

BODY IMAGE

What do 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' body image mean?

Healthy body image is about feeling comfortable in your own skin:

- Feeling happy most of the time with the way you look.
- Feeling good about yourself.
- Valuing yourself by who you are, not by what you look like.

Unhealthy or negative body image is believing your body isn't good enough:

- Thinking that you look too fat.
- Feeling like you're not pretty enough or muscular enough.
- Believing that your looks determine your value as a person.
- Fixating on trying to change your body shape.

Why do I feel negative about my body, and what can I do about it?

Media imagery: Question it

Today's popular media have constructed an idealised image of what 'attractiveness' is. But most images are photoshopped to show body shapes that are impossible to achieve:

- Look for similarities in body shape that you share with family members.
- Focus on your positive qualities, skills and talents.
- Appreciate all the cool physical things your body can do!

Media messages: Choose what you view

Media messages about body 'perfection' have a sneaky way of working into your subconscious:

- Choose media that don't make you feel crap about yourself.
- Avoid sites, magazines and shows that say you need to change your appearance.
- Ignore those media that suggest the 'ideal body' exists. It doesn't!

Fashion: Find your own style

Fashion can make you feel like you've got to dress a certain way to be attractive. In reality, people find others more attractive when they are their authentic, unique selves:

- Wear what makes you feel comfortable.
- Decide for yourself what looks good on you.

Other people's bodies: Everyone has positive features

When you make fun of people for their looks, you can end up feeling crap:

- Focus on people's positive qualities.
- Compliment people on some aspect of their personality or behaviour, rather than on their appearance. You'll also feel good about yourself!
- Treat others the way you'd like them to treat you.