

Body Image

discussion questions

Body image is how you think and feel about your appearance, and how you feel in your own skin. A person can have a healthy or unhealthy body image, regardless of how they look. Developing a healthy body image contributes to self-esteem and wellbeing.

- 1** A healthy body image doesn't mean achieving a specific appearance. It means feeling comfortable with your body as it is. How can you tell if someone has a healthy body image?
- 2** Movies, social media, advertisements, and other forms of media have a major impact on body image. Although these sources often set unrealistic or impossible expectations, they are still impactful. What messages about body image are common in the media you consume?
- 3** Friends and family play a role in shaping your beliefs about body image, whether positively or negatively. Small comments and actions sometimes send powerful messages, even when they are unintentional. Think about the most important people in your life: What are their thoughts and feelings about body image? Have you internalized any of these messages?
- 4** You can develop a more well-rounded body image by focusing on your body as a whole, rather than just appearance. Think about your unique qualities, such as strength, gracefulness, or resilience. Or, consider specific functions your body serves, such as fighting off disease, or getting through a long day. What do you appreciate about your body, unrelated to appearance?
- 5** Whether or not you are aware of it, body image plays a role in nearly every aspect of life. It can influence everything from the clothes you wear to the career you choose. How does body image impact your life, whether positively or negatively?
- 6** For some people, body image is a large part of their self-esteem. For others, it isn't important at all. When a person bases their self-esteem on various sources, body image becomes less important. What factors, other than body image, contribute to your self-esteem? How can you build upon these other areas of your life?
- 7** Taking care of your body through exercise and a healthy diet can improve your body image. But when taken too far, such as through crash dieting or obsessive exercise, these behaviors may become harmful. How can you differentiate between healthy and unhealthy diet and exercise?