

RAISING BODY CONFIDENT KIDS: 10 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW



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[*Body Confident You, Body Confident Kid*](#)



Introduction

Every child deserves to grow up loving their body, but in today's world, that's tougher than ever. Social media, advertising, and even everyday, casual comments can shape how kids feel about themselves for the rest of their lives.

This free guide gives you 10 simple, powerful ways to protect your child's body confidence, build resilience, and strengthen their sense of self-worth, starting today.

1

Model Body Respect

You are likely to be one of, if not the main influence in your child's life. So what you model to them in terms of how one should treat their body really matters. If you're aware you haven't been kind to your body in front of your kids, or made unhelpful comments about others' bodies, please be compassionate with yourself. We have all been bombarded by messages that encourage us to shame certain body types, and it is never too late to make positive changes.

Speak kindly about your own body and show your child what self-respect looks like in action. That doesn't mean that you have to be inauthentic and pretend that you love your body when you don't, but it does mean talking about it in a compassionate, appreciative way. It can help to focus on what your body does for you so that you

yourself become more accustomed to looking at your body through the lens of gratitude, rather than how it matches up to unrealistic body ideals that few of us can even hope to look like!

2

Praise Who They Are, Not How They Look

As far as possible, try to give your kid compliments based on their kindness, creativity, courage, and effort, rather than their appearance. Doing this places increased value on who they are as a person and on things they actually have some control over, rather than what they look like. Kids whose sense of self-worth and esteem is built on a sense of intrinsic value rather than what they look like tend to be a lot more robust and flexible when faced with challenges like bodily changes in puberty and normally bodily changes like weight gain, which is part of normal development across the lifespan for most people.

3

Create A Positive Media Environment

Curate both your and your kid's social feeds. Follow accounts that celebrate diverse bodies and body-positive values, and that show a wide representation of bodies doing cool things that you and your kid can relate to. This helps to ensure that your kid's idealised image of themselves (that is, the way they would *like* to see themselves) is as close as possible to the way they *do* see themselves (their self-image).

4

Normalise All Bodies

Talk about how bodies come in all shapes and sizes, colours, abilities, and that every body is good and valuable. Think about how different body types are represented in and around your home; in magazines, books, on TV and online and run an audit to ensure that there's a reasonable spread of positive body representation around your home. Keep emphasising that what really matters isn't what people look like, but the way we treat ourselves and each other.

5

Don't Moralise Food

This will take some practice if you've grown up in a household and culture in which foods were constantly talked about in the context of 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' or 'good' and 'bad' or 'naughty' and 'treat' foods. In reality, ALL foods can form part of a healthy diet, including, shock horror, even ultra processed foods (bread and baked beans, for example, have a decent nutritional content. The more you are able to support your kid in developing a relationship with all foods that is fairly level, the less likely they are to covet restricted foods, and crave those that are considered 'off limits'. Creating this dynamic around food supports intuitive eating and also prevents kids from moralising *themselves* when they do eat something that's been labelled as good or bad.

6

Focus On Body Function

Encourage your child to focus on what their body can do; run, jump, skip, hug, laugh, learn, explore and so on. This helps shift attention from appearance to function and fosters appreciation and confidence in their body's abilities. This can be a tough concept to get your head around when you've been taught that the only way to feel differently about your body is to change it, but healthy body image is built on a foundation of seven pillars (covered in detail in [Body Confident You, Body Confident Kid](#)) and none of these are dependent on what you look like or weigh.

7

Challenge-Appearance Based Comments

When you hear others making appearance-based comments such as, “*She’s so pretty!*” or “*Wow, you’re looking so skinny!*” gently steer the conversation to focus on qualities like compassion, kindness, courage and how people treat themselves and each other. This reiterates where real value lies for your child.

8

Teach Media Literacy

Help your child question what they see online. Discuss how images are edited, AI-manufactured, and posed, and how companies profit from people feeling bad about themselves. Build their confidence by helping them think critically about media messages and images.

9

Encourage Self-Compassion

Teach your kid it’s ok to have tough days, and normal to experience different types of emotions, including ones that feel less comfortable and even painful or difficult. By allowing your kid to notice and name what they’re feeling and show themselves compassion and care, you support them in developing emotional resilience as well as self-soothing skills. **Remember, kids can only learn to manage emotions that we allow them to have.**

10

Build Rituals of Body Appreciation

Try to create **habits that celebrate what bodies can do** in your household. This might look like:

- Having a gratitude jar for things your body achieved today.
- A glimmer corner of tangible items that remind you and/or your kids of things their body has enabled them to do, or that brings you comfort and joy in moments of emotional difficulty,
- Leaving each other sticky notes on family mirrors with affirming, positive messages like, 'You light up the room when you walk in,' or 'You are so incredibly kind.'



Want more resources?

I hope these ideas help your family build body appreciation and nurture a home where everyone feels good in the skin they're in.

If you would like to learn more about how to heal your own body image and foster a positive body image in your kids, my book, [*Body Confident You, Body Confident Kid*](#), is packed full of more easy-to-follow, practical and evidence-based strategies and activities that you can implement straight away, along with expert insights and real-life examples. It will help you navigate the minefield of health and wellness disinformation and confusion and support you in helping your child feel good about who they are, no matter what their shape, size or appearance. To get your copy [CLICK HERE](#)



Together, let's raise a generation that knows that their worth is deeper than appearance.

