

6th July 2020

This week's theme is Body Image.

**What is body image?** Body image is about how we see ourselves, and how we think about our physical body. Sometimes we have positive body image, which means we embrace the way we look and feel good about ourselves. Sometimes we have negative body image, which means we don't feel confident in the way we look and may want to change our appearance. Having a negative body image is common and it's a normal part of growing up to sometimes be critical of ourselves, particularly when our bodies are growing and changing.

## Children and Young People

*'I don't feel good about my body, what can I do?'*

*It is normal to have negative thoughts about your body, people of any age and body type have insecurities. There are ways we can increase our confidence and develop more positive thoughts. Have a look at [pages 2 -3](#) for some tips on how to promote good body image.*

## Staff

*'I am worried about a pupil'*

*You may have pupils that express feelings of low self esteem and a lack of body confidence. See [page 5](#) for some signs to look out for and some resources to create positive conversations around body image.*

## Parents

*'How can I promote positive body image?'*

*There are some simple things you can do at home to promote positive body image for your young person, see [page 4](#).*

Follow us on social media - @lancsmind  
Find more resources for Children and Young People, Adults and Parents on our website:

[www.lancashiremind.org.uk](http://www.lancashiremind.org.uk)



# Body image

It can be daunting to go from a place of negative thoughts and dislike of our body, to acceptance and positivity. It is a process and will take time; have a look at these techniques to get started.

## Body Neutrality

Body neutrality is a technique to challenge negative thoughts about our body, without the pressure to have complete acceptance or positive feelings. Instead, we focus on facts about our body, or what it can do for us.

Check out this guide from Young Minds for more

Information <https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/tips-if-you-are-struggling-with-body-image-in-lockdown/>

Think about the things your body does for you:

My body keeps me healthy...

My body allows me to move...

## Social media and body image

The interaction between social media and body image is complex. There are resources that can make us feel good about ourselves, and resources that can make us feel worse. Get into the habit of questioning the things you see on social media, as a lot of content is edited and isn't actually real.

Remember, you have the power to unfollow anything that makes you feel negatively about yourself. Take a look at the following resources:

<https://www.themix.org.uk/your-body/appearance/why-we-all-need-more-body-kindness-in-our-lives-32249.html>

<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/body-image-and-self-esteem/male-body-image-and-too-much-exercise-26158.html>

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190311-how-social-media-affects-body-image>



**YOUNGMINDS**  
fighting for young people's mental health

## Body image, sexuality and gender identity resources

<https://www.youngstonewall.org.uk/>

<https://www.theproudsttrust.org/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/body-image-report/sexuality-gender-identity>

**THE MIX**



# Body image

This week we spoke to **Kirsty**, one of our **Wellbeing Coaches** at Lancashire Mind. Kirsty works one to one with people to support them with their mental wellbeing.

Kirsty is also a champion for body acceptance, and has shared some of her tips in this weeks newsletter.

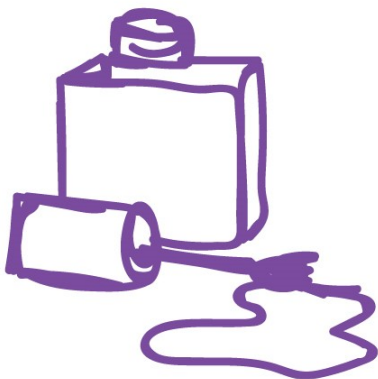
## Activities

**Who Am I?** On a piece of A4 paper, draw a large gingerbread man figure. Inside this figure, write down all the positive qualities about yourself. Are you kind? Are you a good friend? Are you great at history or art or a musical instrument?

Now, on the outside of the figure, write down all your insecurities, the parts of your body you struggle to accept, or anything negative you have been told by others. Take a pair of scissors and cut out the shape of the figure.

Take the outside scraps with the negative words on and tear up this paper before disposing of it. Imagine yourself letting go of all your insecurities.

Keep the gingerbread figure with the positive words on somewhere safe.



A Be Real survey in the UK found that **52%** of young people worry about how they look and **35%** said their body image causes them to worry often or always. This may be due to a range of different factors, such as the media and social media, parents and family members, friends and peers and attempting to live up to the “ideal” body type.

The good news is that we have the power to improve our body image, not by changing the way our bodies look, but by changing our mind-set and how we perceive bodies.

Practicing body acceptance regularly helps us to realise that beauty is more than skin deep and we have so much more to offer to the world than the way we look.

Source: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/body-image-report/childhood>



**Reasons Why I Love You.** Bring to mind a close friend. Grab a piece of paper, or the notes on your phone, and write down all the things you love about this person, what makes them a great friend and why they mean so much to you.

Review this list – did you include anything about their appearance? Probably not – their worth as a person and how good of a friend they are likely has nothing to do with how they look, and more to do with how good they are at listening, how funny they are, how much they cheer you up when you’re feeling sad. If you feel comfortable doing so, send this list to your chosen person and invite them to do the same for you. This should help to remind you, and your friends, that your value as a person and why people love you has nothing to do with your body.

