

# EMBRACE YOUR BODY

## “THINGS YOU CAN SAY AND DO”

Parenting is hard, and we are all just doing our best, but there are some approaches to parenting that are more beneficial to developing a positive body image than others:

1. Role model body positivity by voicing your appreciation for what your body can do.
2. Limit negative discussion about bodies in terms of weight and appearance
  - your own and other people’s
3. Celebrate diversity of different body shapes, sizes and colours
4. Give praise that is related to function and effort over appearance and achievement
5. Engage in fun movement and eating healthy foods because you enjoy them, not because ‘we have to’

If you need some inspiration or to work on your own body image first, we recommend that you first watch the [Embrace film](#) on your own, or with friends.

**More ideas on how to action this:**



## THINGS YOU CAN SAY

### ACTIONS FOR YOUR HOME

#### MODELLING BODY POSITIVITY

- “I’m grateful for my…” go around the dinner table or the car and share a part of your body that you are grateful for, and why.

#### BODY TALK

- If children call each other “fat” in your home – try diffusing the situation like this: “Fat is a part of your body and keeps us alive. We all need fat – it isn’t good and it isn’t bad. Just like your fingernails aren’t good or bad. Calling people names, and commenting on other people’s bodies can really hurt their feelings, and in our family, we really try not to do that. Some people have more fat than others, and live in larger bodies or smaller bodies, but no there is no right or wrong way to have a body.”
- Make a pact and a commitment with your family or friends to avoid speaking about weight loss and weight gain, and bodies in general. Even a well-intended “you look great!” after weight loss can reinforce messaging around what bodies ‘should’ look like. It’s best not to say anything at all, or to praise people for their strengths and qualities and what they can do rather than what they look like.

#### CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

- It’s ok to comment on how people look different – just avoid saying that one appearance or body type is better than another. “Look at how the choir is made up of all sorts of bodies – short, tall, big, and small, and all of those bodies are able to make such an amazing song when they all come together!”

#### PRAISE

- Say things like: “You concentrated so hard and practiced so much to get that dance routine right – well done!”, and “Look how much your legs have grown – you must be able to jump super high/ run super-fast now!”.
- Post positive affirmations on your fridge and around the house and explain what they are and why you use them to make you feel good.

#### FOOD AND MOVEMENT

- Have conversations about the positive reasons why you look after your body by eating healthily and engaging in movement that might not be related to appearance – for example “I’m glad I went for that run – it really cleared my head!”

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## THINGS YOU CAN DO

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### ACTIONS FOR YOUR HOME

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#### MODELLING BODY POSITIVITY

- Red Riding Hood Responses – When kids point out your jiggle bits, try responding with “all the better to...” For example – when the kids jiggle your belly, and ask why it looks like this, you can respond with “all the better to cuddle you with my dear.”

#### BODY TALK

- “My Healthy body can” play charades or Simon Says to go through all of the things that your body can do.

#### CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

- Notice and point out diversity when you are out and about. “Look at all of the different types of dogs at the dog park – they are all different shapes and sizes, and their bodies can all do different things.” The same can conversation can take place for flowers, foods, etc.

#### PRAISE

- Use the Strengths Sheet and colour in all of the special qualities that your child thinks that they have.
- Children trace around their hand and use the Strengths Sheet as a prompt to identify their special qualities and write them in the hand. Do this as a family and notice how everyone’s is different, and how they all work together.

#### FOOD AND MOVEMENT

- Dance to the ‘Embrace Your Body’ Song – how does it feel to move our bodies?
  - Create a food rainbow, grow some food, prepare and share it with your family.
  - Create a list of physical activities – or a list of adventures that you’ve always wanted to try, and tick them off one by one!
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## FURTHER INFORMATION:

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- BIM: [bodyimagemovement.com](http://bodyimagemovement.com)
- For your body image: Body Confident Mums have a range of evidence-based resources to help you to appreciate your body. [instagram.com/bodyconfidentmums/](https://www.instagram.com/bodyconfidentmums/)  
[facebook.com/mummamentalhealth](https://www.facebook.com/mummamentalhealth)  
[bodyconfidentmums.org](http://bodyconfidentmums.org)
- For parenting, encouraging healthy eating, and body image: Confident Body Confident Child [confidentbody.net/activities.html](http://confidentbody.net/activities.html)

