

10 Steps to Helping Your Child Develop a Positive Body Image

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- 1) Avoid diet talk and dieting behavior in front of children (and altogether, if possible!)
- 2) Avoid commenting negatively on other people's body weight, shape and/or size – as well as your own - in front of children.
- 3) Refrain from criticizing your child's weight or appearance.
- 4) Do not categorize foods a “good” and “bad”.
- 5) Do not use different guidelines to feed your child or encourage physical activity based on body size than you would with other children of a similar age.
- 6) Compliment your child on positive behaviors and characteristics (e.g. accomplishments, kindness, determination), rather than on body size.
- 7) Encourage physical activity for enjoyment and fitness, rather than weight control.
- 8) Promote a healthy relationship with food by honoring hunger and fullness cues, providing a wide variety of all types of foods, and sharing family meals when possible.
- 9) Value all types of self-care behaviors that lead to good health - including physical activity, a healthy relationship with food, good sleep patterns, positive relationships, recognizing emotions, and even mindfulness or meditation – rather than focusing on weight as the road to happiness, health and success.
- 10) Teach kids that people naturally come in different shapes and sizes, and that everyone deserved to be treated with respect.



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