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Picture of Health: Having a Positive Body Image

Being an adolescent these days can be difficult for many reasons. Body image especially plays a significant role in developing healthy self-esteem. Our culture, social media, family, and peers all play a role in how teens feel about their bodies. And, it doesn't just affect girls. **Following are some warning signs to watch for if you are concerned about your child's self-image:**



- **Excessive exercising.** Does your child exercise more than normal or have you noticed a change in his or her usual habits?
- **Changes in eating pattern.** Is your child eating less than his or her typical amount, consuming different foods than normal and/or eating at different times of the day?
- **Signs of depression:** Does your child sleep more or less than usual, appear to be less engaged with friends or seem moodier?
- **Symptoms of low self-esteem:** Does your child express a lot of self-criticism, share feelings of not being "good enough" and/or worry often about not fitting in with others?

Although parents may feel they have little influence, they actually can play a significant role in helping their children have a healthier body image.

- **Help kids understand** that weight gain is a normal part of development, especially during puberty.
- **Pay attention** to how your son is talking about himself and working out. Avoid comments or teasing about "filling out."
- **Avoid negative statements** about weight, looks, clothes, etc. Research shows that children are influenced considerably by how their parents feel and speak about their own weight as well as their children's weight and appearance. Fathers play a significant role in this for their children.
- **Praise your children** for their values, accomplishments, talents, and achievements.
- **Monitor what they watch** on TV as well as their use of social media. This presents opportunities to talk about what they're experiencing in real time.
- **Keep the lines of communication open.** If they approach you with concerns, don't just dismiss them. Listen to what they have to say, help them understand the changes their bodies are undergoing and validate their feelings.

5 Healthy Eating Tips for Summer

Between barbecues and vacation getaways, it's easy to skimp on the exercise, but pile on the food during the warmer months. **Follow these suggestions to help stay on track during these summer months:**

1. Take Advantage of Fresh Produce

With produce at its peak during the summer months, now is the perfect time to indulge in nature's finest by eating the freshest vegetables and fruit.

2. Choose Lean Meats

Instead of going for the traditional fare, choose leaner meats. Healthier meat alternatives include ground turkey and skinless chicken breasts. Fish is a very important part of a healthy diet. Grill salmon, tuna, lobster, steamer clams, and calamari for a low-calorie, protein-packed lunch or dinner.

3. Be Smart about Cold-Treat Choices

To satisfy your sweet tooth and not feel guilty about it, look for some healthier alternatives to the typical calorie-laden summer treats. Buy low-fat versions of fat-free and sugar-free ice cream or try a sugar-free sorbet, which is a lower-calorie, refreshing alternative. Experiment with different brands and remember to control your portions

4. Stay Quenched

With scorching hot temperatures and outdoor activities ramping up, dehydration is a major concern. To stay hydrated during the summer, buy a reusable water bottle and keep it with you all the time as a reminder to take sips regularly.

5. Prep for the Beach

Ice cream stands and high-calorie barbecues are bound to put a damper on your diet, so manage these temptations by being prepared. Pack a cooler with ice, bottled water, sandwiches on whole grain breads, pita chips, hummus, yogurt and lots of fruit. You'll feel healthier and happier!



Recipe: Vanilla-Yogurt Fruit Dip

Enjoy this quick-to-make, refreshing fruit dip for a sweet-tasting summer treat.

Serving Size: Approx. One Cup

Ingredients:

- One cup non-fat vanilla Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

Preparation:

1. Mix all ingredients together in a medium bowl
2. Chill for half-hour (time permitting)
3. Sprinkle with brown sugar and cinnamon before serving, if desired
4. Serve with assorted fresh fruit