



# SHREDDED

By the time boys hit puberty, they've been bombarded with thousands of images showing the male body as muscled and devoid of fat. And as their own bodies change, boys realize that muscles don't just pop off their frames naturally. For some boys this leads to anxiety and an obsessive desire to change their image.

**SHREDDED** is about a group of teenage boys who want to transform their bodies so they become "shredded" like the muscle-filled bodies of their media heroes. The film reveals the risks they're willing to take to achieve the ideal male shape, exploring supplement use and the temptations of steroids. With complete frankness, the boys relate their experiences, desires and motivations to the audience, who must draw their own conclusions.

This documentary is designed to provoke discussion among teenagers — both boys and girls — about body image and where lines should be drawn between healthy and dangerous behaviour.

A user guide is printed on the inside of this videojacket.

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**VHS**

149C 9105 134

 Closed captioned.  
A decoder is required.

22 minutes

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SHREDDED



WHAT WOULD YOU **RISK**  
FOR THE **PERFECT BODY?**



A NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA PRODUCTION



## SHREDDED USER GUIDE

*Shredded* is a film for teenagers — to be seen with peers, teachers and/or family. It is intended to be a discussion starter and a catalyst for healthier lifestyle choices. It is meant to encourage teens to reflect upon the risks associated with their current choices and the impact that they may have on their future health.

Teens are faced with enormous pressure to look the way their peers and the media say they should. The temptation to take shortcuts can be overpowering. There are huge risks and costs involved when measures become extreme or obsessive. *Shredded* confronts these issues honestly, and in the process challenges teens to carefully consider the decisions they make about their lifestyles.

This film is an effective tool in health, physical education/wellness, lifestyle, and media courses when discussing issues related to self-esteem, personal growth and the influences of media and marketing.

## BEFORE SCREENING THE FILM

Most people have something about their appearance that they would like to change. For some people these feelings contribute to low self-esteem while for others they can lead to an obsession with body image. Achieving a balanced and healthy lifestyle can be a challenge.

It is important, then, to be sensitive about self-esteem in discussions about body image with teenage audiences. People come in all shapes and sizes. Encourage teens to be respectful of differences.

### Suggested questions for preparing for the film:

- Discuss and define the following terms:
  - healthy lifestyle
  - eating disorders and body dysmorphia
  - masculinity and femininity
- Compare what girls find attractive in boys with what boys think that girls find attractive.
- How important is body image to you? How important is appearance to self-esteem?
- What do the media tell us about how men and women ought to look?
- Is there a difference between exercise for appearance and exercise for fitness or athletic performance?

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## POST-SCREENING ACTIVITIES

**After viewing the film, use these questions as a guide for discussion:**

- Are the boys in the film good role models? What are the positive and negative (or risky) aspects of their dedication to exercise – both physical and psychological?
- If you could talk to the boys, what would you say to each of them?
- The boys in the film experiment with a variety of diets and supplements, from raw eggs and protein powders to drugs. In the end, Shawn advises that “all you need to do is make sure that you plan your diet right and you work out right, and you’ll get exactly what you want.” Is he right? What is the best formula for good health?
- In the film, Cedric comments on his addiction to exercise: “Lots of days I won’t know why I do it... I put it even in a class of anorexia or bulimia, except the reverse.” Compare and contrast how body image affects boys and girls.
- It came as a big shock to Adil that he couldn’t get as big as he wanted to without steroids. “If I want to get that shredded look, that shreddedness that I... that I like pray to every night, it’s physically impossible for me to get to my weight... And if I want to get there, I’m going to have to juice it.” Discuss the misconception that the muscular physiques portrayed in the media are the sole result of blood, sweat, and years.
- A vast industry profits from making people feel insecure about their bodies. Why do you think about your body the way you do? Is it possible to avoid buying into the media images? Consider the influence of the media on today’s youth.
- Discuss the change Alanzo went through before he came up with his final statement: “I think that’s what true body image might be: to just be healthy and happy and, you know, live a long time.”
- Adil’s attitude toward “fitness” drugs is, “If this screws me up, then it screws me up. You know what? At least I learned on my own, not ‘cause someone told me not to, you know what I mean?” What is your response to this statement?

**Assignment:** Define your own body-image philosophy and design a healthy lifestyle action plan that fits your goals.

**Activity:** Use the Internet to further research one of the topics you have discussed in class. Incorporate your findings into a print, Web or video presentation.

Visit [www.nfb.ca/shredded](http://www.nfb.ca/shredded) for related resources and activities.