

At Home, At School & In the Media

Rudd Roots Parents

Healthy Body Image



A *healthy body image* helps kids and teens resist negative influences that increase weight bias. Furthermore, with the likelihood of weight-related bullying and teasing increasing as they enter middle and high school, a positive body image can help protect adolescents and help them cope with these experiences. Building a healthy body image can help kids and teens to develop important life-long healthy behaviors.

Show your *support*...

1 Set a positive, healthy example. Think about how you talk about your weight and health habits.

- *Do you express body dissatisfaction in front your kids?*
- *What are your eating and exercising habits?*
- *Do you often diet or try fad diets?*

2 Get the family involved. Improving the home environment and planning family activities can serve as encouragement and motivation for kids and teens.

- *Eat together as a family when possible*
- *Take a walk together after dinner*
- *Limit buying sugary drinks (i.e. soda and sports drinks) and unhealthy foods*
- *Leave a bowl of fresh fruit in the kitchen*

3 Acknowledge your child's efforts or accomplishments that are not related to weight or appearance.

- *Current efforts for health improvement*
- *Completing school assignment by deadline*
- *Taking care of the family pet*



Educate by *talking* about...

1 *Developmental changes* in their body as they grow up.

- *Normal weight gain*
- *Changes in body shape*
- *Differences in timing of development for each teenager*

2 *Media influences* that show an “idealized” standard of beauty.

- *Is there really a “right” way for me to look? Who decides what is right for me?*
- *What are some computer enhancements used to perfect media images?*
- *What are some images you see of persons with overweight?*
- *What do you think the message is?*

3 *Health behaviors* that kids can develop for continuous health improvement, regardless of body weight.

- *What are health behaviors? What are some examples I can do?*
- *Why are they important for my health?*
- *What are some ways to make these behaviors part of my daily lifestyle?*

4 *Positive role models* who have overcome challenges related to body weight.

- *Who do you look up to in your personal life?*
- *What about people you’ve heard about in history, the media, the news?*
- *What are the qualities that you admire in these role models?*
- *How do you think these qualities have helped them to become accomplished?*
- *Are there similar attitudes or behaviors that you can adopt in your own life?*

