

Facilitator's Guide

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM

for Parents with Children Ages 6-12

A resource to strengthen parents' knowledge
and skills to improve their child's social and
emotional wellbeing

Parents Matter Project

Implemented by Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto
Parent learning sessions are developed with input from the Paediatric Residents' Advocacy
Committee at The University of Toronto and The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)

MIDDLE CHILDHOOD MATTERS
—COALITION TORONTO—

Ontario
Trillium
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Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto (MCMCT)

The Middle Childhood Matters Coalition Toronto (MCMCT) is a group of 20 social service, child welfare, education, recreation, health organizations and parent leaders promoting and influencing a system that prioritizes children ages 6-12 (middle childhood), and their families. MCMCT envisions a city where children ages 6-12 and their families have equitable opportunities and resources to thrive.

The Coalition believes, and research states, that this is an important time in a child's life. To support children's healthy development during this stage, MCMCT promotes high quality, affordable, accessible and culturally appropriate out-of-school time programs (before and after school time, summertime and holidays). The Coalition was one of the driving forces behind the development of the City of Toronto's first Middle Childhood Strategy, which prioritizes programming for this age group.

Our member organizations work with thousands of parents and children across Toronto. MCMCT recognizes the vital need to educate and support parents, caregivers and adult allies living, working and caring for these children across Toronto.

Paediatric Residents' Advocacy Committee

The University of Toronto Paediatric Residents' Advocacy Committee was established in 2001 by residents who were passionate about the overall wellbeing of children and in response to the recognition by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada that advocacy is an integral part of a paediatrician's role.

This committee is resident-led and supervised by staff physicians from SickKids. Residents and staff volunteer their time and are committed to educating parents and children, running clinics, and advocating for children's issues at the national levels. The Parent Nights sub-committee develops curriculum and runs workshops for parents to provide health information to empower them to improve their child's overall wellbeing.

Learning sessions developed by the Paediatric Residents' Advocacy Committee:

- Sleep and Bedtime Routines
- Body Image and Self-esteem
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Emotional Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Social Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence

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INTRODUCTION

The Parents Matter Project endeavors to support and educate newcomer, low-income and racialized parents in Toronto with children ages 6-12 (middle childhood) on how to best improve developmental and social outcomes for their children. This includes the creation and implementation of topic-specific parent learning sessions. Parenting and family relationships provide the foundation from which children ages 6-12 can develop the skills to overcome challenges and thrive to adulthood. These parent learning sessions aim to build upon the assets, capabilities and strengths of parents to help increase their knowledge on a number of topic areas relevant to their child's social and emotional development.

This facilitator's guide provides practical learning sessions to increase familial relationships, including resources that can be utilized and accessed beyond the life of the session. This is grounded in the knowledge that families crave more meaningful time together and the need to have access to materials, tools and skill building knowledge on an ongoing basis that is accessible at all times. By attending a learning session, a parent will leave with more knowledge, awareness and confidence in their ability to parent throughout this developmental stage. The interactive activities and supplementary resources will help parents to solidify their learnings.

In addition to Body Image and Self-esteem, 15 evidence-based learning sessions have been developed in collaboration with experts in the fields such as:

- Sleep and Bedtime Routines
- Healthy Eating and Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- We All Have Mental Health
- Growing Healthy Minds
- Children's Mental Health Challenges and Seeking Support
- Counting on Math
- Reading is Everywhere
- Keeping Children Safe Online
- More than Just Video Games
- Raising Responsible Digital Children
- Cognitive Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Emotional Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence
- Social Development in Middle Childhood and Adolescence

FLOW OF THE LEARNING SESSION

LEARNING SESSION STRUCTURE	DESCRIPTION
Learning Objectives	What parent participants can expect to learn by attending each learning session.
Warm-up/ Check-in	An activity to introduce and ground parent participants. The purpose is to begin getting to know each other by creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where all voices are heard and valued.
Group Agreements	An opportunity to collectively co-create the conditions of how learning will unfold. Creating a group agreement demonstrates that the space is shared by all.
Reflection Moment	Guiding questions are used to prompt reflection on current knowledge of the topic presented.
Content Development	How the information will be delivered and resourced (learning discussions) how learning happens- what do we need to know.
Action Moment	Each learning session will motivate concrete actions for parent participants to go from “reflection to action-now what?” with tips, tools and hands-on experience.
Evaluation and Check-out	Reinforce new learnings, takeaways and evaluate the learning.

