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YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN

Reprinted by:
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Hello Wild Cubs and Wild Cats,

As always, I would like to thank all of my Wild cat and wild cub friends who keep sending me emails.

K.P. from Madison County wrote...

Dear Wally,

What truly makes a person beautiful? I don't look like the models I see in magazines or on TV. My mom says I am beautiful just the way I am. I don't think I will ever look like those models on TV. I will never get into a size 2 jeans! How can I learn to be happy with me?

Thank you K.P., for sharing your feelings with Wally Cat and all of your Wild Cat and Wild Cub friends.

Your mom is right. You are beautiful just the way you are. No one is perfect, not even the models that you see in magazines or on TV. After the camera lights stop flashing and they take their make-up off, they look a lot different.

Always remember that there is only one you. You are a unique individual with your own sense of style, personality, and beauty. No one can copy you because you are an original design!



Love yourself and appreciate all of the qualities that make you uniquely you. You will soon find that others love you as well, not because of the way you look, but because of the great person that you are.

Wally Cat 

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

BODY IMAGE

Body Image: Does it Really Matter?

How many times have you heard someone say or even told yourself: "I'm fat", "I'm too skinny", "My thighs stick out", "My legs are too short", "My hair is too curly or straight", "How embarrassing, I'm hairy." This is how many people see themselves when they look in the mirror and think about their body.

Body image is simply that — the picture in our minds that we have of ourselves or the way we think we look. Body image is your own opinion and how you feel about your size, shape, weight, and other parts of your body.

It is sometimes hard to accept how we "really" look because of the many things around us.

that tell us how we "should" look. Body image affects both young men and young women! Young men face pressure to tone-up, build muscle, and look big, strong, and tanned. Young women face pressure to slim-down, tone-up, and look petite and thin.



Need a Self-Esteem Boost?

- **Make a list of the things that you are good at.** Everyone has a talent. Most people have more than one. It can be singing, dancing, drawing, playing a sport, or making those around you laugh.
- **Give yourself a compliment everyday.** Remember to give yourself a pat on the back. Remind yourself each day just how special you are.
- **Love the skin you are in.** There are things about ourselves that we can change, and some things we have to live with. Appreciate yourself for the unique person that you are.
- **Replace your negative thoughts.** When you have a negative thought, replace it with a positive one. Don't let negative thoughts lower your self-esteem or discourage you. Remind yourself of all you have accomplished and all of the things you do well.
- **Focus on your strengths.** There is almost nothing you can't do if you set your mind to it. Set small goals for things you want to achieve.

Hold your head up high. You deserve to be loved and respected. Make your own decisions, you don't have to follow the crowd or do something just because everyone else is doing it. You are a unique human being. There is only one person in the world with a smile like yours. You guessed it. You!

SOURCES:

- Alabama Cooperative Extension System — "There's no perfect body size for a teenager."
- http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/self_esteem.html

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