobs, relocating) or "diabetes-related transitions" (diagnosis, developing complications, commencing insulin pump therapy, going to diabetes camps; Rasmussen et al. 2011, 1984). The coping mechanisms Rasmussen et al.'s (2011) participants cited for dealing with life transitions included: strategic

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thinking and planning, self-negotiation to minimize risks, managing diabetes using previous experiences, connecting with others with diabetes, actively seeing information to "patch" knowledge gaps (e.g., using a continuous glucose monitor), and putting diabetes into perspective (1985). Collectively, these coping mechanisms point to the need for T1 diabetics to find a sense of belonging through shared experience.

Finding a sense of belonging is particularly difficult when you are new to the T1D lifestyle. Below, I share the experience of Tanya, a participant who had recently been diagnosed. At the time of our session, Tanya was struggling to figure out where she fit socially with her friends and in the T1D community. Without any other friends with diabetes, Tanya felt "odd" around her friends, and had quit many of her recreational activities. Having to deal with this disease changed the way she was treated by her peers and how she felt when in social situations. Having an opportunity to connect with other, more experienced T1 diabetics gave Tanya an opportunity to make new friends, and to find out how others cope with this disease. Feeling like she belonged in our classroom helped her to maintain that feeling outside of our classroom.

Tanya, Age 13– Distress with Diabetes Diagnosis

Tanya was a thirteen-year-old girl who had been recently diagnosed with T1D. Having been diabetic for not quite a year, she was the least experienced participant with T1D. The newness of her life as a T1 diabetic meant that Tanya was also less involved in diabetes-centered recreational programs; my classes were the first she had attended. She was in the process of choosing an insulin pump but, at the moment, was using multidosed injections for her treatment. Up to this point,

> *Tanya had quit all the sports and dance classes she was taking before her diagnosis. The idea of exercising and not knowing how to manage all of this properly was too scary.*
> (Tanya's Mother, 2017)

My conversation with Tanya's mother revealed that Tanya had come to perceive her disease as a limitation. It had taken away her sense of security and drastically altered her life. As a new T1 diabetic, and not yet on an insulin pump, her lead concern at the moment was figuring out how this disease could be controlled and fit into her life. In the moment, T1D had taken over her social life as she had quit all recreational activities.

Throughout the discussion portion of our lesson, Tanya did not share very much. She chose instead to listen to the other girls' stories about dealing with T1D in different situations, nodding her head and writing her ideas down. In her journal, Tanya wrote:

> *I loved to do all different activities but when I got diabetes it got really hard to manage. I quit a lot of my sports and classes because I didn't feel safe. No one else on my teams had T1D and I could tell they were nervous just having me there.* (Tanya, 2017)

Her discomfort openly sharing her experience signified a disruption in her identity—she had not yet completely accepted her diagnosis nor did she feel confident in her ability to control her condition.

Connecting Tanya to the conflict between aesthetics and managing T1D, the development of her body image reflected her experience. Given that she was still in the early stages of adjusting to T1D, Tanya's tentative attitude to partaking in activities centered on being able to manage her blood glucose levels medically and not drawing attention to her difference by needing help. She did not have the same worries as some other girls in regards to visibility because she did not wear a pump. However, Tanya was clearly concerned about what others thought of her diabetes. She quit her extracurricular activities because she felt uncomfortable being the only participant with T1D. In an active setting, Tanya could not hide her disease because of the necessity to test glucose levels more frequently in that situation. Disappearing to

perform the tests over and over again did not foster a sense of belonging for Tanya with her teammates outside of Work It Out. In contrast, in Work It Out, Tanya was more comfortable performing her medical requirements in front of others. The social aspect of the creative choreography gave Tanya time to connect with the other girls about dance and diabetes. In this way, dance encouraged a social interaction between the girls and served as an effective method for dealing with body image. Finding community and forming a relationship because of a shared interest in both dance and diabetes helped Tanya to deal with her body image concerns.

Body-Based Ideals

I define body-based ideals as how my participants see or aesthetically idealize their bodies. This includes the behaviours that participants exhibit in pursuit of their version of the ideal body. Connecting this understanding to the T1D session I ran of the program expands the possibilities for how body image, aesthetics, and difference are constructed. While issues with weight control and food intake are prevalent for those living with T1D, additional stress results from the need to control blood glucose levels and the measures that must be taken in order to do so (e.g., consuming extra calories to treat lows, highly monitoring food intake, counting carbohydrates, regularly exercising, and injecting insulin). Due to the heightened focus on food, movement, and the body among T1 diabetics, T1D presents unique risks of leading to disordered eating through the manipulation of insulin intake (Goebel-Fabbri 2013). Although none of the girls I worked with admitted to having an eating disorder, many expressed a concern about weight gain:

> *I lost a lot of weight before I was diagnosed but never got to be as skinny as some people get. My mom noticed I was drinking a lot and peeing a lot. My brother has T1D so she knew the symptoms. Once I went on insulin, though, I gained all the weight back and it's stayed that way.* (Sage 2017)

When I started taking insulin, it was like I got blown up like a balloon! I just gained and gained weight. Now I look like this. (Sienna 2017)

I have highs sometimes but not because I skip insulin, just because sometimes I count my carbs wrong. I lost some weight a while ago cause I was high a lot. They were figuring out my insulin ratios but now I'm back to normal with that. (Taylor 2017)

As these responses show, the girls were aware of how T1D had increased their weight. Some expressed this change as returning to a "healthy weight," while others just described it as "getting bigger again." Either way, for these T1D girls their difference was the cause of their weight gain. It also related to why they could not comply with the idealized thin female dancer physique, potentially leading them on the path towards body dissatisfaction (Hargreaves and Tiggemann 2004).

The influence of role models on my T1D participants' body image was significant. While the majority of girls idolized pop icons (e.g., Taylor Swift and Selena Gomez), one girl, Holly, was fixated on a T1D celebrity. Holly was extremely active on social media, specifically Instagram. Her chosen role model was the famous T1D beauty queen Sierra Sandison. As I discuss below, Holly's desire to emulate Sandison's overall demeanor by showing off her insulin pump points to the influence of role models on young girls, specifically how role models come to embody the ideal these girls internalize as their goal. Holly's reaction highlights another way that having T1D can affect body image. In this case, she connected her disease to a more "beautiful" example of a diabetic body. In so doing, she felt better about her own physical difference.