FACILITATION TIPS

- Prepare your session in advance; read content carefully and organize materials and resources needed.
- Be clear and concise in your interactions.
- Listen to what is said.
- Remember to integrate important points that have not been raised by parent participants.
- Validate questions outside of the lesson plan raised by parent participants and direct them to their service provider.
- Be ready to accommodate changes and respond to your audience. Flexibility will be required from time to time and you may need to adapt the agenda in some situations.
- When appropriate, share your own lived experience as a parent or caregiver. However, be conscious not to dominate the conversation.



Useful Tips to Successfully Facilitate a Group Discussion

1. Adults learn better when:

- They are personally motivated and engaged.
- They have the opportunity to reflect on what they are learning.
- They can exchange knowledge and experiences with others.
- They can have better understanding of what they learn and the implementation of that learning at home.

2. Adapting for inclusion:

- Know the diversity within the group: who are the participants? What experiences do they bring?
- Integrate cultural experiences: consider how both the facilitator and parent participants can bring their cultural experiences into the session.
- Be sensitive to emotional responses: depending on parent participants lived experiences, sometimes exercises can trigger participants' emotions.

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Overview

The purpose of this topic is to introduce parents to the importance of positive body image and self-esteem in children ages 6-12, understand the factors that may impact body image perception and discuss strategies on how to encourage acceptance and positive personalities.

Learning Objectives

- a. Parents grow their understanding of concepts of self-esteem and body image
- b. Parents will discuss the connection between low self-esteem and negative body image
- c. Parents can distinguish a positive body image in their children
- d. Parent will identify the long-term effects of negative body image and low self-esteem
- e. Parents can recognize factors leading to a negative self-perception and strategies to overcome them
- f. Parents will generate strategies to promote positive self-image in their children



Materials and Supplies

FLIP CHART



MARKERS



POST-IT NOTES



PENS



SOFT DOLL



LEARNING TOOLS



FLIP CHART PAPER



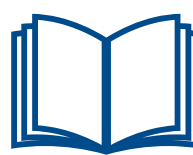
ATTENDANCE FORM



EVALUATIONS



TEENS MAGAZINE



ADVERTISING QUESTIONNAIRE



LEARNING SESSION OUTLINE

<i>Agenda</i>	Length of the learning session (1 hour)
1. Welcome and Introduction	(5 minutes)
2. Check-in	(10 minutes)
3. Reflection Moment	(10 minutes)
4. Content Development	(25 minutes)
5. Action Moment	(5 minutes)
6. Evaluation and Check-out	(5 minutes)

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

Facilitator(s) will welcome parent participants and organization(s) supporting the learning session. Housekeeping items should be introduced: washroom facilities, fire exit and additional information needed for the learning session.

Materials needed: Pens

Appendix 1 - Tool 1.1 Agenda

Tool 1.2 Attendance and Photo Release Form

Tool 1.4 Evaluation (Pre)

2. Check-in (10 minutes)

Materials needed: Soft doll

Getting to know each other: Introductions of parent participants (5 minutes)

Facilitator asks parents to sit/stand in a circle and invites them to state their names, their children's names and ages. Along with this introduction parent participants are asked to pass the soft doll to the next person using an adjective that describes the doll.



Facilitator Tip:

Providing adjectives to the doll will open up the conversation about body image and self-esteem. To close this activity emphasize the importance of understanding the perception of our children's bodies.

2.a Group Agreements

(5 minutes)

Materials needed: Post-it notes, markers, flip chart paper, pens

Facilitator asks parent participants any of the following

? Guiding Questions

- What do we need from each other and ourselves to create a safe learning space?
- How are we going to learn together in this space?

Parent participants are asked to write their answers on a post-it note and place it on the flip chart. Facilitator will read them out loud for parents' consensus.

The list should be posted visibly for the length of the learning session.

3. Reflection Moment

(10 minutes)

Facilitator asks parent participants the following questions:

What ideas come to your mind when I say “self-esteem”?

Can you think of examples that describe it?

Discussion Points

- Discuss the difference between someone with high self-esteem vs low self-esteem.
- How might a person with high self-esteem feel about their body/self vs someone with low self-esteem?
- Would they present themselves differently (i.e. more confident, dress differently)?



