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NEW NATIONAL REPORT REVEALS THE HIGH PRICE OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Dove® Addresses Self-Esteem Crisis with Unprecedented Effort to Reach Girls

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, NJ, October 7, 2008 – Self-esteem has become a national crisis in this country. The majority of girls (seven in ten) feel they do not measure up in some way including their looks, performance in school and relationships. Most disturbing is that girls with low self-esteem are engaging in harmful and destructive behavior that can leave a lasting imprint on their lives. These new findings come from *Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem*¹, conducted with girls between eight and 17 and commissioned by the Dove Self-Esteem Fund. In response, the Dove® brand is launching its largest effort yet to bring self-esteem programming to girls across the country and to encourage everyone to make a difference in the lives of girls. This new initiative is part of the Dove Self-Esteem Fund goal to reach 5 million girls globally by 2010 with self-esteem programming.

Destructive Behaviors

An alarming number of girls are turning to destructive action when feeling insecure, and girls with low self-esteem are three times more likely to participate in dangerous behaviors during these times.

- **75 percent of girls** with low self-esteem reported engaging in **negative and potentially harmful activities**, such as disordered eating, cutting, bullying, smoking or drinking,

¹ Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem (commissioned June 2008)

when feeling badly about themselves—compared with **25 percent** of girls with high self-esteem.

- **61 percent** of teen girls with low self-esteem admit to **talking badly** about themselves (Compared to **15 percent** of girls with high self-esteem)
- **25 percent** of teen girls with low self-esteem resort to **injuring themselves** on purpose or **cutting** when feeling badly about themselves (Compared to **4 percent** of girls with high self-esteem)
- **25 percent** of teen girls with low self-esteem practice **disordered eating**, such as starving themselves, refusing to eat, or over-eating and throwing up, when feeling badly about themselves (Compared to **7 percent** of girls with high self-esteem)

“Low self-esteem among girls and young women has reached a crisis level,” said Dr. Ann Kearney-Cooke, Ph.D., a psychologist and self-esteem expert who collaborated on *Real Girls, Real Pressure*. “The new report from Dove confirms the importance of healthy self-esteem and the dangerous consequences that can arise when hang-ups about looks, academics and popularity erode a girl’s sense of self-worth and self-acceptance.”

Self-Esteem Tipping Point

Girls are also craving better communication with adult figures as they struggle with challenges in their lives. The top wish among girls is for their parents to communicate better with them, including more frequent and more open conversations, as well as discussions about what is happening in her life. However, as girls enter their teenage years there is a significant loss of trust and communication with adults, particularly when they are feeling badly about themselves.

- **67 percent** of girls ages 13 – 17 turn to their mother as a resource when feeling badly about themselves compared to **91 percent** of girls ages 8 – 12
- Only **27 percent** of girls ages 13 – 17 will turn to their father for help when feeling badly about themselves compared to **54 percent** of girls ages 8-12. Interestingly, at 16, girls become more likely to seek support from male peers than from their own dads.

“We cannot underestimate just how vital the words and actions of parents are in fostering positive self-esteem in girls. However, it can be challenging because adolescence is not typically a time when girls are reaching out to their parents and speaking candidly,” said self-esteem expert Jess Weiner, a best-selling author and the Global Ambassador for the Dove Self-Esteem Fund. “The good news is that if parents and other role models are willing to create a

steady conversation of encouragement, honesty and openness it can definitely help girls gain confidence and reach their full potential.”

Making a Difference

This fall, the Dove Self-Esteem Fund is extending its outreach in an effort to tackle the self-esteem crisis among girls. As part of its largest efforts to date, Dove is continuing to support *uniquely ME!*, a long-term partnership with the Girls Scouts of the USA that helps build confidence in girls 8-17 with after school programs, self-esteem building events and educational resources. The brand is also embarking on a new partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of America to conduct educational workshops in 20 cities across the country for both girls and the adults who influence them.