Holly, Age 13 – Strength in Selfies

Holly was a thirteen-year-old T1 diabetic who loved social media. Having just gotten her own Instagram account, she was very excited about sharing her pictures with other girls before and after our class. Having had diabetes for two years, Holly had recently started pump therapy,

and social media was the inspiration for that decision. In 2014, Sierra Sandison wore her insulin pump during the bikini competition segment of the Miss Idaho pageant. The pictures of her sporting her pump on stage sparked a large body-positive response from the T1D community. Following the pageant, Sandison started the Show Me Your Pump campaign, which encouraged T1 diabetics to take and post pictures wearing their insulin pumps. Holly found this story and the campaign incredibly inspiring. As a result, she took a selfie with her new pump on the day she got it. Holly explained:

> *Showing my diabetes on Instagram and along with beautiful other T1s like Sierra made me feel like I was part of this big thing. I got all these likes and supportive comments from other T1s too.* (Holly 2017)

In Holly's case, showing off her pump in a way that garnered virtual support from others fuelled the cultivation of a more positive relationship with her device. It also highlights the possibility of an ideal "beautiful" diabetic body. In regards to the Work It Out program, Holly included her penchant for social media in our class. She decided that the girls needed to choose a group name and take a picture with their pumps and devices. She was not pushy about who had to reveal their technology but wanted to include this experience in her picture-taking venture. The girls decided they would be called "The Sugars" and took a few silly and smiling pictures together.

Holly's behaviour points to some interesting insights about body image, visible difference, and social stigma. Unlike the other girls in this class, Holly never expressed a dislike of or wish to conceal her medical device. Making her T1D completely visible both to the girls in our class and to peers on social media was, for Holly, a method for garnering positive body image. In terms of role models, Holly's choice to idolize Sierra Sandison, a celebrated beauty queen living with T1D, spoke to her personal goals as a girl living with the same condition. By definition, Sandison represents Western ideals of femininity and beauty. Her difference in the

pageant world as a T1 diabetic was brought to light when she wore her pump visibly during a competition. In so doing, Sandison instantly announced herself as an advocate for T1D but also as an example of someone who did not satisfy the held stereotypes of diabetics as unhealthy or ugly. Holly, as a fan, chose to align herself with a person who went against the popular body negative understandings of her disease. While the affinity Holly felt had positive effects on her willingness to share her T1D with peers, I question how healthy her perceptions of female bodies were given the narrow view of beauty represented in the pageant world and on social media. Sandison is a beauty pageant winner who satisfies culturally-constructed notions of idealized female beauty. Holly's choice of role model in Sandison speaks to what she aimed to be—a diabetic who still satisfies beauty ideals.

Unfortunately, due to the structure of this session, I could not meet with all of the girls to see how their interaction with Work It Out affected their body image. As a dancer with T1D, my status as a role model was specific to continuing to participate in the dance world despite my difference. How did the girls see me? How did their outlook on participating in dance change following our interaction? Holly's penchant for idolizing Sierra Sandison as a T1D role model points to how influential celebrity figures who support certain causes can be. Could my role as a dancer dealing with T1D inspire participating girls to continue with dance practice? I hope to take these considerations into account in future work with girls on body image and T1D.

Concluding Thoughts

Dealing with physical difference is a difficult task. The responses of my T1D participants illustrated this observation in their shared emotional and physical challenges. Their responses also showed the positive effects of interacting with other individuals dealing with the same challenging difference. By connecting with others who faced the same issues dealing with T1D

as dancers, these girls felt that they belonged. Meeting other T1D girls in person and connecting with them over their shared struggle to deal with their physical difference helped the girls to gain skills to control their diabetes as well as perspective on where they "fit in."

The responses of my participants support the idea that the dance studio is indeed a divided space (Foucault 1983), which results from notions of the ideal body (Foster 1997) that continue to permeate among young dancers. The specificity of this embodied ideal is exclusionary for many physical differences, including physical disabilities, health issues, or racial minorities. My findings in this case study draw attention to the importance of belonging. More specifically, this work points to what belonging means to those with physical differences: inclusivity. When individuals feel welcome in the dance studio, they can perform. Although dancers with T1D may need to use medical equipment, alter movements slightly, or work differently, they can participate fully. However, without the understanding of their dance teacher, such an environment may harm their body image and encourage them to pass.

This session of Work It Out was short and, for some participants, a one-time event. If the girls had more classes where they could dance, talk, and control their T1D, it may have brought more insights into the ways that the dance classroom could be made more inclusive for those dealing with a physical difference. While I cannot say conclusively that Work It Out fully addressed the concept of body-based ideals for these girls, I am hopeful that in connecting with other dancing T1 diabetics, they felt less alone in their struggles. Following my classes, ICD received numerous messages from parents hoping my classes would be run again soon. I learned that some of the girls had kept in touch after exchanging information at our class and others had enrolled in regular dance classes. Overall, the parents appreciated having a place where their

daughters could gain skills to help them independently deal with the highs and lows of diabetes—both literal and figurative.

From a research perspective, it is hard to draw conclusions having met these participants for a considerably shorter amount time than in my other field sites. However, the recurrence of the girls' conflicting feelings about idealized health and appearance fuelled my confidence in stating that this session provides new insights into T1D and the dancing body. When body functionality is altered by a chronic illness, it sets off a chain reaction affecting both a student's sense of belonging and understanding of body-based ideals. The framework of the Work It Out program served as a space to encourage student expression through altered movement and choreography, supporting the notion that allowing students to engage with each other as well as with the classroom teacher collaboratively sets the stage to make meaningful dances.

I want to return to the overall goal of this project – to improve body image issues for adolescent girls. In this case study I investigated how having a physical difference influences girls' body image. T1D is a very specific physical condition but there are many more ways that difference can manifest and affect girls' body image. At the center of this case study is the acknowledgement that internalizing aesthetic body ideals leads to the recognition of difference. Consider the ways a woman might compare her post-natal body to her pre-natal physique, or how a cancer patient remembers their body before chemotherapy. What both of these examples have in common is the alienation of a person from their current body because of changes that are out of their control. If I were to run this T1D session again I might consider including T1D boys or adolescents dealing with other conditions. The focus then could be taken off of T1D as a specific disease and instead be channeled towards larger discussions about physical difference and its effect on body image. By bringing people with multiple physical differences into the

program the topic of body based aesthetic ideals is expanded. In so doing participants could come to appreciate that they are not alone in their struggles with body image and feel supported in dealing with those issues.

Dancing with a physical difference is a challenge and a tough one at that. However difficult it may be to deal with, being "different" in the dance world, it is not an impossible goal. I hope that this research begins the conversation surrounding the need for social programming options for people living with chronic illnesses and physical challenges. More specifically, I hope that dance teachers who may read this research begin to recognize how influential dance can be on their young participants' body image. Programs like Work It Out offer girls an outlet to express their concerns and feel less alone in their struggles with body image.