Examples of Answers May Include

HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

- May be more confident and comfortable with themselves
- May seek out more opportunities (joining clubs at school)
- Might appear to have a larger friend group because they seek out more social opportunities
- May appear to be “popular”

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

- May appear to be more withdrawn
- Have a smaller friend group or only a few close friends
- Might be quieter in class and not participate as much
- Might sit out of activities because they lack confidence to take part

KEEP
IN
MIND



If not brought up during group agreements, facilitator should explore the importance of **confidentiality** and sharing in a safe space.

4. Content Development

(25 minutes)

Materials needed: Flip chart paper, markers, pens, magazines and advertising questionnaire.

4.a Self-esteem and Body Image

(5 minutes)

Mini-lecture

Facilitator presents the following content to parent participants. Content can be introduced on a piece of flip chart paper with key points.

What is self-esteem and how does it impact body image?

Self-esteem is how we view our self-worth or self-value^{1,2}.

Body image is how a person feels about and sees their body^{1,2}. Body image is the mental picture you have of your body – what it looks like, what you believe about it, and how you feel about your body.

Body image can be influenced by our feelings or by comments made by others^{1,2}. Children with a **negative body image** tend to have **low self-esteem**.

? Guiding Question

How does low self-esteem or a negative body image affect children?

Nearly 40-50% of children ages 6-12 report being unhappy with the way they look³. Some children may become very concerned with their body image and try dieting or exercise to change how they look^{1,2,3}. Dieting and exercising in excess can lead to significant negative health outcomes.

Body image concerns can affect both girls and boys. In girls, the ideal may be to be thin whereas in boys, it may be desired to be muscular³.

Long term effects of a negative body image and low self-esteem can include:

- Eating disorders
- Obesity
- Over-and under-exercising
- Depression^{1,2,3}

For more detailed information on the long-term effects, please refer to the **Appendix 2.1**.

After the mini-lecture, facilitator invites parent participants to discuss the factors that affect self-esteem and body image.

? Guiding Question

What factors impact self-esteem and body image?

Examples of Answers May Include

- Media including magazines, TV shows, YouTube videos, social media
- Peers at school (may desire to look more or act more like “popular” peers)
- Bullying/teasing
- Comments made by teachers, peers, family (comments around weight and appearance for example)
- Being overweight/obese

4.b How the Media Portrays Body Image

(10 minutes)

Materials needed: Teens magazine, Advertising Questionnaire (**Learning Tool 4.1**) and pens

Working Groups: Facilitator invites parent participants to number themselves from 1 to 4 and form 4 groups.

Each group is given one copy of a recent issue of a popular magazine for teens and copies of the Advertising Questionnaire handout. Ask each group to select 1-2 ads in the magazine to discuss and answer the following questions about each ad.

Advertising Questionnaire

Adapted from Purdue Extension. Healthy Body Image: A Lesson Plan for High School Students⁶.

1. Does the ad include people with a variety of body shapes and sizes?

- A. Yes
- B. No

2. How do the people look in the advertisement? (What is their body type?)

- A. Normal weight
- B. Unusually thin
- C. Overweight

Teaching Point 1: Most advertising models appear either normal weight or thin (rarely overweight or anything other than tall and lean).

3. Do you think people who actually use the product being advertised typically have the body type shown in the advertisement?

- A. Yes
- B. No

Teaching Point 2: Often the product and the body type of advertising models are in conflict (i.e. slim people are eating unhealthy food or healthy-looking people are smoking)

4. Do you think the models in the ad naturally look the way they appear or do you think their picture or their appearance has been enhanced in some way?

- A. This is their natural look.
- B. The picture (or their appearance) was probably enhanced.

Teaching Point 3: Advertisers want people to think advertising models look good naturally, however most models rely on heavy makeup and/or computer-enhanced photography to look the way they do in an advertisement.

5. How would you say the people appear in this ad?

- A. Happy/having fun
- B. Unhappy
- C. Neither happy nor unhappy

Teaching Point 4: Most often advertising models appear to be having fun while using the product.

6. How would you describe the product being advertised?

- A. Healthy
- B. Unhealthy
- C. Neither healthy nor unhealthy

Teaching Point 5: Whether the product is healthy or unhealthy, most advertising models appear thin and look as if they are having fun.

Facilitator presents the following content to parent participants. Content can be introduced on flip chart paper with key points.

