



What is Body Image?

Adapted from BodyTalk Facilitator's Guide

Body image is the picture of your body that you hold in your mind. Body image is made up of many events in your life. Some examples are below:

- How your family members react to your body
- How your body changes as you grow
- Any experience of physical or sexual abuse you may have had
- How your body feels
- How you feel about being a girl or boy
- How you feel about your body
- Dance, sports or other exercise classes that you attend
- Accidents and illnesses you may have had
- Your culture
- Messages from media, such as on the internet, in magazines and in television or movies

Develop a Positive Body Image

Turn negative thoughts into positive and powerful energy!
Choose 5 of the following positive activities to practice every week.

- Exercise for the joy of feeling my body move and grow stronger.
- Do activities that make me happy. I deserve to do things that I enjoy!
- Wear clothes that make me feel happy.
- List at least 5 good qualities that I have, such as, being kind, clever, or creative. I can repeat these to myself whenever I start to feel bad about my body.
- Surround myself with people and things that make me feel good about who I am.
- Treat my body with respect and kindness. I will nourish it, move it, and listen to its needs. My body will carry me to my dreams!
- Appreciate all that my body can do.
- Remind myself that beauty is a state of mind, not a state of my body.

Treat your body: Do something nice for your body that you can enjoy. Take a bubble bath, paint your toe or fingernails, read a book, make time for a nap, pet an animal, find a peaceful place outside to relax. The options are endless!



Ask Yourself ...

Adapted from BodyTalk Facilitators Guide



How have you used food or eating to cope with bad feelings?

Have you ever dieted? If yes, what situations lead you to begin a diet, how does your body and mind feel when you are dieting?

How often do you eat when you are hungry, eat what your body wants, and stop when you are full?

Observe the messages about beauty in your surroundings. What messages do you see and hear?

Make a list of the comments you have made about your body — both in your head and out loud. Are these thoughts and comments negative or positive? If some are negative, where do they come from?

Think about how many times in one day you judge other people’s looks. How does this practice make you feel? How does it affect the people around you?

What would you be free to do if you accepted your body?

How would you feel if you really loved your body as it is?

What are you going to do to help yourself feel good about your body?



The Important People in My Life

How much do looks really matter? Answer the questions below about the important people in your life. You can use the same person more than once. Why are they important to you? It is probably not because of the way they look, but because of the way they make you feel about yourself. We value other people because they care about us, not because of how they look.

A friend who is always there for you

A teacher who makes you happy

A relative who shows you love

An adult who has reached out to help you

Someone who makes you laugh a lot

Someone you love very much

Someone you can tell your troubles to

Someone who makes you feel good about yourself

Someone you are there for

Someone you wish felt better about him/herself

Someone you want to be like





Accept All Body Shapes

Adapted from Joanne Ikeda, Health at Every Size

- ◆ Human beings come in many shapes and sizes. We should celebrate our differences.
- ◆ There is no perfect body size, shape, or weight that everyone should have.
- ◆ Every body is a good body, no matter its size or shape.
- ◆ Judging people based on how they look is unfair. It is based on factors over which the person has little or no control.
- ◆ We must respect the bodies of others even though they may be different from our own.
- ◆ We must take care of our body, self and mind.
- ◆ Good health is not defined by body size. It is physical, mental and social well-being.
- ◆ People of all sizes and shapes can improve their health by living a balanced lifestyle.