Conclusion: Work It Out– Reflecting on Research

"Hindsight is 20/20"—a common sentiment in Western social circles highlighting the potential for any experience to hold great influence on our lives, even if it seemed insignificant at the moment it occurred. For me, this idea describes my experience as a researcher and the story of my research. I took on this project to address the pressing issue of negative body image among girls. My interest stemmed from my own experiences dealing with the severe effects poor body image can have on a person's social, emotional, and physical well-being. Having struggled for many years to accept and appreciate my own physicality, I pursued this project from an informed and personal point of view. I was not lucky as a young girl to have teachers who recognized my depleting body image. Nor were there programming options at that time to foster a sense of body appreciation for young girls like me. I often wonder what would have happened if my schooling had provided me with support through a body image program like the Dove Self-Esteem Project, Girls on the Run, or Work It Out. Would I have struggled for as long as I did? Are there opportunities I missed out on because I was so uncomfortable in my own skin? Would my diagnosis with T1D have been easier? Although I will never know the answers to these questions, they fuelled the creation of this research and the Work It Out program. I thus hoped that the Work It Out program would help young adolescent girls today to establish a positive relationship with their bodies much sooner than I could.

Work It Out aimed to build upon current offerings in body image education including the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run, which are now commonplace in schools across Ontario. Such offerings highlight a positive change in the amount of support now available to girls to address body image. The message of these programs is positive, and each program has strengths and weaknesses in its pedagogical framework. Dove's focus on media literacy

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enhances girls' understanding of idealized female bodies through discussion. However, the absence of physical engagement with the body leads girls to assess the body in an objectified way. In contrast, Girls on the Run incorporates movement through running. However, it ignores the potentially negative effects that sport-based, competitive activities can have on girls' body image. Both programs have had great success in schools and their curriculums have helped immensely by making the issue of poor body image for adolescent girls a recognized one. However, body image is a diverse concept and not every girl's body image concerns can be met by these two programs alone. With these issues in mind, I designed Work It Out to be more creative and inclusive in its focus on physical engagement with the body and build upon what the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run have begun.

Among Work It Out's most significant contributions is its acknowledgement of the need to study girls and body image with a more constructivist frame of mind. Current body image programs (e.g., the Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run) operate under the assumption that girls' main problem with body image is tied to either beauty ideals or mastery over the body. While for some girls this may be true, the responses of my participants illustrate a more diverse relationship between girls and body image. Some worried about physical ability in comparison to peers and graded assessment, others struggled to share their ideas openly with classmates, while others still grappled with satisfying their definition of ideal health. Regardless of the specific focus of participants' issues, each girl who took part in Work It Out expressed their own unique ideas and concerns around body image. Thus, a program like Work It Out offers a more holistic, inclusive understanding of body image, extending the range of support within the program. Coming out of this research, I have found a promising pedagogical framework to approach girls' body image effectively—my positive body image model and its

three fundamental concepts of body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals. The data collected and presented in each session of Work It Out demonstrates how influential these fundamental concepts are in creating lessons that cultivate a body-positivity.

In this chapter, I discuss the overall findings of my research implementing Work It Out. First, I discuss each of the fundamental concepts of my positive body image model. I highlight how my approach, the setting, and the girls' reactions demonstrate the influence each concept had on girls' expressions about body image. By comparing the findings of each session, I illuminate the value of these concepts in regards to teaching tactics. I then identify the aspects of the programming that require further research, addressing barriers to success of the programming in its current state. By reflecting on the outcomes of this project, I draw attention to the ways that my approach to dance practice offers a promising tool to assist adolescent girls with body image issues.

Main Findings

In each session of Work It Out, the guiding principles for the modifications I made related to the fulfillment of my fundamental concepts. Body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals are the basic considerations I viewed as integral to cultivating body positivity. I am confident in my original idea that each of these concepts relates to the building of a body image program, though I have now gained a better understanding of how each concept affects girls in the live classroom. The most prominent finding was that each motivator presented physical and emotional challenges for students. The main roadblock I encountered in my attempt to fulfill the fundamental concepts relates to the population of the classroom. Gender performativity, interpeer competition, and noticed physical difference all influenced the social climate of the

classrooms I worked in. Below, I discuss each of my fundamental concepts in relation to the pedagogical considerations that arose throughout my research.

Body Functionality

Initially, I viewed body functionality as a simplistic idea with an uncomplicated solution. I believed that key to making the dance classroom more body positive was straying from technical dance instruction. I made the assumption that emphasizing creative movement would inspire students to engage with choreography from a playful rather than mechanical point of view. However, I found that body functionality is much more complicated. The basis for my initial thinking about body functionality came from my own experiences as a dancer in the formal studio setting. I remember the frustration and lowered body image I felt when a particular step proved difficult for me but not for my classmates. However, I also recall the fun I had when teachers allowed us to move in our own way during a free movement exercise. In remembering this, I believed that a dance class where the focus was purely on cultivating personal movement would inspire the same appreciation for the body I felt during one exercise. However, I forgot that a large part of my difficulty in a technique-based setting came from comparing my physical performance to that of my classmates.

The major obstacle for enhancing body functionality I have come to recognize in Work It Out was the influence of interpeer competition. My choice to use creative movement worked in making students' physical involvement with choreography easier. However, it did not erase their desire to perform to the best of their ability and, specifically, to be better than their peers. At School A, the girls were less antagonistic to one another as the presence of the boys was their leading obstacle. However, their desire to "do better than the boys at dancing" (Alessandra 2016) at School A led to a comparative analysis of the dances they made. The girls in the coeducational

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setting took on the choreographic process as an opportunity to physically outdo the boys, a goal they felt they could not achieve in sports-focused physical education classes. At School B, the girls similarly focused on demonstrating physical ability in choreography. In the all-girls setting, the students choreographed dances intended to "show off all the good and hard dance moves" (Jessica 2017) they had learned elsewhere. Given that most of the girls in this group had technical dance training, they took on the task of choreography as an occasion to show just how well their bodies functioned. The difference in this case was that the competition was directed at their female classmates because there were no boys present.

My observation about competition and body functionality also applies to the T1D-focused recreational setting. For the T1D girls partaking in the final session of Work It Out, as a weekend program, the idea of perfectionism was not as fervently applied to the choreography they created. I attribute this to the limited time they had to work on the dances (i.e., a single class) and removal from the school setting. For the group of T1D girls, the idea of body functionality was made competitive through their shared desire to control their blood glucose levels. However, for these girls the competition to control blood glucose was individually focused and not directed at other T1D girls. The T1D girls frequently commented on their personal goals for blood sugar management:

> *Miss, I am working really hard to not have super high blood sugars. I have had some high ones lately and I need to figure out how to keep them down. I'm much better today so far than I was yesterday.* (Alyssa 2017)

> *I got a unicorn blood sugar reading this morning, Miss. That's what I call them when I wake up at 5.5 mmol/L cause it's like the perfect reading. Right in the middle. I was so proud.* (Maya 2017)

With the addition of a chronic disease like diabetes, the girls' focus on body functionality completely shifted from that of the other two sessions. Their "perfect" was not so much about

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what they performed in a dance but about how well they could control their disease individually. It was not a leading issue that kept girls from recognizing their dance abilities but is a point to note about body functionality as a concept. Overall, this fixation on perfection speaks to the development of positive body image for girls. It reveals how diverse individual definitions of body functionality can be for girls, as well as the influence of the classroom setting and the girls' personal challenges with their bodies as movers.