1. Media

The media (magazines, television, internet, social networking) can present a skewed version of what an ideal body image is by showing images of mostly thin and muscular individuals³. When young children see these images in their favourite TV show, movies or in magazines on a day-to-day basis, they start to feel that this is how they should look. Parents can help their children to question messages from television, movies and magazine advertisements by pointing out what is real and what may have been altered to sell a product. This way, children can learn to make better-informed choices for their health^{2,3}.

Social media, can also impact body image **perception**, or how children see themselves. Being on social media can sometimes lead children to want to change aspects of their face, hair or skin, as most often, photos on social media outlets are “profile pictures” of the individual’s face. The children who were the most affected were the ones who tend to constantly compare their appearance with others⁷. Others may use social media to feel valued by comparing themselves to others online. This constant comparison can further lead to the development of a **negative self-image**^{7,8}.

Children are most likely influenced by what they see on the internet and social media if they already compare themselves to others and feel that their self-worth is based on how they look. It is important to emphasize to your children that an individual’s value is not based on their appearance but based on other qualities that are reflected in their behaviour, for example, loyalty, honesty, helping others, etc.

2. Puberty and Development

Puberty typically starts around 9-15 years of age for boys and 8-13 for girls. With puberty comes changes in your child’s body. These changes may include an increase in body hair, increase in weight and growth in height. Evidence shows that puberty can impact self-image, which is influenced by weight, satisfaction with weight and body image. For males, this may be the desire to be more muscular. For females, this may be a desire to appear more thin and look like people portrayed in the media. It is important to discuss with your child these potential changes before they happen so they know what to expect. This will help them to understand the physical changes associated with puberty and to view these as a normal part of development during puberty⁹.

3. Weight and Weight Perception

Obesity is defined as having a BMI (Body Mass Index) above the 97th percentile. Studies have shown that children who are overweight or obese tend to be less satisfied with their bodies⁴. Young boys and girls who **thought** that they were larger in size, even if they were not obese or overweight, also desired to be thin⁴. This is called having a **distorted body image**. Being able to recognize unhealthy **behaviours and attitudes** can allow us to foster healthy ones!

Weight can be a sensitive subject to talk about however becoming aware of weight as a modern-day issue is a normal part of growing up¹⁰. It is normal and likely that your child will want to talk about it. If they do bring it up-don't avoid the topic, talk openly and honestly with them. Some kids may talk to you about weight because they are being bullied about it.

Discussion Points

- How can you support your child if they are being teased or bullied about their weight?
- Has anyone had this situation occur with their children? How did you respond?

Examples of answers include:

- **Empathize** with them- it's horrible to be teased and bullied!
- **Explain** that you can't change the teasers, but you can change how you react.
- **Reinforce** their value: their value isn't based on their weight or appearance in any way.
- **Support** healthy change: offer support if they wish to make some healthy changes to their lifestyle.
- **Remember** to focus on healthy living and not weight as the end point.
- **Praise** them for coming to you to talk about the bullying- it can be really hard to share that information.

What are some things you could say?

- "I'm glad you told me"
 - » "That sounds like a really hard situation and I'm glad you felt you could share this with me, I'm always here to listen".
- Let them express their feelings.
 - » You may ask "what happened?" or "How did that make you feel?" etc.
- Validate their feelings.
 - » We all want to give them a cuddle and tell them it will be alright but it's important that you acknowledge the difficulties they are facing and support them.

4. Multicultural Practices

Cultural norms also influence body image. Different cultures have different ideas of what an “ideal body” looks like and this is further impacted by certain ethnic practices and foods consumed by particular cultures. These differences in appearance among different cultures are not always pictured on television, in movies or in magazines and may not be viewed as “attractive” or “beautiful.” It is important to recognize that people come in different shapes, sizes and colours and that this is not always represented in the media. Understanding these cultural differences is important in order to encourage positive body image perceptions among people from diverse backgrounds.



Bullying should be dealt with separately with school staff, with the permission of the child. It is very important that it is addressed, monitored, and not allowed to continue.

5. Appearance-Related Bullying - Things we say to others

It is important to understand how comments about appearance may be perceived and influence someone’s thoughts about their own body. Teasing from family members, classmates, and friends can have a negative impact on body image³. A study done in 2003 looked at body dissatisfaction in boys and found that boys who were teased about their appearance were more likely to not be satisfied with their bodies and how they looked. Other risk factors such as puberty, Body Mass Index (BMI), and trying to lose weight to look thinner or gain weight to look larger were also important in how happy or satisfied boys felt about their bodies³.

