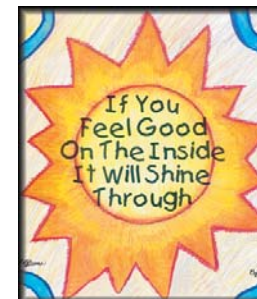


1. Celebrate people's different shapes and sizes.
2. Compliment your friends and family on their wonderful personalities, successes, or accomplishments rather than on their weight and shape.
3. Lead by example. Don't focus on your weight and shape, and do not make comments and/or tease people about their weight and appearance.
4. Encourage open dialogue with your friends and family about the negative affects of weight and shape pre-occupation.
5. Choose active pastimes with friends and family for fun rather than for weight loss.
6. Be a good role model in regards to sensible eating, exercise, and self-acceptance.
7. Focus on the fact that "true beauty" is not simply skin deep.
8. Share with people your feelings, fears and joys related to the changes of life: puberty, menopause, etc.
9. Encourage family and friends to seek assistance when harassment and/or bullying is an issue.
10. Assist loved ones to reach out for help if they are struggling with a negative body image.

Lost in Translation?

Positive Body Image Can Be Interpreted in All Cultures



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What is Body Image?

Body image is the mental picture you have of your body and the thoughts and feelings you have about this picture.

What is a Positive Body Image?

Positive body image is having a realistic view of your body size and shape while, at the same time, feeling comfortable and content with your body.

This includes:

- ▶ An appreciation of your natural body shape
- ▶ Refusing to spend an unreasonable amount of time worrying about food, weight, and calories
- ▶ Resisting pressure to strive for the “perfect” body by finding more meaningful and lasting ways to feel good about yourself
- ▶ Feeling comfortable and confident in your body

Developing a Positive Body Image:

1. Recognize that bodies come in all shapes and sizes. There is not one “right” body size, shape or weight.
2. Sharpen your media literacy skills: Media present stereotypical and unrealistic ideals to men and women. Love your body, not someone else’s body.
3. Develop your own unique talents and abilities that are unrelated to your looks. Let these capabilities be a part of how you define your worth and identity.
4. Remember your body size, shape and weight does not determine your worth or importance as a person.
5. Find a personal fashion style that feels comfortable to you.
6. Engage in activities that do not require you to focus on your body. Connect with other people – volunteer your time to a worthy cause.
7. Include people of all ages, sizes, abilities, racial and sexual orientation in your circle of friends: Find friends who do not focus on weight, shape or size.
8. Assert yourself when other people comment on your body. Let people know that comments about your body are not welcome.
9. Take the pressure off: Accepting and respecting the natural diversity of body shapes, sizes and weights will help support the health and well being of all people.
10. Focus on the ways in which your body allows you to take part in life. Hug a loved one, write a poem or take a moonlit walk.

(Adapted from the National Eating Disorders Association. (2002). Enhancing male body image. Retrieved November 30, 2005, <http://www.NationalEatingDisorders.org>)