A solution to the issue of competition is to encourage the adoption of a growth mindset (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007; Dweck, 1999, 2007). This mindset acknowledges mistakes as opportunities to learn and the process of learning as a long process. Girls in the school setting were mostly fixed in their ideas about how they could functionally use their bodies perfectly. The T1D girls desired control over the function of their diabetic bodies with blood glucose. Applying a growth mindset approach to choreography would mean spending longer amounts of time with the girls. Having additional lessons would place less pressure on the girls to achieve body functionality quickly. I found the third iteration of Work It Out to be the most successful in regards to staving off interpeer competitiveness. I owe this in part to the collaborative way I approached the choreography in the T1D session. Since all participants contributed to creating the same dance, they did not adopt the us-versus-them attitude of competitive performance. Adopting the organization where all participants work towards a single piece of choreography could be a helpful innovation for future sessions.

Belonging

The concept of belonging relates to inclusivity and making any and all students feel welcome in the classroom. I applied this pedagogical consideration primarily through the Work It Out program's use of creative dance over technical training. Allowing the girls to decide how

they engaged with movement made the choice of activity more inclusive. This approach to using dance more broadly than a formal dance class was effective in all sessions for the participating girls. In all groups, the girls found ways to contribute to their choreography efforts. Socially, the cultivating of belonging in the classroom added to the willingness of the girls to share their thoughts. This is why I included multiple options for students to communicate their ideas (e.g., in a group setting, through their journals, through one-on-one interviews). When dealing with a potentially stressful topic like body image, the most important thing was to make the format of the class more comfortable. By making the girls the leaders of their own participation in class, both in sharing ideas and in dancing, I aimed to create a more inclusive classroom.

In each setting of Work It Out, I utilized the program's emphasis on personal choice in different ways. For both the public and private school settings, personal choice was largely tied to creating a classroom where the girls felt comfortable socially. In the public school setting, the girls' main struggle with belonging related to the presence of the male students. For these girls, choosing to remain quieter during larger group discussions and communicating their ideas through journals and their choreographic choices made them more comfortable. For girls at the private school, deciding who to pair with in their dance groups created a sense of belonging. Specifically, choosing to create dances with classmates who were friends or had similar interests in movement was the key to their belonging. Girls in the T1D session bonded through their shared need to tend to blood glucose management (i.e., testing glucose, wearing insulin pumps, taking injections, and treating low or high blood glucose). In this setting, the girls openly took action for their safety as needed. This differed from other group settings, where it was difficult for the girls to address their needs without drawing attention to their diabetes and, therefore, their difference. In the confines of this exclusively female and T1D classroom, the girls felt a strong

sense of belonging, which helped them to take care of their bodies and deal with their struggles in body functionality.

In all three settings, the girls' status as the choreographers proved the most effective tool to encourage participation in a girl-centered way. Having control over what movements or poses their group performed enabled the girls to communicate their ideas through choreography while showing off their most confident moves. This established a stronger sense of body functionality (i.e., movement ability) as well as belonging. Looking at the reactions of all three sessions, there was a direct link between body functionality and belonging. If students felt comfortable in the classroom, they participated more fully, which helped them to recognize their abilities.

Body-Based Ideals

My initial thoughts on body-based ideals as a fundamental concept related to idealizations of the female body. This definition of body-based ideals and its effect on girls' body image related to my own experiences as a young girl. For me, the acquisition of confidence was tied to representations of female bodies in the media and my desire to look like those images. The British pop band, The Spice Girls embodied one of the most influential archetypes of femininity I subscribed to as an adolescent. I wore my bell-bottom pants and pigtails with pride, memorized songs and dance moves, and commonly spoke in fake British accents with friends. At the time, I took my actions as nothing more than an expression of girl fandom and fun, though I have since recognized the ways such behaviour can harm girls' confidence. I saw these same mannerisms exhibited by my female participants in Work It Out. While the pop idols mentioned in the girls' conversations had changed since my girlhood, the sentiment expressed in relation to these celebrity figures remained the same—she is happy, she is confident, and I could be all of those things if I looked like her.

My most pressing concern about body-based ideals and the Work It Out program related to the overt sexualizing of female bodies in media and the girls' responses to it. This was less of a limitation and more of a pedagogical apprehension. In songs, movies, and media, particular parts of the female body are deemed sexually desirable. In reviewing girls' Body Brainstorm worksheets, the girls struggled to write positive adjectives or actions for their chest, hips, and thighs. These are all highly sexualized parts of the female body, and I believe that their trouble speaking about them reflects this objectification. Socially, I could not remove the effects of these idealized images of female bodies in the media for the girls. However, I helped them to speak about what they saw. The only viable solution I found in this regard was to look out for language that reflected this sexualized femininity and assisted the girls to have a conversation about these popular icons. In so doing, the girls more critically reviewed their relationship to these parts of their bodies, improving body image.

Another consideration in satisfying the concept of body-based ideals comes from the idea of passing (Delgado and Stefancic 2018). Passing in the Work It Out program related to identity-making for the girls. At the schools, the girls focused on passing as knowledgeable movers and dancers. For the recreational T1D-specific setting, the girls wished to pass as healthy or in control of their diabetes. Regardless of what specific aspect of their identity the girls worked to ratify through their participation, their choreographic choices were unanimously used to satisfy this desire. In the school setting, the girls "amped up the choreography" (Abby 2016) so that they would measure up to or be better than their peers. This meant playing with formations, dancing in complete unison, and "showing off tricks like cartwheels from acro[batics] class" (Hailey 2017). For these girls, being able to perform pieces they felt were exemplary of their abilities and impressive allowed them to pass as confident dancers. For the girls with T1D, their

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choreographic choices were at times dictated in relation to their wearable technology. Some aimed to "not have my pump be front and center" (Cindy 2017) or to eliminate their fear of "having my pump fall off when I do [a move]" (Rose 2017). The T1D girls desired to make their condition less visible when dancing. In doing so, they could pass as healthy, and as a dancer without diabetes.

