



Council of Fashion Designers of America Health Initiative Guidelines

In January 2007, the CFDA formed a health initiative to address what has become a global fashion issue: the overwhelming concern about whether some models are unhealthy thin, and whether or not to impose restrictions in such cases. Designers share a responsibility to protect women, and very young girls in particular, within the business, sending the message that beauty is health. While some models are naturally tall and thin and their appearance is a result of many factors, including genetics, youth, nutritional food, and exercise, other models have or develop eating disorders. Although we cannot fully assume responsibility for an issue that is as complex as eating disorders and that occurs in many walks of life, the fashion industry can begin a campaign of awareness and create an atmosphere that supports the well-being of these young women. Working in partnership with the fashion industry, medical experts, nutritionists, and fitness trainers, the CFDA formed a committee to propose a series of positive steps designed to promote wellness and a healthier working environment. We recognize that change will take time and are committed to industry-specific educational efforts, awareness programs, support systems, and evaluation and treatment options that advance our recommendations.

Guidelines:

- Educate the industry to identify the early warning signs in an individual at risk of developing an eating disorder.
- Encourage models who may have an eating disorder to seek professional help in order to continue modeling. And models who are receiving professional help for an eating disorder should not continue modeling without that professional's approval.
- Develop workshops for the industry (including models and their families) on the nature of eating disorders, how they arise, how we identify and treat them, and complications if they are untreated.
- Support the well-being of younger individuals by not hiring models under the age of sixteen for runway shows; not allowing models under the age of eighteen to work past midnight at fittings or shoots; checking IDs to ensure that models are the appropriate age; providing regular breaks and rest. Consult the applicable labor laws found at www.labor.state.ny.us when working with models under sixteen.
- Supply healthy meals, snacks, and water backstage and at shoots and provide nutrition and fitness education.
- Promote a healthy backstage environment by raising the awareness of the impact of smoking and tobacco-related disease among women, ensuring a smoke-free environment, and address underage drinking by prohibiting alcohol.

The **CFDA Health Initiative** is about awareness, education, and safety, not policing. Although we do not require a specific body mass index to work, we do recommend that models receive regular medical care to ensure their well-being.

The **CFDA Health Initiative** is committed to the notion of a healthy mind in a healthy body, and there cannot be one without the other. The industry is determined to foster a balanced approach to nutrition, recreation, exercise, work, and relationships.

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August 2011

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