



# BODY IMAGE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2025

## What does body image mean?

Body image is a term that can be used to describe how we think and feel about our bodies; positively, negatively or both. Body image can relate to a person's body size or shape, height, skin colour, appearance, physical disabilities or differences.

Research has shown that for young children, attitudes about body shape and size may start as early as three or four years old.

A negative body image can influence a child or young person in many different ways. This can include:

- Lower self-esteem
- Lower levels in confidence
- Increased anxiety
- Depression or low mood
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Self-harming or restricted eating

*The Mental Health Foundation has more information on what body image is and how it can affect children and young people. Click the image to find out more!*



Source: Mental Health Foundation

## What can trigger poor body image?

There are several factors that can trigger or contribute to poor body image in children and young people. Some of the most common triggers include:

- **Media and Social Media:** Unrealistic beauty standards, influencers and celebrities, filters and editing tools.
- **Peer Influence and Bullying:** Peer comparisons, bullying and teasing.
- **Parental comments:** Negative comments from family members, pressure to meet certain standards, overemphasis on appearance.
- **Cultural and Societal Expectations:** Cultural beauty ideals, gender expectations, diet culture.
- **Changes in Physical Appearance (Puberty):** Body changes during puberty: Children may feel awkward or self-conscious during physical changes that come with puberty (e.g., weight gain, growth spurts, and changes in body shape).
- **Developmental differences:** Children who grow at different rates than their peers, or who develop later or earlier, may feel self-conscious about their bodies.
- **Existing mental health conditions:** Children who struggle with mental health issues such as anxiety or depression, may be more vulnerable to poor body image.

# Spot the signs of poor body image

It is normal for children and young people to compare themselves to others, especially as they get older. However, there are signs to be aware of which could indicate that they have an unhealthy view of their body, which is negatively effecting how they feel about themselves. This could include;



- Frequent negative comments about appearance: A child may constantly criticize their body or compare themselves to others.
- Expressing feelings of inadequacy: They may talk about feeling "ugly," "too fat," or "not good enough."
- Talking about wanting to be different: For example, they may wish they had a different body type or facial features.
- Avoiding mirrors or cameras: A child who is self-conscious may avoid looking at themselves or being photographed.
- Wearing baggy clothes: They might dress to hide their body, preferring loose or oversized clothing to conceal their shape.
- Over-exercising or extreme dieting: Some children might adopt restrictive eating habits or excessive exercise routines in an attempt to change their appearance.
- Avoiding social situations: A child may refuse to participate in activities like swimming or gym class because they're self-conscious about their body.
- Comparing themselves to peers: They may show signs of feeling inferior to others or obsess over how they look in comparison.
- Disordered eating behaviors: This might include binge eating, skipping meals, or trying fad diets.

## Advice and Support

There are a number of services and charities that can offer advice and support on all areas of mental health in young people. Click on the logos to head straight to their websites!

**YOUNG MINDS**

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# South Leicestershire Community Board

## EXAM ANXIETY

Simple ideas to help manage stress and anxiety

### Make time for the things you enjoy

Find ways to release stress and celebrate your progress. You could listen to music, draw, cook, go for a walk, play a sport or enjoy a treat like a cinema trip!



### Take regular breaks

Make sure you take regular breaks, as your brain cannot concentrate for hours at a time. Breaks from revision can boost your energy and motivation



### Take care of your physical health

Make sure you get enough sleep, food, water and exercise. A good diet and the right amount of sleep can help increase your energy and improve your concentration, focus, and memory.



### Talk to others about how you feel

Connect with other people, especially your classmates who are also taking exams as they might be feeling anxious too.



### Focus on yourself

Try not to compare yourself to others. Remind yourself what you like about yourself and what your good at.



### Ask for help

Talk through your concerns with your teacher/tutor who can let you know what support your school can offer you. Let your family and friends know if you are struggling so they can support you too.



### Create a timetable

Create a simple revision timetable and make sure you are realistic about what you can achieve each day.



### Keep things in perspective

Remember, you are more than your exam results. Exams are only a small part of the picture and don't define you.



## SUPPORT

If you do feel stressed or anxious, don't feel alone, there is lots of help and support available. Click on the logos to find out more:



Health | Well-being | School Sport | PE | Physical Activity  
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### KNOW THE SIGNS OF STRESS:

- Feeling irritable, angry, impatient or wound up.
- You might experience anxiety, feel nervous or afraid.
- Unable to enjoy yourself
- Depressed
- Uninterested in life
- A sense of dread
- Worried or tense
- Loss of appetite
- Neglected or lonely

You might experience physical signs such as

- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Feeling sick
- Trembling
- Feeling more tired than usual
- Clammy or sweaty palms
- Dizziness
- Racing heartbeat

[YOUNG MINDS HAVE MORE INFORMATION HERE](#)

Click the images to find out more!

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Please get in touch!  
[lutterworthcountryparkjuniors@parkrun.com](http://lutterworthcountryparkjuniors@parkrun.com)

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**NHS**

The Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust have created a directory of mental health support available in your local area and how to access it.  
Find out more [here](#)

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