

Strategies for Promoting Healthy Body Image



Focus on Body Function

Encourage students to focus on maintaining healthy habits and behaviours for the function of their body, rather than their appearance.

Promote Body Diversity

Use content that reflects bodies that are diverse in ability, size, shape, and appearance. Remind students that bodies come in ALL shapes and sizes.



Teach Physical Activity for Health

Teach students that physical activity contributes to mental and physical health rather than discussing physical activity for weight management.

Model Positive Body Image

Use positive language to describe the body and model healthy attitudes about mental health, eating, and being active.



Encourage Positive Comments

Remind students that body-related teasing is bullying. Encourage students to comment on positive characteristics, behaviours, and skills rather than physical attributes.

Engage in Open Conversations

Be willing to answer questions and engage in open conversations about body topics, such as puberty and pressures from the media.



Sources:

1. Alleva, J.M., Sheeran, P., Webb, T.L., Martijn, C., & Miles, E. (2015) A meta-analytic review of stand-alone interventions to improve body image. PLoS ONE 10(9): e0139177. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0139177
2. Healthy Schools BC (2012). Being me: Promoting positive body image. Retrieved from Healthy Schools BC Resources <https://healthyschoolsbc.ca/media/22366/asbc-being-me.pdf>