



## Body Positivity

### Objectives:

- Girls will be able to understand that their bodies are perfect the way they are.
- Girls will be able to identify negative or misleading media sources about bodies.
- Girls will be given the opportunity to express their creativity through a personal letter.

### Lesson Plan:

- Ice breaker/review (10 minutes)
- Activity: Change the Beat (20 minutes)
- Discussion: Challenge the Culture (10 minutes)
- Break (5 minutes)
- Activity: Love Letter to Your Body (10 minutes)
- Week Wrap-Up (5 Minutes)

### Icebreaker/Review (10 mins)

- Draw yourself!
  - On a pad of paper, draw different ways that they see themselves and what they want to do with their body, and what their body can allow them to do with their body
    - *For an example:*  
<http://arttherapyspot.com/2014/11/13/the-body-in-ar/>

### Change the Beat (20 minutes)

Divide the group into small groups and instruct them to pick a popular song. Ideally, this is a song that perpetuates harmful body ideals or just reinforces societal ideals of one body image. Instruct the groups to look up the lyrics of the song and rewrite a verse or more with fun body positive messages. At the end of the session, have the students come back and perform their new song to the group. When complete, debrief with the following questions.

1. How do explicit songs that promote violence, racism, sexism, and homophobia make you feel about your body?
2. How do body-positive songs impact your mood?
3. Do you think that applying body-positive messages can help you internalize the message?

Example:

Original:

Yeah, my mama, she told me, "Don't worry about your size"  
She says, "Boys like a little more booty to hold at night"  
And, no, I won't be no stick-figure silicone Barbie doll  
So if that's what's you're into then go ahead and move along

Because you know I'm all about that bass, 'bout that bass, no treble  
I'm all about that bass, 'bout that bass, no treble  
I'm all about that bass, 'bout that bass, no treble  
I'm all about that bass, 'bout that bass

Hey, I'm bringing booty back  
Go ahead and tell them skinny bitches that  
Nah, I'm just playing, I know y'all think you're fat  
But I'm here to tell ya every inch of you is perfect from the bottom to the top

New:

Yeah, my mama, she told me, "Don't worry about your size"  
She says, "Your partner will love you don't worry about your thighs"  
And, no, my worth won't be determined by any guys  
So if that's what's you're into then go ahead and move along

Because you know I'm all about that love, 'bout that love, no mean stuff  
I'm all about that love, 'bout that love, no mean stuff  
I'm all about that love, 'bout that love, no mean stuff  
I'm all about that love, 'bout that love

Hey, I'm bringing self-esteem back  
Go ahead and tell all the cameras that  
Nah, I'm just playing, I know y'all think you're fat  
But I'm here to tell ya every inch of you is perfect from the bottom to the top

**Challenge the Culture (10 minutes)**

Why does it seem normal for people to have shame and pain around their body?

- We live in a culture that teaches us to feel like this. Women get nonstop feedback on how they look and we live in a culture where it's okay for mass media and individuals to tell us about ourselves. People tell us:
  - What they think of how our body looks in certain clothes
  - What looks good or bad on our bodies
  - What we should and shouldn't eat
  - We'd look better with makeup
  - How our hair looks
- People give us unsolicited advice on how to lose or gain weight

Start asking questions about any popular or widely believed idea:

- How does this cultural idea make me feel?
- Who benefits from this cultural idea?
- What is the cultural idea trying to do?
- Does this cultural idea benefit me and the people I care about?
- Do I want to keep investing in this behavior or product?

These are great questions to ask surrounding ideas that we come across in the media as well as in our family, friend, and school communities. Work to change the narrative so that we, and the people around us, do not feel pressured to comply and adapt to fit the current narrative that has the potential to cause harm.

## BREAK

### Activity: Love Letter to Your Body (10 mins)

- The facilitator should begin by reading the following passage from *The Self-Love Revolution: Radical Body Positivity for Girls of Color* by Virgie Tovar
  - Do you ever stop and think about all the amazing stuff your body is doing all the time, without you even having to think about it?
    - All day long, your heart beats. Whether you're asleep or awake, your heart pumps blood to your brain. Every single day your hair and nails grow just a little. You don't have to think about it. It just happens.
    - Your brain works together with your eyes to effortlessly read this book. Your eyes process information that your brain translates as colors, images, voices—without you even having to think about it.
    - Your ears can detect sounds; they can tell if you're hearing a movie or your friend's laughter or your teacher's voice. They allow you to hear

crickets at sunset. They help you know if a car is getting too close. They let you hear the beat of your favorite song.

- Your skin is this huge, amazing organ that lets you feel sensations—the warmth of the sun, the cold of the ocean, the pleasure of a soft sweater, the way it feels to hold someone’s hand, the texture of a flower petal, the sensation of rain, or the prick of a cactus.
- Your tongue talks to your brain and lets you taste all the amazing stuff you’ve ever tasted: Cheetos, birthday cake, peanut butter, sushi, nachos, pizza, kimchi, chili, tacos, pupusas, ghost peppers. It lets you know when something tastes bad or is rotten.
- Your brain processes languages people can talk to you and you can understand them. It stores your best memories. It works to help you recover from traumatic events. It learns and retains new information.
- Your intuition lives in your body. Some people think it lives in the old, reptilian part of your brain. Others believe it lives deep in your stomach—that’s why some people call it a “gut feeling.” Whenever something feels *just right*—or wrong—that’s your intuition telling you to listen.
- Your stomach takes everything you eat and works with your intestines and other internal organs that turn that food into fuel that you can use to think, do homework, have fun, move around, and interact with others.
- Your feet are made up of twenty-six connected bones that keep you upright, that move you around, that let you run, walk, play basketball, go bowling, and jump on your bed. They have more than 100 muscles and thousands of nerve endings that let you feel sand and grass.
- At night, we fall asleep and we dream. Our dreams help us deal with things that are happening all around us during the daytime. Our dreams sometimes tell us if we have unconscious stuff we have to deal with. While we’re sleeping, our body recovers and reenergizes. Have you ever had a cut or a scrape, fallen asleep, and found it was almost completely healed by the time you woke up?
- Thanks, body.
- ...
- Close your eyes and listen to what you’re able to hear because you have ears that are connected to eardrums that allow you to detect a bird or a voice or a train and know what it is. Touch your skin and remember that this organ will be with you forever, allowing you to experience the most important sensations of your life. Remember that no matter what you look like—whether you have a disability, no

matter what your body size, your weight, your color, your gender, your sexuality, or your height, or whether you have an illness or not—you are 100 percent flawless.

- Use this website to write individual, personalized love letters to your own bodies
  - <https://www.futureme.org/>

### **Week Wrap-Up (5 Minutes)**

- What is something that you found useful in today's lesson that you can apply to the outside of our classroom?
- Does your version of yourself that you drew show how amazing of an individual that you are?
- *Optional:* A reminder of the final project.

### **Parent Email**

#### **Today's Objectives**

- Girls will be able to understand that their bodies are perfect the way they are.
- Girls will be able to identify negative or misleading media sources about bodies.
- Girls will be given the opportunity to express their creativity through a personal letter.

#### **Discussion Questions**

- What does healthy body positivity look like for you?
- How does the media play a role in the way that we view our bodies?