6. Appearance-Related Conversations/Parental Impact - Things we say about ourselves

Evidence shows that “fat-talk” or negative body talk can start as early as pre-adolescence (11-12 years old). Negative body talk is where peers or family members talk about the size and shapes of their bodies and ways to make enhancements¹¹.

Discussion Points

What are examples of fat-talk that we might say on a day-to-day basis?

Examples of answers may include:

- “I am fat” or “today is a fat day”
- “My clothes are too tight”
- “My arms are flabby”
- “This is fattening/these foods are high in fat”

Remember not to focus on food as being “bad” or “good” instead we should be focusing on moderation and healthy habits.



Parents play a crucial role in the development of children's attitudes and behaviors. Not only are parents responsible for buying and preparing the food that contributes to a healthy and balanced diet, as well as encouraging regular physical activity, but parents also help to build a strong foundation for their child's self-perception.

It is important to understand your own attitudes towards food, exercise and your body^{1,2}. Children tend to mirror what they see at home. They learn to cook and clean by watching and learning from their parents. Similarly, children learn to copy beliefs and attitudes based on what they see and hear on a day-to-day basis.

**We may not be aware of the example we are unconsciously setting!
Starting with ourselves is important.**

We should show our children how to be confident in themselves, how to love and accept their bodies and value themselves as whole people.

4.d Parent Reflection on Body Image^{1,2}

(5 minutes)

Facilitator invites parent participants to discuss the following questions. The purpose of this activity is to identify the negative thoughts we sometimes have about ourselves. Reassure that this is a normal thing that everyone does and reflect on how these comments and actions can sometimes impact others and their view of themselves.

? Guiding Questions

- Are you dissatisfied with your shape, size, and weight? Do you talk about this?
- Are you always on, or going on, a diet?
- Do you express guilt when you eat certain foods?
- Do you make negative comments about the way other people look?

Defining a Positive Body Image¹

Facilitator invites parents to discuss what a positive body image is.

If someone has a positive body image, how do they perceive bodies of different shapes and sizes, individuality and the images portrayed in the media?

People with a positive body image recognize and accept that:

1. Healthy bodies come in different shapes and sizes.
2. Body size and weight do not determine happiness, success, or health.
3. People are more than numbers on a scale; every person is a unique individual with admirable talents, skills, and abilities.
4. Images in the media are unrealistic and are created to sell products.

Having a positive body image allows a person to feel good about their body, reflect confidence and take care of the needs of their body.

5. Action Moment

(5 minutes)

Materials needed: **Learning Tool 3.1**

Facilitator hands out **Learning Tool 3.1** and invites volunteers to read tips out loud.

As discussed, there are many factors that influence body image and self-esteem. It is important to recognize these factors and address them early on in life before negative body talk and poor body image perceptions starts. It is important to encourage a healthy diet and exercise to promote fitness, rather than to focus on physical attractiveness and appearance^{2,11}. Physical activity promotes greater self-confidence, as children develop social skills through playing with others. Through physical activity, children can begin to appreciate their bodies' abilities. A balanced approach to both nutrition and physical activity will encourage a lifetime of healthy habits².

6. Evaluation and Check-out

(5 minutes)

Materials needed: Pens, **Learning Tool 1.5** Evaluation Form (post)

Evaluation: Invite parent participants to give their feedback. Provide parent participants with pens and evaluation forms to be filled out. Encourage them to be honest. Their responses are anonymous and they don't have to answer any questions they don't feel comfortable answering.

Check-out: Thank parent participants for their participation and time.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Tool 1.1 Agenda - Body Image and Self-esteem

Tool 1.2 Attendance and Photo Release Form

Tool 1.3 Facilitator's Check List

Tool 1.4 Evaluation (Pre)

Tool 1.5 Evaluation (Post)

APPENDIX 2

Learning Tool 2.1 Further Reading of Long-term Effects of Body Image and Low Self-esteem

Learning Tool 2.2 Advertising Questionnaire & Take Home Message(s)

APPENDIX 3

Learning Tool 3.1 Tips For Promoting a Positive Body Image in your Child

APPENDIX 4

References

Tool 1.1 Agenda - Body Image and Self-esteem

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)
2. Check-in (10 minutes)
3. Reflection Moment (10 minutes)
4. Content Development (25 minutes)
5. Action Moment (5 minutes)
6. Evaluation and Check-out (5 minutes)