Overall, the girls' desire to pass as anything other than themselves is troubling to me. The goal of this program was to assist girls to acknowledge their individual abilities and, therefore, improve various aspects of their body image. The troublesome part of passing is that it implies that the girls were "faking it" or not entirely truthful in their self-representation. This realization demonstrates to me how interrelated my three fundamental concepts are. Specifically, I see that when body functionality is affected, belonging is also inhibited in the dance classroom. Similarly, when belonging is affected, girls' body image is affected as they feel the need to put on personas that satisfy a particular ideal in the classroom.

Study Limitations and Looking Forward

The leading goal of this research was to find methods for improving body image in adolescents. Although the formation of the Work It Out program was the central tool for my investigation the overall implications of my work are broader in scope. Having pulled apart the reactions of my participants in each session I am faced with the task of making my approach pedagogically applicable for all teachers. The Dove Self-Esteem Project and Girls on the Run have been successful because they are tools that classroom teachers have been able to take and use with their students. If my work is to make an impact on the issue of body image I need to expand upon the ways educators could use the pedagogical framework of Work It Out in multiple scenarios. Central to this dialog is a discussion of how teachers could create classroom

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conditions where students support one another, all abilities are recognized, and performance anxiety is diminished.

The majority of schools and programs offered to adolescents are coeducational. In my work I found that the coeducational setting enhanced students' tendency towards gender performativity. Moreover, in both the all-girls school and T1D setting my female participants embodied familiar feminized behaviours through their choreography. What this tells me is that in order for body image programming to be effective students need to be pushed outside of what is socially comfortable for them. Students need to be presented with less obvious options for how they might interpret a piece of music, script, or work or art if the expectation is for them to more critically engage with the creative process or in this case body image. If gendered connotations are easily identified in the material provided to them students will be drawn to express cultural constructions rather than their own ideas. The tension I describe here identifies that gender performativity is embedded into student performance and interaction. In order to overcome this issue, teachers need to be vigilant in selecting class materials that encourage students to work together rather than self-segregate.

I see a way to discourage the influence of gender performativity by presenting participants with a collective challenge. That challenge is to create something that expresses all of their ideas about body image. In order to combat the possible influence of gender performativity in their creative process teachers need to select materials or sources of inspiration that are non-descript. Examples could be using classical music or contemporary art to accompany students' work. Another way to help combat gender performativity is to encourage students to brainstorm actions they would like to use in their pieces. This choice would also help to enhance student's recognition of body functionality. If the goal students have in mind is to

generate ideas as a group and those ideas are based in action rather than gender tensions more expressive work could result. This tactic once again harkens to the idea of enabling constraints as a mechanism for pushing students' work further. Providing some limitations on the choices students have in such a scenario helps with performance anxiety and asks students to focus solely on creating.

The idea of performance can inspire competition. This was seen most prominently in my second case study at the all-girls private school. A teaching tactic for dealing with this issue in a body positive way could be to interchange group members throughout a session. In the T1D setting the choreography portion of our class was completed with everyone contributing to a single dance. By doing this the girls who participated in the session saw the creation of their choreography as a collective goal rather than an outlet for competition with other groups. Perhaps a teacher could have students build upon one another's work? Students could compile a series of different stories about an embodied experience into a script for a play. Multiple canvases could be passed throughout the class with each group adding their own artistic flare to the picture. In examples such as these the focus on performance is minimized and the process emphasized. Moreover, students with different abilities are able to contribute to the creation of a piece more easily. My initial thoughts about homogenizing the classroom population (i.e. all dancers, all non-dancers, or all T1D's) is not a realistic or helpful solution. The goal of body image programming is to teach acceptance and appreciation for the body and its abilities. With this idea in mind I see the encouragement of collaboration to be more productive. By bringing multiple perspectives together under a collaborative project students take satisfaction from what they have built together and relatedly appreciate everyone's contributions.

The physical space of the classroom is another important consideration in my approach to body image programming. In this work I tried to avoid being in a formal dance studio and covered mirrors when I was in one during the T1D session. I stand by my ideas about the formal studio space because of how distracting the mirrors were for my participants when we had them. In order for this program and framework to be effective the learning space needs to be a welcoming one. This is less about the physical characteristics of the space and more about the emotional connections students have to the setting. For example, the library at School A was a shared space for all students. Both boys and girls were familiar with and used the library often. Contrastingly at School B bringing girls into the studio space caused a significant emotional response from students. I saw girls without dance experience gravitate to the furthest corners of the room and those girls with dance experience take up most of the studio space. In order for a program to encourage students to participate everyone needs to feel welcome. Clearly the studio space did not make all girls at School B feel comfortable and further enhanced their competitive attitudes towards body functionality. I recommend that classroom teachers choose the space for body image programming carefully and try to use open spaces that are not tied to specified skills or activities.

A limitation I would seek to rectify in future relates to my presence as a researcher. For every session I ran, the responses I collected were taken from group situations where I was present. For this reason, I would like to explore including online, individual, or social media data to obtain the girls' reactions to the program. In the context of Work It Out, the creation and use of a website or Facebook group would provide female participants with a virtual space to share their ideas. Upon registering to participate, all girls could be given a profile to fill out and a related blog/forum to manage. In doing so, the girls would be able to share their stories about

dance and body image with each other and on their own. What they chose to share, how they presented their stories, and how they interacted with one another online would be dictated entirely by the girls themselves. Such a forum would extend the experience of the class outside of the physical studio. In this way, a virtual space would help the girls to continue to build their body functionality, belonging, and body-based ideals well after the class ended. This is especially true in regards to belonging, since the girls would have an ongoing way to connect with other participants.

Although using social media for future research could be helpful it also raises some serious social considerations for my participants' safety. Cyber bullying on social media websites is an issue schools have become extremely concerned with in recent years. Online forums like Facebook allow participants to share their thoughts with a wide audience but do not always censor content. If I were to use social media for a future research project, I would need to ensure that the program's page was a safe and supportive space for girls to share. This would mean placing constraints on what content can be shared on the website. It would also require the use of a moderator for all conversations and comments posted by participants. Perhaps the conversations had online could be directed by me in response to a particular topic or image. Using social media could definitely provide some interesting insights into the ways that my participants socialize but it would need to be administered in a way that puts their emotional safety first.

Body image is a socially charged topic. It is an issue that does not stand alone and is influenced by social tensions surrounding gender, competition, and stigmatization of bodies. This is something that my participants communicated to me and I cannot ignore as an educator. Consider the ways that girls compete and compare their appearance as females to one another

and against idealized images of feminine bodies. The same pressure is placed on male students as well but with a different set of physical characteristics. In each of my case studies I was faced with a point of tension. For the girls at School A it was the performance of gender, at School B girls grappled with a desire to compete, and the T1D girls spoke to the stigmas associated with their bodies. Collectively I see these points of social tension as contributors to the pervasiveness of body image issues.

