

# Feeling Good About Our Bodies and Our Selves

## Tip Sheet for Students

### What is body-image?

**Body-image** is what you believe, think and feel about your body. Body-image includes how you feel about all of your physical features (e.g., weight, height, facial features, colour, physical maturation), and abilities. Our body-image is influenced by what we learn from others (e.g., parents, doctors, media and friends) about how bodies are seen. When we talk about body-image, we are talking about:

- What we believe about our bodies (e.g., bodies are strong; bodies need nurturing).
- How we feel about the way that we look (e.g., “Sometimes I wish that I was taller, but I love my big smile.”)
- How we feel about what we can do with our bodies (e.g., “I can be adventurous because my body is strong.”)
- How we think others see us (e.g., “My friends think that I am attractive.”)

### How will a positive body-image help me?

It’s hard to feel good about yourself if you don’t like your body, right? That’s why it is so important to have a positive body-image. When you feel good about your body, you will feel better about yourself. Here are some of the good things that can happen when you accept your body:

- You feel like you are important and worthy, even when you make mistakes
- You have more confidence to try new things
- You will feel comfortable with who you are
- You know that you can take good care of your body and your self, (e.g., eating well and being active; brushing your teeth; taking soothing baths or listening to music to relax).

### How can I develop a more positive body-image?

The list below provides some tips on how to improve your body confidence, which you can also use to help your friends feel better about themselves.

### Tips for a Positive Body-Image:

- Think about all of the things that you like about your body (e.g., eyes, hands, strong legs, soft skin).
- Think about and remind yourself of all the things that you do well (e.g., being a good friend, making people laugh, being creative).
- Think about all of the great ways that your body works for you: your legs get you from one place to another; your lungs give you the breath you need to laugh, etc.
- Take care of yourself – eat well, sleep well, participate in activities that you enjoy, spend time with people who care about you.
- Dress in clothes that you like and that you feel comfortable in.
- When you are upset or angry, try to find a positive way to cope with those feelings (e.g., writing in a journal, painting, going for a walk, sharing feelings with a close friend or a trusted adult).
- Talk with friends about the all the things that you like about them.
- Read stories – fiction or fact – about how other people your age cope with their difficulties. This can give you ideas to try on your own. Ask your teacher for suggested books or websites.