



# Feeling Judged

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In school, Mira sometimes hears gossip and mean comments about girls, their bodies and how they look. It feels like there are invisible rules she and her friends have to navigate everyday to try to fit in - what to say, how to look, when to laugh.

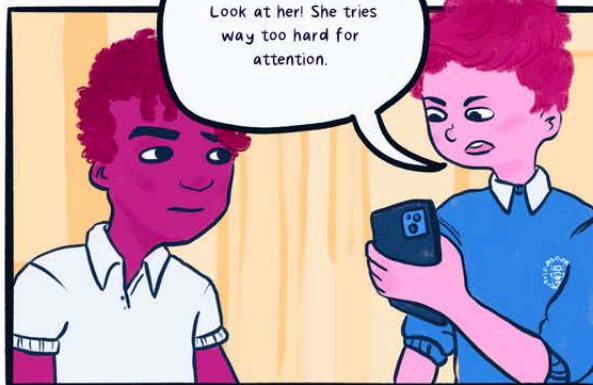
Did you see what that girl was wearing? So embarrassing, she doesn't have the body for that skirt.

And look at that girl... She really needs to start going to the gym.

If that's what they say about those girls, then what are people saying about me behind my back?

Look at her! She tries way too hard for attention.

Moving through the corridors, Mira feels the atmosphere heavy with judgement.





Every move comes with the potential for mean looks and whispers. Mira tries to do everything right and look the right way, to avoid the sense of shame, anxiety and loneliness of feeling evaluated and disapproved of.





Mira doesn't know how to handle her feelings of stress and worry. She tries to find support from friends and on social media.



She tries to be confident and love herself, but her feelings of insecurity stay, no matter how positive and confident she tries to be.






The more Mira thinks about it, she realises it's no wonder it's difficult to feel confident and good about herself. She and her friends are surrounded by messages that set expectations for how a girl should look and act. These feel impossible to ignore.





Thinking about all the different factors that impact how she feels and thinks about herself and her body, Mira feels that big changes are needed to make things better for girls.



What changes would be needed in school and society to challenge expectations for girls to look, act and be a certain way?

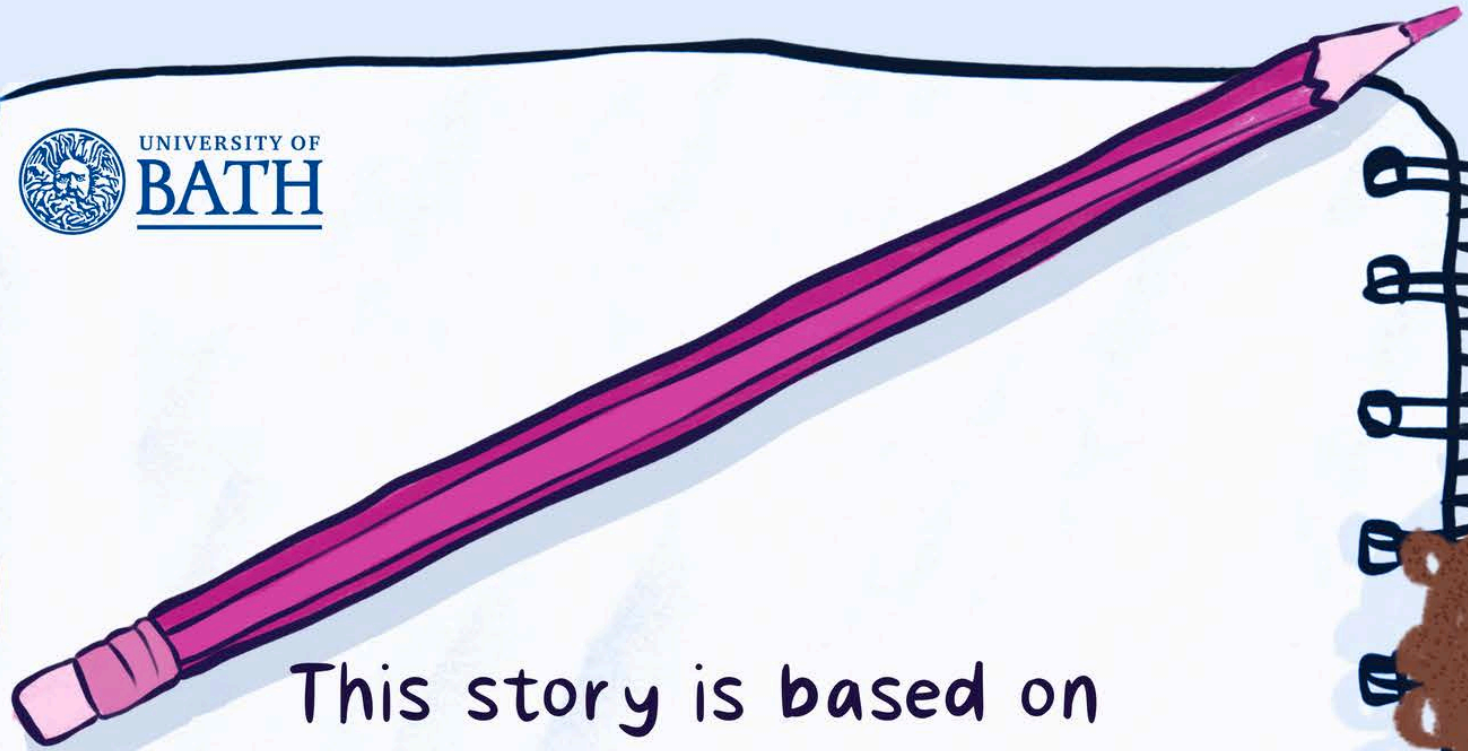
What do  
you think?







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This story is based on research data produced with girls in secondary school in the UK and Sweden. It explores how peer relations in school affect how girls feel about themselves and their bodies.



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