How then can educators help students to deal with their personal issues with the body. I would advise that the first step towards creating a body positive classroom is helping students to acknowledge what their most pressing concern is. Are they worried about gender representation? Is there something different about their physique that they are struggling to accept? By creating a platform for students to explore their body image more critically change can be inspired. Using both an understanding of body image as a socially charged topic and the fundamental concepts of my model teachers can effectively guide students towards enhanced body appreciation.

Concluding this research has led me to reassess the meaning of my fundamental concepts. While body functionality is about recognizing ability, it is also about the desire for control over the body. Whether that control centers on performing a particular step or managing blood glucose levels, the satisfaction of body functionality depends upon personal power. In this way, the adoption of a more student-centered approach as in Work It Out gives dancers the opportunity to take full responsibility for their physicality. Belonging is an effective tool for encouraging comfort in the classroom and for reducing students' desire to "pass" or apprehensions about sharing personal ideas. When a dancer feels that they fit into the dance classroom, it helps to reframe body image. Feeling accepted is at the center of belonging and is a key feature in inspiring all dancers to continue their training. Body-based ideals are about finding

positive role models and critically thinking about beauty ideals. Dancers who have overcome

various forms of difference (e.g., race, gender, disability, disease) could be useful here. Such

figures give a face to physical difference and bring diversity to representations of female bodies.

Concluding Thoughts

Comparing the girls' reactions to Work It Out reveals three specific insights about girls'

programming. Firstly, it points to how influential conceptions of the body are for girls in

developing a positive body image. While there are many contributors to the girls' concerns,

recognizing that there is an issue to be dealt with is of primary importance. Secondly, it reveals

how difficult it is for girls to talk about a topic like body image openly. Girls fear being judged

for their feelings. These fears, if left internalized and without the opportunity for expression, will

ultimately harm girls' relationship to their body. Lastly, it highlights the effectiveness of playful,

embodied interactions such as dance as a useful intervention for helping students deal with

negative body image. Allowing girls to be in control of the action, socially engage with one

another, and explore the body through creative action rather than objectifying discussion makes

difficult subjects like body image more approachable. In this case, the Work It Out program

enabled this type of interaction through the use of shared creative dance.

Throughout my analysis of girls' feedback to Work It Out and the positive body image

model, I identified further three prevalent themes. These themes follow along with the principles

of Action Research as they help to inform my understanding of body image and its place in the

classroom. First, body image is a personal and gendered experience. Second, girls' pursuit of

"perfection" is diverse and influential in self-making. Finally, the relationship girls have with

their body is directly linked to a desire for some form of control. How the girls defined and

worked towards control varied in each setting. However, the prevalence of desiring personal

choice, pursuing perfectionism, and hoping to pass as healthy (Delgado and Stefancic 2017) were the most notable of the girls' reactions. Moving forward, I see potential for this work and program to grow. Implementing sessions with exclusively male students would foster a whole new understanding of body image and how its presentation varies for boys and girls. Including other chronic illnesses or differently-abled students could also yield more insights into how dance practice and playing with choreography can assist students in relaying difficult emotions.

My interests in T1D, body image, and creative dance are extremely relevant to current events in the dance world. This past year, Canada's National Ballet School admitted their first T1D student into their program. Up until now, the emotional strain of life with T1D as a dancer has not been spoken about publically. There are no dance-specific resources for dance teachers to refer to in welcoming students with T1D into their studios. Realizing the need for better support for T1D dancers, the National Ballet School has agreed to support me in founding the first T1D dance camp. This program will make visible an otherwise undisclosed experience of girlhood; one affected by chronic illness and that yields a new need for control over the body. Ultimately, I hope my work will inspire recognition—recognition that body image is about more than vanity; recognition of how rampant body image issues are in young girls today; and recognition of dance as a practice that can inspire students to share with one another, achieve a profound sense of confidence, and successfully form a loving relationship with their bodies.

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WORK IT OUT

Think it. Move it. Work it.
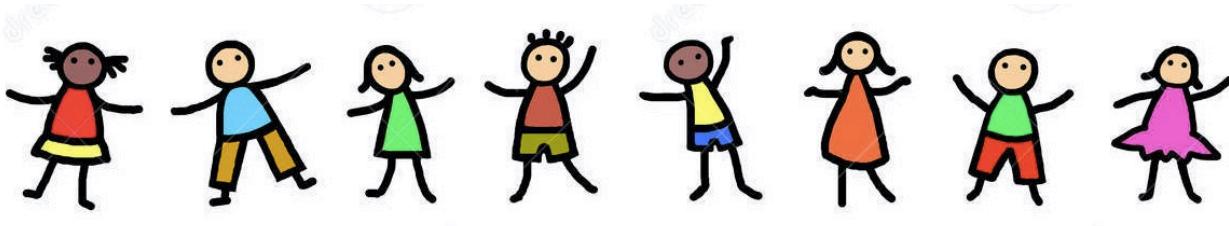
This "Work-It" Book belongs to…

_____

Please check one of the boxes below:

☐ Miss Deanna is allowed to read my booklet for her research.

☐ I would rather keep my booklet private.

Meet Your Teacher
MISS DEANNA

Miss Deanna has been dancing since she was four years old. She has trained in a number of dance styles, competing and performing across North America. She loves dance so very much that she decided to devote her education in

university to studying dance. She is now a student at York University completing her doctorate degree in dance education. That's right, she is going to be a, "Doctor of Dance" one day.

The "Work it Out" Program is a program Miss Deanna designed herself. She will use the time she spends with you running the program to test its effectiveness. By participating you are helping her to make the program better… so please let her know what you think.

Miss Deanna is extremely happy to be working with you, and thanks you in advance for all of your fantastic feedback and participation!

"Work it Out" – What's this all about?

Welcome to the "Work it Out" Program ☺ I am SO excited to have you in class! Over the next 10 weeks we will work together to discuss, exercise, and move our bodies in many different ways. Some of these activities include:

- ❖ Group Discussions
- ❖ Dynamic Warm-ups
- ❖ Dance Fitness
- ❖ Choreography (YOU get to make up some cool moves!)

The goal of this program is to help you to learn more about your body. What you learn depends entirely on you. You could:

- ❖ Discover a new talent
- ❖ Find a new and exciting dance move to share
- ❖ Find a new way to view your body and what it does for you
- ❖ Find new friends – maybe you share some experiences or ideas with classmates you were not aware of

Whatever you may find in this program I hope that it is meaningful to you. Most importantly I want you to take this time to think critically and carefully about the discussions and activities we do. How they relate to your previous experiences with dance and fitness, how you feel when participating, and why these activities might be important to you.

Together we are going work hard, work together, and…

Work it Out!

