

SELF-IMAGE: SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

Large Group Activity (10 Minutes)

Divide the class by boys and girls. Ask them to draw a picture of the ideal teenager of their gender. Have them list the perfect personality, the right type of clothes, the family he/she is from, and the lifestyle they have. Have each group show their picture to the other half of the class, and list their descriptions on the board. Allow five minutes for the first part, and five for the second part.

SHOW THE VIDEO (16 Minutes)

Small Group Questions (10 minutes - 5 per group, assign 3 or 4 questions)

1. How much time do you spend each morning on how you look?
2. What impact do your friends and others at school have on the way you dress, your hairstyle, and even the slang you use?
3. Which TV shows depict what you wear or how you act?
4. What impact, if any, does TV or print advertising have on the way you feel about yourself, or the way you feel you need to look or act?
5. How do you struggle to "keep up" with your friends?
6. What are things your parents and friends say that make you feel good or bad?
7. Are you what you want to be, in terms of looks, grades, athletics, and popularity?
8. What would your self-image be like if nobody said anything negative to you?
9. Why do you think people your age have a low self-image?
10. Do you need to get some new friends and/or new hobbies?
11. What would you really like to do, but don't, because you're concerned about your friends' opinions?
12. What are the ways you can improve your self-image?

Large Group Activity (5 Minutes)

Write down the amount of time students spend each morning to look good. Then discuss #8, emphasizing the impact others have on us and the way we feel about ourselves. Finally, discuss #11. Changes in friends and self-expectations are often needed to improve our self-image!

WRAP UP: SELF-IMAGE

CLOTHING, MAKE-UP, GOOD LOOKS, AND WHAT YOU OWN DO NOT DETERMINE WHO YOU ARE.

- Don't allow false images of what you're "supposed to look like" ruin your self-image.
- Stop playing the comparison game. A real friend likes you no matter what you wear or look like.
- Stop filling your mind with expectations that you can't meet. If a magazine is telling you that you need to act or be a certain way through its articles or advertising, stop reading it! If a TV show makes you wish you were somebody you can't be, don't watch it!
- Remember what lasts beyond appearance: Personality! Have you ever really liked somebody on the radio or on the phone, who you've never even seen?

FIND FRIENDS WHO ARE POSITIVE AND ENCOURAGING.

- Stop hanging out with negative people. Look for friends who are interested in you and encourage you.
- If your parents are negative, talk to them or write a kind letter and ask them to please be more positive and encouraging. You can get the ball rolling by being encouraging to them first! Start with a line like, "Mom, I know I never tell you this, but I sure appreciate you doing my laundry and cooking dinner (or working hard at your job all week long) Thanks." Or, "Dad, I know it seems like I don't appreciate a lot of things, but I just want you to know that I'm really thankful you work so hard to support us and pay for all of the stuff we need. Thanks."

FIND YOUR NATURAL TALENTS AND THINGS YOU REALLY LIKE TO DO.

- Find a hobby and spend time developing it. Find friends who enjoy the same hobby and who will encourage you! If your friends aren't supportive, it's time to find new friends!
- Everybody has different things that they enjoy and are good at. Do what you want to do, not what everybody else says you should do.

LOOK FOR SELF-WORTH IN WHO YOU ARE ON THE INSIDE.

- Keep your self-respect and dignity by doing what you know is morally right.
- Get involved in helping others. This gives you a feeling of great self-worth that is not based on what you look like or how many things you own!

HOMework: SELF-IMAGE

HOMework Project: What makes your self-image in TV?

Tape a TV show that has people your age in it. Then analyze it and its central character (of your gender) by answering the following questions:

1. Describe the central character of your gender. What does the guy or girl look like? (Do they have pimples, are they overweight, do they have any of the normal physical problems of a teenager or are they mostly perfect?)
2. What styles of clothes do they wear that you like, and why?
3. What about the car they drive?
4. What is a normal dating/sexual relationship like in this TV show?
5. Where does the person get their good self-image from? Do they get encouraged by anyone, like parents or friends, or do you just have to assume they have it all together?
6. How do you feel you stack up to this character?
7. Do you feel this is a good representation of people your age? Why or why not?
8. How does this show, or TV in general, affect the way you think you need to be?
9. Write a page long description of how this character might be more realistic.

HOMework Project: Who helps or hurts your self-image?

Use a small note pad or seven 3 x 5 cards that you can put in your back pocket, purse, or book bag. Carry the cards or note pad with you, and label each page with a different day. At the end of each class or break time, lunch time, and every other period in the day, write down the comments made toward you from others, both good and bad. Include comments from family, friends, enemies, teachers, coaches, etc. At the end of each day, count the number of positive and negative comments, and add up each week. Then answer the following:

1. Who were the most positive and encouraging people to you this week, and how did they make you feel?
2. What were the results of their comments to you? (Did you work harder, decide not to quit, have courage to do something, etc?)
3. Who were the most negative and discouraging people to you this week, and how did they make you feel?
4. What were the results of their comments to you? (Did you get angry, discouraged, give up, etc?)
5. Based on what you've learned, what changes do you need to make in your life in terms of how you act and who you spend time with?

Conclude your report with your opinion on how friends and others affect our self-image. Support your opinion with the results of your research.