

HEALTHY BODY IMAGE
Teaching Kids to Eat and Love Their Bodies Too!

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BACKGROUND FOR EDUCATORS	Page	xix
UNIT INTRODUCTION: Growth and Change in Appearance (Health) <i>Building Block: The way we look will change as we grow up.</i> Students will recognize that change is a natural part of life, understand that developmental change is expected for preteens and teens, and learn there are tools to help manage changes smoothly. They will recognize the importance of these <i>Healthy Body Image</i> lessons and will be reassured that discussions will be safe, respectful, and occasionally gender specific.	Page	1
LESSON 1: Gaining Perspective: The Development of Unrealistic and Negative Body Images in Western Culture (Literature, History) <i>Building Block: People become unhappy trying to control something that is not in their power to control. As for looks, it's best to make the most of who we were born to be.</i> Students will develop historical and cultural perspective on today's prevalent body image, eating, nutrition, fitness, and weight norms. In this light, students will be motivated to develop critical thinking skills about current body image attitudes and the influence of mass media.	Page	15
LESSON 2: Identity and Competency: More Than the Way We Look (Health, Art) <i>Building Block: The way we look is only one part of us. We need to pay attention to all of who we are.</i> Students will consider many different aspects of their identities. They will learn that a whole is stronger than the sum of its parts, and attention to all of who they are makes them stronger than undue focus on any one aspect. A strong sense of self based on an appreciation of diverse attributes will empower students to resist objectification and comparisons to unrealistic, idealized images.	Page	27

LESSON 3: How Your Appearance Will Change in Puberty (Science) Page 39

Building Block: There are many different normal ways for looks to change in puberty. Sooner or later, most girls and boys gain weight and fill out.

While recognizing that looks are only one aspect of their identity, students will acknowledge that physical changes in puberty naturally draw attention to their bodies' appearance. Students will learn the normal outward changes to expect as they enter puberty, and that words describing body sizes are not judgments. They will learn that talking about these changes can be reassuring and supportive.

LESSON 4: Genetics: How Body Size and Shape Are Determined (Science) Page 65

Building Block: Most of the way we look is determined before we are even born: taller, shorter, fatter, thin—all are normal, all built in!

Students will recognize that genetics are the greatest determinant of body size and shape. This lesson provides a foundation for their own body images as they learn the biological limits to what they can and cannot expect to control in regard to size and shape. Students will identify characteristics of their own personal genetic heritages.

LESSON 5: Internal Weight Regulation: The Metabolism Factor (Science) Page 77

Building Block: Each person's body works to grow and maintain a weight that is natural for him or her.

Students will recognize that the body's internal weight regulatory system defends the body's natural weight. Metabolism provides an example. Through an experiential activity, students will learn that, if everyone ate exactly the same food and was active in exactly the same ways, people would still have diverse bodies, from fat to thin. Students will understand why it is not safe to make assumptions about how much a person eats or how active they are from appearance alone, and will learn that care must be taken with labels, such as "overweight" and "underweight."

LESSON 6: "Sold" on Looks: The Influence of Mass Media (Family Life & Consumer Science, Social Studies) Page 93

Building Block: Hardly anyone looks as perfect as the models in advertisements. I will be careful not to compare myself or others to them.

Students will consider the role of looks. They will document the pervasiveness of media images in our culture and understand the potent role mass visual media has had in determining current cultural values about looks. They will recognize the ways in which unrealistic media images create misunderstanding and destructive expectations. They will learn to interpret media messages and reduce their vulnerability to being "sold" unhealthy messages.

LESSON 7: Hunger and Eating: What Is and Is Not in Our Control? (Science) Page 109

Building Block: Weight-loss diets are not a good idea. We can hold back hunger for a while but will eat more to make up for it later.

Students will discover that predictable outcomes occur when basic needs are not fully met. Food fulfills a basic need, and if internal hunger cues are discounted, counterproductive results can be expected. Restrictive eating (dieting for weight loss) is not an effective strategy for long-term weight loss or control. Students will understand the importance of trusting hunger to regulate how much to eat.

LESSON 8: Eating Well for Confidence in a Healthy Weight (Health) Page 123

Building Block: Satisfy hunger completely with enough wholesome food at regular meals and snacks.

Students will learn the first part of a two-part equation for confidence in a healthy weight. They will learn that eating well for nutrition, energy, satisfaction of hunger, and enjoyment is needed to discover a healthy weight that is right for them. Students will examine whether they are eating enough nutritious food.

LESSON 9: Physical Activity for Confidence in a Healthy Weight (Health) Page 143

Building Block: It's important not to sit too much in our free time. Being active is one of the best things we can do for our health and self confidence.

Students will learn that, to feel confident of health, physical activity must be paired with eating well. They will gain historical perspective and see that in modern times sedentary lifestyles easily occur by default. Students will see the value of fitness for everyone and examine their own daily activity levels. They will also learn that, while aerobic activities produce health benefits, the idea of “no pain, no gain” is a myth.

LESSON 10: Compared to Whom? Selecting a Standard for Choosing Role Models (Health) Page 163

Building Block: Choose role models you admire for things deep inside and who make you feel good about who you are.

Students will identify how fads and fashions may influence their choice of role models and will learn to select positive, realistic role models. They will consider “daring” to stay true to their authentic selves even in the face of peer and cultural pressures, and will reflect on their current and future role models

APPENDIX