



Body Image



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Body image is how you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind. It involves what you believe about your appearance, how you feel about your body, and how you feel in your body.

Before we are old enough to realize it, many of us hold onto messages that can lead to either positive or negative body image starting at a very young age. This could be from media or even comments from family or friends. Having a healthy body image is an important part of mental wellbeing and in many cases, eating disorders prevention.

Improving body image takes time and effort. Below are suggestions to help you get started improving your own body image.

- 1. Appreciate all that your body can do.** Celebrate all of the amazing things your body does for you—running, dancing, breathing, laughing, dreaming, etc.
- 2. Keep a top-ten list of things you like about yourself—** think personality, accomplishments, and other positive things unrelated to looks. Read your list often. Add to it as you become aware of more things to like about yourself.
- 3. Remind yourself that “true beauty” is not skin-deep.** When you feel good about yourself and who you are, you carry yourself with a sense of confidence, self-acceptance, and openness that makes you beautiful. Beauty is a state of mind, not a state of your body.
- 4. Surround yourself with positive people.** It is easier to feel good about yourself and your body when you are around others who are supportive and who recognize the importance of liking yourself just as you naturally are.
- 5. Shut down those voices in your head that tell you your body is not “right” or that you are a “bad” person.** You can overpower these thoughts with positive ones. The next time you start to tear yourself down, build yourself back up with a few quick positive thoughts about yourself.
- 6. Wear clothes that are comfortable and that make you feel good about your body.** Work with your body, not against it.
- 7. Manage your social media and what you allow on your feeds.** Pay attention to images, slogans, or attitudes that make you feel bad about yourself or your body. Remove these from social media feeds. You can also report posts you find harmful.

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