THE ELEMENTS OF DANCE
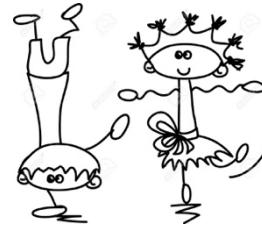
Body   Body parts. Shapes you create
with your body. Body bases.
How are your using your body? Think about the
movements themselves. What you are doing,
what parts are working, and what parts are still?

Time   Tempo. Speed. Think about how quickly or
slowly you are moving. Do you find the beat of
the music and keep time with it? OR do you
dance through the music?

Space   Floor patterns. Directions. High and low levels.
Think about how you use the available space.
Are your movements confined to certain area?
OR are you using as much room as you can?

Energy   Movement quality. How are you moving? Are
you moving sharply or softly? Are your
movements strong or weak? What does that tell
your audience about the emotion behind your
dance? How does it change the movements?

Relationship How do you relate to the dancers around you?
What does your formation (i.e. where you stand
and face) say about the story you are telling?

BODY BRAINSTORM 1 (Getting Started)

> We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.
>
> Remember – this is **YOUR** booklet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

What are some of your favourite ways to use your body?

Choose one of the body uses you listed above, (your MOST favourite one) and tell me why you feel this way?

What are some of your least favourite ways to use your body?

Choose one of the body uses you listed above. (your LEAST favourite one) and tell me why you feel this way?

In one word tell me….

Something you are very proud of about you: _____

Something you want to improve about you: _____

BODY BRAINSTORM 2 (Upper Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** booklet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body...	Actions I can do with this body part...
Head		
Neck		
Shoulders		
Arms		

Elbows		
Hands		
Fingers		

EXTRA ROOM & OTHER THOUGHTS...

BODY BRAINSTORM 3 (Middle Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** booklet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body...	Actions I can do with this body part...
Chest		
Stomach		
Hips		
Waist		

Back		

EXTRA ROOM AND OTHER THOUGHTS...

BODY BRAINSTORM 4 (Lower Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** booklet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body...	Actions I can do with this body part...
Thigh		
Knee		
Calf		
Ankles		

Feet		
Toes		

EXTRA ROOM AND OTHER THOUGHTS...

"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!" – Dr. Seuss

CREATIVE SPACE: This is the part of your work-it book where you get to be creative. You may jot down ideas, draw, journal, write me a note. It is your space to use as you would like to. It is your space to create in.

[T1D Worksheets]

BODY BRAINSTORM (Upper Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body...	Actions I can do with this body part...
Head		
Neck		
Shoulders		
Arms		

Elbows		
Hands		
Fingers		
Type One Diabetes	**Can you describe Type One Diabetes in one word? List words that come to mind and circle or underline the one that you feel describes your ideas best.**	

BODY BRAINSTORM (Middle Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** worksheet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body...	Actions I can do with this body part...
Chest		
Stomach		
Hips		
Waist		

Back		
Type One Diabetes	**Can you describe Type One Diabetes in one word? List words that come to mind and circle or underline the one that you feel describes your ideas best.**	

BODY BRAINSTORM (Lower Body)

We use and move our bodies in so many ways! Have you ever taken time to **think** about your body? Here is where you get to do just that. Take a few minutes and write down the first words or ideas that come to mind...brainstorm about your body.

Remember – this is **YOUR** worksheet and it is **YOUR** choice to share or not share your words with anyone.

Body Part	Word that comes to mind when I think about this part of my body…	Actions I can do with this body part…
Thigh		
Knee		
Calf		
Ankles		

Feet		
Toes		
Type One Diabetes	**Can you describe Type One Diabetes in one word? List words that come to mind and circle or underline the one that you feel describes your ideas best.**	

Appendix B: Work It Out Lesson Plans

BODY SECTION: Introduction and The Elements of Dance WEEKS: 1 and 2		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Briefly explain the program to students ✓ Establish classroom rules/conduct ✓ Group Introductions ✓ Student Bios ✓ Introduce students to "The Elements of Dance" (i.e., Time, Space, Shape, Energy, and Relationship)	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Chart paper • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
On week 1 begin with reading through the first few pages of the workbook. Be sure remind students that they are not being marked for this BUT their participation helps me with my schooling. Move on to have them fill in the first section of the booklet outlining a bit of information about themselves.

On week 2 begin to present the idea of "choreography." What does it mean? What are things you need to think about when beginning to choreograph a dance?

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
As the first week of class there is no choreography work yet. Students are told they will be making up dances but we will begin the second week of this unit. On that second day students will choose their groups and begin to brainstorm music and inspiration for their pieces.

BODY SECTION: Upper Body		
WEEKS: 3 and 4		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Introduce students to upper body parts ✓ Fill in upper body surveys ✓ Split into and begin to work with choreography groups	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Chart paper • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
Over the next two lessons we will discuss the first two elements of dance. What they mean and what they might look like (i.e., Body and Time). Students will fill in the surveys for the first body section.

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
Using their filled in surveys students will look for similar adjectives among group members. Using the words listed in their surveys students will begin to choreograph their dances using these ideas as inspiration

BODY SECTION: Lower Body		
WEEKS: 5 and 6		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Introduce students to lower body parts ✓ Fill in lower body survey ✓ Continue to work on choreography in groups adding in lower body ideas/movements	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Chart paper • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
Over the next two lessons we will discuss the first two elements of dance. What they mean and what they might look like (i.e., Space and Energy). Students will fill in the surveys for the second body section.

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
Using their filled in surveys students will look for similar adjectives among group members. Using the words listed in their surveys students will begin to choreograph their dances using these ideas as inspiration

BODY SECTION: Mid-Body		
WEEKS: 7 and 8		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Fill in mid-body survey ✓ Continue to work on choreography in groups adding in mid-body ideas/movements	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Chart paper • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
Over the next two lessons we will choose to input the elements of dance we have learned so far into our group warm up. In preparation for this we will go over what all four What they mean and what they might look like (i.e., Body, Time, Space and Energy). Students will fill in the surveys for the first body section.

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
Using their filled in surveys students will look for similar adjectives among group members. Using the words listed in their surveys students will begin to choreograph their dances using these ideas as inspiration

BODY SECTION: Whole Body Dancing and Culmination		
WEEK: 9		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Return to surveys to edit, add to, or complete any unfinished sections ✓ Increase attention to elements of dance ✓ Continue to work on choreography with added attention to elements of dance and expression	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why? • What do I think about body image? • How can I express my ideas through my movement?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Chart paper • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
Over the next two lessons students will deepen their understanding of the elements of dance and how they can help them express their ideas about body image. Specifically, we will focus on using the element of Relationship to help them do this.

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
Now that all elements of dance have been addressed and all segments of the body students will work on the creative aspect of their choreography. They will sit down with group members to discuss what they wish to express through their dances.

