

Lunch at the Library's HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK



This healthy tip of the week was adapted from "KidsHealth from Nemours," kidshealth.org/en/parents/strong-bones.html. For more tips, visit kernlibrary.org or kidshealth.org.

Encouraging a Healthy Body Image

What Is Body Image?

Body image is the way you feel about your body. Children who have a healthy body image feel good about their bodies. They are happy with how they look, how their body moves and grows, and what their body can do. Body image is part of a child's whole self-image. Having a good body image helps kids feel confident. It adds to their self-esteem. Children with a poor body image don't feel good about their body or looks. A poor body image can take away from a child's self-image. It can lower self-esteem. A healthy body image grows over time. It starts in babyhood. It builds as kids grow. It changes when kids go through puberty. It gets shaped by what others say. At every stage, parents can do things to help support a child's healthy body image.

Body Image in Growing Kids

As kids grow, they can build good feelings about their bodies. Sometimes it shows. Kids beam with pride when you say how tall they've grown. They smile at themselves in the mirror. They like how they look in a favorite outfit or new haircut. They want you to watch how fast they can run. Or see what they can do on a skateboard.

As they grow, kids may compare themselves with other kids. They want to feel good about how they look. They want to be able to do what other kids can do. When they feel good about how they measure up, it builds their body image.

To help kids build a healthy body image, parents can: teach them about their body, help them take care of their body, say nice things about how kids look, let kids show you what they can do, show them you're proud of what they can do, be active with kids, have kids be active every day

What Else Can Parents Do to Help?

Remember to be a good body image role model. Be active every day. Eat a healthy diet. Talk about your own body in positive ways. Accept your own body, and take good care of it. Kids will pick up on this and do the same for themselves



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