# Parents

This newsletter works well alongside last weeks edition on the topic of self esteem and confidence. Body image has always been an important topic for young people, but with the growth of social media and reality tv, projections of the 'ideal' body are hard to escape.

## Tips for supporting body positive body image

- Be a good role model - think about how you talk about yourself and the language you use about your body. Try to be more body positive, or body neutral. Take a look at [page 2!](#)
- Encourage healthy habits, such as eating a balanced diet and keeping active
- Look at the 5 ways to wellbeing, and talk about how you can fit them into your daily routine
- Talk about concerns they may have and allow them to open up about their insecurities
- Encourage conversations about social media and body image. Talk about how what you see isn't always real and we need to challenge what we see in the media



For more information on the 5 ways to wellbeing, take a look at <https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

## Resources

How to empower children to develop positive body image <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/promoting-positive-body-image-with-children/>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/risks-and-protective-factors/lifestyle-factors/body-image/>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/you-your-body/my-body/how-you-look/>

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/self-esteem-body-image-parents-guide>

If you are concerned about your young person, Beat offer a great guide on how to start a conversation around body image <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/supporting-someone/worried-about-friend>

# School staff

School staff are often in an position where they are they may start to notice signs of issues around body image, lack of self esteem or disordered eating. There are lots of great resources to support teaching on the topic of body image.

## Things to look our for

According to Beat, key signs to look out for include social isolation, pupils being increasingly withdrawn and lethargic. Take a look here for further information <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/supporting-someone/worried-about-pupil>

Other signs of a pupil who is struggling with body image may include:

- Wanting to cover parts of their body
- Being reluctant to get undressed for PE
- Being overly preoccupied with how they look
- Being bullied for their weight or appearance

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/risks-and-protective-factors/lifestyle-factors/body-image/>

## Support for staff

Mind and Twinkl have collaborated to create resources for staff and pupils. These resources are designed to support the wellbeing of both staff and CYP <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/twinkl-partnerships/mind-partnerships>



## Promoting healthy body image within school

Body image in a digital world pack <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/body-image-lesson-plan-pack>

YMCA and Dove Be Real

Campaign <https://www.berealcampaign.co.uk/resources>

#MySenseOfSelf body image and self esteem lesson plan <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/mysenseofself-%E2%80%93-body-image-and-self-esteem-lesson>

# Know the signs

## Eating disorders. Know the first signs?



### Lips

Are they obsessive about food?



### Flips

Is their behaviour changing?



### Hips

Do they have distorted beliefs about their body size?



### Kips

Are they often tired or struggling to concentrate?



### Nips

Do they disappear to the toilet after meals?



### Skips

Have they started exercising excessively?

If you are concerned about your young person, remember that you can talk to your GP.

If you're worried someone you care about is showing any signs of an eating disorder – even if they're not on our list – act quickly and get in touch. We can give you the answers and support you need to help them on the road to recovery as soon as possible.

**Don't delay. Visit [beateatingdisorders.org.uk/tips](https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/tips)**



Source: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/edaw/edaw-2020-resources>

As we have explored, body image concerns are a very normal part of teenage life. However, it is important to be able to recognise if these concerns turn obsessive or begin to take over the young person's life. Young people between the ages of 14-25 are most at risk of developing an Eating Disorder, and it is crucial we know the first signs in order to carry out early intervention.

## Links to helpful information & resources

### General Government Guidance and Updates

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

### NHS Guidance

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/caring-for-children-and-young-people/children-and-young-peoples-services/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

### Lancashire Mind Resources

<https://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/pages/148-coronavirus-and-your-mental-health>

### Mind.org Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/#collapse77625>

### Other Mental Health Resources

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/health-and-other-forms-of-anxiety-and-coronavirus/>

<https://www.healthyyoungmindsisc.co.uk/information/children-and-young-people>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

### Other Coronavirus Resources for Parents and Carers of Young People

<https://nursedottybooks.com/dave-the-dog-is-worried-about-coronavirus-2/>

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/3210-tips-for-families-coronavirus>

<https://www.abc.net.au/life/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-coronavirus-covid-19/12084666>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/what-to-do-if-you-re-anxious-about-coronavirus/>

<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

### Crisis Help and Helplines

If the person is in a crisis and in need of medical attention, you should call 999 and ask for an ambulance to take them to A&E.

If the person is presenting as a danger to themselves or members of the public you should contact the Police on 999.

Samaritans on free phone 116 123 (open 24 hours a day every day of the year)

<i>Local area</i>	<i>9am-5pm</i>	<i>5pm-9am</i>
Blackburn	01254 226430	01254 226074
Blackpool	01253 951225	01253 956280
Chorley & South Ribble	01772 676173	01772 773525
Hyndburn, Rossendale & Ribble Valley	01254 226006	01254 612640
Lancaster & Morecambe	01524 550550	01524 550198 or 01524 550199
Pendle & Burnley	01282 628455	01282 657222
Preston 01772 647024	01772 773433	
South Cumbria	0300 024 7247	0300 024 7247
West Lancashire	01695 684161	01695 684356