BODY SECTION: Whole Body Dancing and Culmination (SHOW WEEK)		
WEEK: 10		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Last look at surveys ✓ Final edits and rehearsals for sharing choreography with class	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why? • What did I learn about myself through this experience? • What did I learn about my own body? • How did my ideas relate to my peers?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Open Space (big enough to move in)

LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
On the final of our classes participants are able to give a final edit to their surveys. They may also reflect upon the process of choreography and write down their final thoughts on things they learned throughout the process of choreographing their pieces.

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Showtime!
Groups will share their dances with the group. After all groups have presented we will have a discussion about what students saw and how their ideas about body image related to the movements they chose. Through this discussion, students will also be encouraged to share what the experience of choreographing was like for them. Things they learned or things they struggled with.

T1D DANCE CLASS LESSON FORMAT

ONE DAY CLASS FORMAT		
Objectives	**Guiding Questions**	**Materials Needed**
✓ Fill in modified worksheet ✓ Group movement ✓ Create a group piece of choreography	• What are the elements of dance? • How and when do we use these elements? • Why do we use them? • Which is my favourite element? Why? • How does T1D integrate into the dance classroom? • How does T1D affect me as a dancer? As a person? • What do I do to help manage my T1D when dancing? When in a social situation?	• Work It Out Booklets • Music player • Open Space (big enough to move in) • Low blood sugar supplies (e.g., juice and Dex4 Tabs)
LESSON ACTION: 90 minutes		

PART ONE: Discussion and Reflection
Introduction to the group. All participants will introduce themselves to each other and fill in their worksheets on their own. We will then collectively discuss things we wrote (all is voluntary). Included in this initial discussion is also an attention to T1D management and instructing girls as to where the low supplies are (safety protocol).

PART TWO: Shared Movement
We will do three different dances together and finish with a group cool down/stretch. Remind them that this is about continuing to move as best they can. Each section of the dances is broken down this week so that students have an idea of what kind of movements I will do with them. They are free to modify if they wish to.

PART THREE: Creative Movement and Reflection
All participants will break into pairs and work on a separate section of the song. Together they will use their surveys to find common ideas about their bodies and T1D to express in their movement. Each group will then share their choreography with the group and piece to together these sections to make a completed dance.

Appendix C: Informed Consent Forms

Informed Consent Form for Schools

YORK U
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Deanna Paolantonio and I am a current Ph.D. Candidate from York University. For the next ten weeks I will be a guest teacher at your daughter's school. As part of my studies at York in dance education, I am researching how taking part in dance and choreography can aid girls in achieving positive body image and social empowerment. During my time at the school I am looking to complete some of my research. This letter is inquiring as to whether you would grant consent for your daughter to partake in my work. Here is what you need to know…

What is the reason for this research? What is it about?
- I aim to investigate whether students who actively participate in dance and dance fitness lessons attain heightened social empowerment, specifically, in relation to body-image.

What will my child have to do?
- Take part in weekly dance classes held at the school with their classmates. These classes have been included in their academic timetable and will in no way interrupt class time for other subject areas with their homeroom teacher.

Will my child remain anonymous?
- Yes, all participants will remain anonymous as will the school.

How long will the research materials be stored? How will they be used?
- Research materials (i.e. notes, videos, student surveys, and student journal assignments) will be stored in a locked cabinet in my office for up to 2 years. After that time all will be destroyed.
- The data will be compiled into a final paper and presentation as part of my final dissertation at York University (copies of the dissertation can be provided at your request).

Things to note…
- You may ask to have your child removed from the study at any time.
- Choosing to not participate or remove your child from the research will not affect any future relationships you may have with York University.
- I would like to take videos of work sessions and photos of those who participated. Your child may or may not be included in these activities based on your consent.

Should you have any further questions or concerns please contact me through email OR my research supervisor.

Miss. Deanna Paolantonio
(Ph.D. Candidate – York University, Dance Department)

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS SECTION TO THE SCHOOL…

Student's Name: _____

Guardian's Name: _____

Please place an "X" under the "yes" or "no" columns in response to the following questions…

	YES	NO
I have read, and fully understand, the proposed study listed above.		
I give consent for my daughter to be involved in this study.		
I understand that I may choose to withdraw my daughter from the study at any time.		
I give consent for my child to be included in videos of classes.		
I give consent for my child to be in photos taken during class.		

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date

Informed Consent Form for T1D Classes

YORK U
UNIVERSITÉ
UNIVERSITY

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is Deanna Paolantonio and I am a current Ph.D. Candidate from York University. As part of my studies at York in dance education, I am researching how taking part in dance and choreography can aid girls in achieving positive body image and social empowerment. More specifically I am interested in how dealing with type one affects body image and the ways involvement in dance classes and diabetes education events can aid type ones in achieving the highest level of self-esteem. During the dance event with I Challenge Diabetes I am looking to complete some of my research. This letter informs you of what this research entails and is inquiring as to whether you would grant consent for your daughter to partake in my work. Here is what you need to know…

What is the reason for this research? What is it about?
- I aim to investigate whether students who actively participate in dance and dance fitness lessons attain heightened social empowerment, specifically, in relation to body-image.

What will my child have to do?
- Take a dance class held at York University as part of the I Challenge Diabetes offered programming. There will be four different dance classes to take on different days. All are voluntary and all of them need not be attended for your child to participate in research.

Will my child remain anonymous?
- Yes, all participants will remain anonymous.

How long will the research materials be stored? How will they be used?
- Research materials (i.e. notes, student surveys, and student journal assignments) will be stored in a locked cabinet. All electronic data collected will be stored in a password protected computer. After that time all will be destroyed.
- Data will be be stored in my office 2 years and after that time be destroyed.
- The data will be compiled into a final paper and presentation as part of my final dissertation at York University (copies of the dissertation can be provided at your request).

Things to note…
- This research has received ethics review and approval by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University.

- You may ask to have your child removed from the study at any time. Should you decide to remove your child from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed where possible. Choosing to not participate or remove your child will not affect any future relationships you may have with York University.
- I would like to take videos of work sessions and photos of those who participated. Your child may or may not be included in these activities based on your consent.
- Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Should you have any further questions or concerns please contact me OR the Dance Department at York University.

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THIS SECTION TO THE SCHOOL…

Student's Name: _____

Guardian's Name: _____

Please place an "X" under the "yes" or "no" columns in response to the following questions…

	YES	NO
I have read, and fully understand, the proposed study listed above.		
I give consent for my daughter to be involved in this study.		
I understand that I may choose to withdraw my daughter from the study at any time.		
I give consent for my child to be included in videos of classes.		
I give consent for my child to be in photos taken during class.		

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian's Signature   Date