Tool 1.2 Attendance and Photo Release Form

FULL NAME	EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER	DO YOU CONSENT TO HAVE YOUR PHOTO TAKEN?	SIGNATURE REQUIRED
1.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
2.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
3.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
4.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
5.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
6.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
7.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
8.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
9.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
10.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
11.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
12.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
13.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
14.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
15.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
16.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
17.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
18.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
19.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	
20.			<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

Tool 1.3 Facilitator's Check List

Materials and Supplies:

- Markers
- Flip Chart (if needed)
- Flip Chart Paper
- Post it Notes
- Pens
- Soft Doll
- Teens Magazine
- Learning Tools
- Advertising Questionnaire
- Attendance Form
- Evaluation Forms (Pre & Post)

PARENT EVENT: ____ / ____ / 201__

START of Event
1

Please answer the questions below.

PART 1: About You

1. **Your Gender:** Female Male Trans I describe my gender in a different way
2. **Your Children’s Age(s):** 0-5 6-12 13+
3. **Parenting Status:** I’m a single parent I’m **not** a single parent
4. **What country were you born in:** _____
5. **What is your postal code:** _____
6. **Do you have any relatives living with you at home?** Yes No
If YES how many? _____

PART 2: About the Event

8. **How did you hear about this event?** Friend/Family Another Organization
 Internet Flyers Other (please specify): _____
9. **Please rate your knowledge on...(Circle ONE answer per question)**

		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	DON'T KNOW
a	What self-esteem is	H	M	L	DK
b	What body image is	H	M	L	DK
c	How self-esteem and body image are related	H	M	L	DK
d	How media influences my child’s view of themselves	H	M	L	DK
e	The long-term impacts of negative body image on my child	H	M	L	DK
f	How to talk about positive body image with my child	H	M	L	DK
g	How to talk about body weight with my child	H	M	L	DK

PART 3: About your Learning

10. **What do you hope to learn today about children’s body image and self-esteem?**

THANK YOU!

PARENT EVENT: ____ / ____ / 201__

END of Event
2

Please answer the questions below.

PART 1: About the Event

1. After the event...(Circle ONE answer per question)

		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	DON'T KNOW
a	What self-esteem is	H	M	L	DK
b	What body image is	H	M	L	DK
c	How self-esteem and body image are related	H	M	L	DK
d	How media influences my child's view of themselves	H	M	L	DK
e	The long-term impacts of negative body image on my child	H	M	L	DK
f	How to talk about positive body image with my child	H	M	L	DK
g	How to talk about body weight with my child	H	M	L	DK

PART 2: About your Learning

10. What did you learn today about children's body image and self-esteem?

PART 3: About your Satisfaction

a	How often will you use what you learned about body image and self-esteem with your child(ren)? (Circle ONE answer)	Never	Sometimes	Always
If never, please tell us why not?				
b	How informative was the facilitator? (Circle ONE answer)	Not Informative	A little Informative	Very Informative
c	How satisfied are you with this event overall? (Circle ONE answer)	Not Satisfied	A little Satisfied	Very Satisfied
d	If we could improve ONE THING - what would it be?			

Learning Tool 2.1 Reading on long-term effects of body image and low self-esteem

Eating Disorders

Always feeling bad about your body, worrying about weight or feeling guilty when eating is **not normal or healthy**. If you are the parent of or know a child who seems excessively worried about their weight, talk to them.

If you are concerned that your child may have an eating disorder or unhealthy attitudes to diet, exercise and/or body image do not hesitate to contact your health professionals and discuss this with them.

Obesity

We have discussed under-eating as a long-term consequence of negative body image; however, negative body image can also lead to **overeating**. Diets tend to have periods of under-eating (or cutting calories) followed by periods of binge eating (or eating much more than usual in one sitting). Food can also sometimes be viewed as a source of comfort in times of stress, leading to **emotional eating**. Overeating can lead to obesity and further fuel negative body perception and low self-esteem^{1,2,3}. This is why, rather than focusing on food items that help to lose weight such as diet and low calorie items, it is important to encourage healthy nutrition and an **active lifestyle**.