The Dove Self-Esteem Workshops for girls have been developed to empower them and promote new ways of thinking about beauty, body image and self-esteem. Separate “Train the Trainer” workshops will also be held in each city for mentors and educators to provide them with the skills and information they need to host workshops with girls in their own organizations.

“We know that if you spend time giving girls new ways to think about beauty, body image and self-esteem it can make a real difference,” said Kathy O’Brien, Dove marketing director. “This program has been developed to provide the resources necessary to create positive change and ensure the next generation of young women grows up feeling good about themselves and appreciating their own unique beauty.”

To ensure everyone has access to self-esteem resources, Dove has developed a range of powerful and engaging self-esteem online tools, workbooks and facilitator training guides for girls, moms and mentors that can be downloaded for free on the Dove Web site. To learn more visit campaignforrealbeauty.com.

About *Real Girls, Real Pressure*: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem

Real Girls, Real Pressure: A National Report on the State of Self-Esteem was conducted nationally online among 1,029 girls 8 – 17, and is representative of the U.S. based on census indicators (region, ethnicity and parental education.) An additional 3,344 girls 8 – 17 were surveyed in a targeted study that was conducted in 20 major U.S. cities representative of each DMA based on ethnicity and parental education. The research was conducted by StrategyOne, an applied research consulting firm, in collaboration with Ann Kearney-Cooke, PhD.

Methodology: Interviews averaged 15 minutes and were conducted between May 6 and May 28, 2008 using the online field services of ResearchNow.

About the Dove Self-Esteem Awareness Measurement

The Dove Self-Esteem Awareness Measurement was developed to provide an indicator of self-esteem encompassing an overall sense of self-acceptance, confidence and emotional orientation among American girls. Each girl surveyed was assigned a score based on how she rated herself in each of these areas. Based on their individual scores, girls were classified into three groups: high, average and low self-esteem. The high self-esteem group was comprised of girls whose scores fell within the top third of the distribution, the average self-esteem group included girls whose scores fell within the middle third of the distribution and the low self-esteem group included girls whose scores fell within the bottom third of the distribution.

About the Dove Self-Esteem Fund

The Dove Self-Esteem Fund was established as an agent of change to inspire and educate girls and young women about a wider definition of beauty. It is committed to help girls build positive self-esteem and a healthy body image, with a goal of reaching 5 million girls globally by 2010. The Fund is part of the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, a global effort designed to widen today's stereotypical view of beauty.

The Dove Self-Esteem Fund is a global project, which consists of a network of local country initiatives linked in strategy and direction by a global steering group. In each country, the Dove Self-Esteem Fund supports a specific charitable organization to help foster self-esteem. In the U.S., it supports the Boys and Girls Club of America and the Girls Scouts of the USA to help build confidence in girls 8-17 with after-school programs, self-esteem building events and educational resources.

About Dove

The Dove mission is to make women feel more beautiful every day by challenging today's stereotypical view of beauty and inspiring women to take great care of themselves. Dove, manufactured by Unilever, is the No. 1 personal wash brand nationwide. One in every three households uses a Dove product², which includes beauty bars, body washes, face care, anti-perspirant/deodorants, body mists, hair care and styling aids. Dove is available nationwide in food, drug and mass outlet stores.

About Unilever

Unilever's mission is to add vitality to life. We meet everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life. Each day, around the world, consumers make 160 million decisions to purchase Unilever products.

In the United States, the portfolio includes major brand icons such as: Axe, Ben & Jerry's, Bertolli, Breyers, Caress, Country Crock, Degree, Dove personal care products, Hellmann's, Klondike, Knorr, Lipton, Popsicle, Promise, Q-Tips, Skippy, Slim-Fast, Suave, Sunsilk and Vaseline. All of the preceding brand names are registered trademarks of the Unilever Group of Companies. Dedicated to serving consumers and the communities where we live, work and play, Unilever employs more than 14,000 people in both the United States and Puerto Rico – generating nearly \$11 billion in sales in 2007. For more information, visit www.unileverusa.com.

² AC Nielsen (2004)