



# Body Positivity



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## Student Wellness Centre

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Body image is the mental picture you have about your body with the feelings you have about this picture.

There is a feeling in today's society that there is only one perfect shape and perfect size that makes the "ideal" body. This feeling is perpetuated by the media and fashion industries. The ideal woman by today's standards is tall and pencil thin with the unrealistic proportions of a Barbie doll. Women, men, 2SLGBTQ all struggle with the idea of a perfect body image.

Although the media strongly affects our body image, other factors involved include how other people perceive us, and the stereotypes about what the ideal male and female body should be according to our family and friends.

By changing your attitude and the way you view yourself, you CAN improve your body image.

## **How to Improve Your Body Image**

- Do not use your body as a sign of your self-esteem. Consider all of your qualities when evaluating yourself.

- Focus on the positive aspects of your body. Replace negative thoughts about your body with positive ones.
- Avoid comparison with what you see on the internet because most images on there are edited or photoshopped
- Do things that make you feel good about yourself. Buy clothes that fit well and feel good on you.
- Take part in physical activity. It will usually enhance your sense of well-being. Appreciate your body for what it is and what it can do. Exercise for a sense of well-being and for the joy of being active.
- Surround yourself with people who appreciate and respect a variety of body types.
- Become judgmental of media images. Free yourself of ideal body stereotyping by critically examining the messages that are transmitted through the media.



# Reject the “Ideal” Body Image

- Challenge weight prejudices that you hear around you. Refuse to accept the prejudiced views of others as reasonable or right.
- Refuse to buy magazines that focus on unrealistic dieting and thinness.
- Refuse to talk about dieting in social conversation with friends and family.
- Work toward accepting yourself and your natural size and shape.
- Understand that your self-esteem is dependent on your acceptance of yourself as you are, not on your size or on the opinions of others.
- Recognize that a “perfect” size and shape does not create talent, competence, and love, in spite of advertisers’ promises.

## Be a Role Model

- By displaying a healthy self-esteem and a healthy body image, you can be a strong role model to others.
- Respect who you are and talk about yourself in a positive way.

- Find pleasure in “normal eating.” Do not label foods as “good” and “bad.”
- Learn to appreciate yourself for your goals, skills, achievements, talents, and personality, NOT for how you look.

The fact is that every person has a body that is unique to them and it is important that we recognize and accept our individuality.

## **Intuitive Eating**

### **Intuitive Eating Is**

- Going to the table hungry and eating until you are satisfied.
- Being able to choose food you like and eating until you truly get enough of. Do not just stop eating because you think you should.
- Being able to give some thought to your food selection so you get nutritious food, but not being so wary and restrictive that you miss out on enjoyable food.
- Sometimes giving yourself permission to eat because you are happy, sad, bored, or just because it feels good.

- Mostly three, four, or five meals a day. It can even be choosing to munch along the way.
- Leaving some cookies on the plate, because you know you can have some again tomorrow, or it is eating more now because they taste so wonderful.
- Overeating at times, later feeling stuffed and uncomfortable. Under eating at times and wishing you had more.
- Trusting your body to make up for your mistakes in eating.
- Takes up some of your time and attention, but keeps its place as only one important area of your life.

**“In short, normal eating is flexible. It varies in response to your hunger, your schedule, your proximity to food, and your feelings.”**

Ellen Satter, 2012

## Disordered Eating

Disordered eating is not only about food or body issues. Although the exact reason why people develop disordered eating is not known. The most strongly held view is that biological factors, socio-cultural factors, and

psychological factors are all contributors.

Eating disorders and body image difficulties often stem from how we think society views us, how our families have viewed us, and the degree of perfection we demand of ourselves. It appears to also be related to higher education and socio-economic levels.

The behaviors and irregular eating patterns seen in disordered eating include:

- Anorexia,
- Bulimia,
- Chronic restrained eating,
- Compulsive or overeating, and
- Habitual dieting.

Disordered eating can be detrimental to an individual's well-being, causing harm to them emotionally, socially, and physically. Psychological problems, including depression, mood swings, and irritability, as well as physiological problems, such as kidney damage, depressed growth, and loss of menstruation, may develop from disordered eating.

**80% to 90% percent of disordered eating begins with weight loss diets.**

National Eating Disorder Information Center

# What to Do and How to Help

**Seeking help:** making change is difficult to do completely on your own. Talk to people you trust. Often they can provide support and help you get professional assistance when needed. The most important thing is to seek help. This is a multi-factorial problem and getting help will provide you with the support you need.

**How to help:** be patient, compassionate, encouraging, and non-judgmental. Learn as much as you can about the subject. The person will get better at a pace that is suitable to them -- you cannot make them get better, but they do need your love and support.

## Where to Go for Help

Make an appointment with the dietitian or counsellor at Student Wellness Centre.

**Body positivity Influencers on Instagram.**

- Madeline Forsyth
- Kenzie Brenna



- Jose
- Lizzo

### **LGBTQ body positivity influencer**

- Enam Asiama

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## **Additional Resources**

### **Visit these great sites:**

- [nedic.ca](http://nedic.ca)
- [bridgepointcenter.ca](http://bridgepointcenter.ca)
- [haescommunity.com](http://haescommunity.com)
- [swadesaskatoon.wordpress.com](http://swadesaskatoon.wordpress.com)
- Facebook: Nourish YXE

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