

## BODY CONFIDENT KIDS



*Schools and parents are crucial parts of the body confidence equation for students. Body image & eating problems are best prevented when parents and teachers are on the same page with creating body confident environments for kids (Burnette et al., 2017).*

**77%** of adolescents today experience body image distress (Milton et al., 2021)

### BODY DISSATISFACTION & BODY CONFIDENCE

- When people are dissatisfied with their bodies, they can obsess about their looks, worry about their weight, and miss self-care cues from their body and mind. They often don't engage in self-care behaviors around eating, moving their bodies, listening their emotional signals. (Paxton et al., 2006).
- People with **body confidence** like their body, accept their "flaws," and don't focus on their weight. They have higher self-esteem because they value themselves for who they are, not what they look like. They are more likely to take care of themselves (Tylka, 2015).

### BODY DISSATISFACTION & MENTAL HEALTH

**Body dissatisfaction** is a risk factor for: eating disorders, low self-esteem, depression, isolation, suicidal ideation, substance abuse, unsafe sexual behaviors, and lack of self-care. These mental health issues became more acute for young people during the COVID-19 pandemic (McLean et al, 2022; Perkins & Brausch, 2019; Bornioli et al., 2019).

### Most adolescents today do NOT like their bodies today.

- 1 in 8 girls and 1 in 16 boys will develop an eating disorder at some point in their lives (Smink et al., 2012).
- 50% of adolescents exhibit disordered behavior: food restriction (dieting), binge-eating, purging, laxative abuse, taking diet pills and muscle building supplements, and over-exercising.
- Visual social media --like Instagram and TikTok-- are one of the causes of body dissatisfaction among adolescents today (Jiotsa et al., 2021).
- Young people are constantly consuming images on their cell phones, TVs, and computers. Studies show they see thousands of images of perfect-looking people every day
  - Teens are on their screens up to 8.5 hours a day (Rideout, 2019).



### MINDSHARE CONTINUUM: THINKING ABOUT FOOD & BODY



Because our culture has become so preoccupied with our appearance, each of us personally thinks about our appearance a lot. This graphic, above, is the "Mindshare Continuum" of preoccupation with food, body, and eating. Each of us lives somewhere on this spectrum.

- The problem for adolescents is when the preoccupation takes over space and time in their brains, they don't have space and time for things that matter more
- Normally we figure out who we are from many aspects: character traits, abilities, interests, and talents
- For today's adolescents, they are figuring out who they are in a culture that focuses mainly on the appearance aspect

*Body Confident Schools* (which shares 50% of its content with *Body Confident Kids*) has been vetted by the Harvard T.H. Chan Eating Disorder Prevention Incubator, STRIPED. They surveyed 200 of BE REAL's educator participants. Read the [STRIPED Report](#) which talks about all the good things educators (who can also be parents!) learn by participating.

## BODY CONFIDENT KIDS EDUCATES PARENTS ABOUT 3 SHIFTS AWAY FROM "DIET CULTURE"

### Shift #1

#### Cultural Belief:

Focusing on Body as an Ornament



#### Shift To:

Focusing on Body as Instrument for Our Own Use

*Less focus on appearance and more focus on what our bodies do for us.*

### Shift #2

#### Cultural Belief:

Focusing on Body Measurements



#### Shift To:

Focusing on Healthy, Self-Care Behaviors

*It's about the process, not the results.*

### Shift #3

#### Cultural Belief:

Judging People by Their Appearance



#### Shift To:

Recognizing People Come in All Shapes and Sizes

*It's about compassion, not comparison.*



## IN YOUR MIRROR



- Explore **YOUR VALUES & ATTITUDES** about food body and eating.
- See yourself as a **ROLE MODEL** on this topic. Children get so many messages about bodies from us.



## INSIDE YOUR HOME



- Teach **SELF-CARE LESSONS** to kids
- Establish a **COMMUNICATION LINE** for talking about emotions with your children
- Be the **CULTURAL CRITIC** when you see media that has negative messages about bodies
- Create a **BODY-FAULT FREE ZONE** (that includes your own body) in your home
- Create an **OASIS OF ACCEPTANCE** for who they are



## OUT IN THE WORLD



- Focus on what **YOUR BODY DOES** for you allowing you to live your life
- Be **BODY-GRATEFUL**
- Focus on **NON-APPEARANCE ASPECTS** of self. What are their interests, opinions and ways they like to spend their time?



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