Over- and Under-Exercising

A negative body image can lead to exercising a lot or not enough. Children who are not satisfied with their bodies may start to either exercise excessively or stop exercising as a way to alter their appearance (appear thinner or less bulky). Up to 44% of young boys and girls exercise to lose weight⁴. **It is important to emphasize the importance of exercise for fitness and health benefits rather than for improving appearance.**

Depression

Children who are not happy with how they look or feel like their bodies are not the “ideal,” may start to feel inadequate. They may start to feel like they don’t belong in their friend group. They might even be bullied at school about how they look. Individuals with “body dissatisfaction” may start to diet and if they fail, start to feel even sadder. All of these things can lead to depression. Mood disorders, especially depression, are common long-term effects of negative body image and low self-esteem⁵.

APPENDIX 2 - LEARNING CONTENT

Signs that your child might be having issues with their mood or even be depressed include:

- Isolating themselves from others
- Showing signs of low mood or irritability
- Changes in behaviours (not talking as much, staying in their room for extended periods of time, no longer taking part in activities they once enjoyed)
- Changes in eating patterns or sleep patterns (going to bed later and later and having difficulty waking up)
- Poor academic performance
- Self-harm (cuts or burns done on purpose to inflict pain/harm to themselves)

The signs and symptoms of depression can sometimes mimic changes that come with transitioning into adolescence so it is important to create an open discussion with your child about their thoughts and feelings.



If you are concerned that your child may be depressed, please seek medical care. Depression can be very serious and can even lead to suicide. If your child is threatening to harm themselves or other people, please go to your nearest emergency room department.

Learning Tool 2.2

ADVERTISING QUESTIONNAIRE

How the Media Portrays Body Image

1. Does the ad include people with a variety of body shapes and sizes?

- A. Yes
- B. No

2. How do the people look in the advertisement? (What is their body type?)

- A. Normal weight
- B. Unusually thin
- C. Overweight

3. Do you think people who actually use the product being advertised typically have the body type shown in the advertisement?

- A. Yes
- B. No

4. Do you think the models in the ad naturally look the way they appear or do you think their picture or their appearance has been enhanced in some way?

- A. This is their natural look.
- B. The picture (or their appearance) was probably enhanced.

5. How would you say the people appear in this ad?

- A. Happy/having fun
- B. Unhappy
- C. Neither happy nor unhappy

6. How would you describe the product being advertised?

- A. Healthy
- B. Unhealthy
- C. Neither healthy nor unhealthy

Adapted from Purdue Extension. Healthy Body Image: A Lesson Plan for High School Students⁶.

Learning Tool 2.2



Take Home Message

The images in advertisements represent one type of body but do not always include the full spectrum. With these images being constantly accessible in magazines or on the Internet, they can have a large influence on how kids see themselves. They may feel that it is not okay to be overweight or short and it's the norm to be slender or muscular. These ideals are also encouraged by friends, teachers, coaches and sometimes parents.

An emphasis should be placed on physical fitness and healthy nutrition rather than on the idea of a single ideal body image.

Learning Tool 3.1 Tips for Promoting a Positive Body Image in your Child

1.	<p>Place less emphasis on your child's appearance and more on their abilities and skills. The emphasis should be on effort and work rather than end goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applauding them for trying hard in school, taking part in an art or joining a club.
2.	<p>Be a role model by accepting your body and maintaining a positive attitude towards food and exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel good about you! Strive toward a healthy nutritious regimen with all 4-food groups and an active lifestyle. As a family, you should focus on reducing consumption of foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Promote increased consumption of fruits and vegetables; have fresh fruit with cereal at breakfast, use fruit and veggies as snack options.
3.	<p>Make time for family meals and enjoy the time spent together, not in front of screens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can also be helpful involving the children in meal prep and clean up!
4.	<p>Encourage your child to think critically about messages and images they see and hear in the media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is everything that we see in the media as it seems? Were the images altered to sell more products?
5.	<p>Help your child understand that their body will change, especially throughout puberty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty is a normal part of growing up. It is important that we talk to our kids about what to expect.
6.	<p>Look out for signs of bullying or teasing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you noticed changes in your child's behaviour? What about in how they talk about food? Have you noticed changes in their mood? Have an open and honest discussion.
7.	<p>Discourage appearance-related teasing in the household and/or at school and redirect the conversation to more positive and unifying conversations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting teased is not fun! Let's make positive, encouraging comments and steer the conversation away from appearance and toward the goals of good health.

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