

# Power of Words

## Creating a BodyKind School

### About BodyKind

BodyKind Schools runs every September in conjunction with Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness Week (BIEDAW). BodyKind Schools main call to action is body kindness; encouraging young people to be kind to their own body and to others. Online, face to face, everywhere!

### Why appearance and weight-based teasing is a problem?

In the 2022 BodyKind Youth Survey an alarming 70% of young Australians, aged 12-18, reported receiving negative comments or being teased about their appearance. Unfortunately, 38% reported it happening in the previous month and the vast majority (72%) experiencing this at school.

Appearance and weight based teasing and bullying is a socio-cultural risk factor to the development of body dissatisfaction, which can have a negative and sometimes, life-long impact on a person's self-esteem and mental health. Body dissatisfaction can affect how young people engage in their life and places them at greater risk of developing disordered eating and eating disorders.

Helping to foster BodyKind environments for young people means that a zero-approach to appearance and body teasing, bullying and banter is taken seriously.

To do this we need to build resilience in young people so they can stand up for their own body and others, but also and most importantly we need to ensure we make people more aware and accountable for the words they use to talk about and describe bodies and appearance.



**AUDIENCE**  
Secondary



**SESSION LENGTH**  
Min single lesson (ideally 2)

#### ACTIVITY AIM :

By the end of this two-part lesson, students will be better able to identify when banter about appearance may have gone too far and understand the impact that appearance-related jokes and teasing can have on individuals' mental health, self-esteem and body image.

Through the development of the BodyKind Student Code of Conduct students are encouraged to be accountable to themselves and each other when it comes to appearance teasing to help build a BodyKind School.

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Body Kind Power of Words – Educator Guide
- Device to play BodyKind Power of Words Student PPT
- Wi-Fi to play digital clips (available via YouTube and SafeShare.tv)
- Paper and pens
- BodyKind Student Code of Conduct Activity Sheet
- BodyKind Power of Words Pledge

#### HOW:

The implementation of this lesson is supported with a developed Power Point presentation. This includes linked digital clips (wi-fi required, clips not embedded), discussion questions, and outlines the activities for students. The Educator Guide provides a detailed outline of how to facilitate this lesson.

The lesson has been divided into two parts so this activity could be split over 2 lessons. The length of the lesson will be determined by how much the students interact with the discussions and activities.

Prompts included within the Educator Guide are suggestions only. Of course, facilitators are welcome to present the information in their own words.

#### ENSURE A 'DO NO HARM' APPROACH:

This activity has been developed to take a strength-based approach to the topic of teasing, bullying and banter. However, it is important to note that this topic may also be challenging and sensitive for some students, particularly those who has/had an experience of appearance teasing and bullying. It's important that:

- Individual students are not singled out.
- Involvement in discussions is 'opt-in'.
- If sharing personal experiences that details and names of people are not shared by Facilitator. Aim to focus on feelings.
- Discussions may alert students/staff to otherwise unknown current issues. Address these sensitively at another appropriate time.
- Help-seeking information for students is included at the end of the session. A check-in post lesson is recommended.

If you have questions about this activity,  
please contact:

E: [education@butterfly.org.au](mailto:education@butterfly.org.au)  
[www.butterfly.org.au](http://www.butterfly.org.au)

Educator Guide

## POWER OF WORDS – Creating a BodyKind School

### INTRODUCTION TO BODY KIND SCHOOLS AND ACTIVITY (no slide)

- We are proud to be participating in BodyKind Schools, which is an initiative of Butterfly Foundation. BodyKind Schools aims to raise awareness and promote a positive body image, by being BodyKind. (You can also play the Welcome to BodyKind Schools [assembly clip](#) \* which introduces key ideas on how we can be kinder to our own and all bodies.)
- It's not always easy to like, love or appreciate your body so instead BodyKind Schools encourages young people to find ways to be kind and practice kindness towards their own body and also to others.
- Today we are going to explore the power of words and the role of appearance teasing, bullying and also banter on our body image. All discussions are opt-in and I'll be sharing some information at the end if you need to chat with anyone.
- Respectful classroom reminder: Please remember that what is disclosed is not something to be shared with friends and peers.

\* also available via SafeShare.tv - <https://safeshare.tv/x/zGq6GvoPIPQ>

### PART ONE – PowerPoint Slides 1-7

When body banter goes too far.

Exploring the impact of teasing and bullying and the role of banter.

- Use the prompts within the Educator Guide to help facilitate the discussions and activities.
- Students will need paper and pens for this activity.

Prompt to connect Part One and Part Two:

*"Imagine a world that was BodyKind, where people didn't tease, make jokes or nasty comments about other people's appearance and body? While we might not be able to make the whole world BodyKind, we can make our own environments a better, safer and more positive place for all people and their bodies to exist and thrive".*

### PART TWO – Power Point Slides 8-11

Develop a class/year level/school BodyKind Student Code of Conduct.




- Use the prompts within the Guide to help facilitate the development of a BodyKind Student Code of Conduct, with the specific focus on reducing appearance teasing and bullying in the school.
- Students will require the handout (Code of Conduct Handout and Power of Words Pledge)
- It is recommended that the session be closed with the help-seeking information on slide 11.
- It is also encouraged to check in with students at a later date.

For questions relating to this activity contact [education@butterfly.org.au](mailto:education@butterfly.org.au)

For further information about BodyKind and to learn how to involve your young people 2023 survey go to [www.butterfly.org.au/bodykind](http://www.butterfly.org.au/bodykind)

Educator Guide

# PART ONE: Role of Appearance Teasing and Banter

Slide #	Educator Notes
Introduction to Body Kind Schools and Lesson (no slide)	Suggested introduction included on page 2 of this guide.
<p>1</p> 	<p><b>Prompt:</b> In 2022 Butterfly conducted the first ever national BodyKind Youth Survey on the body image experiences of young people, aged 12-18. Let's take a look at some of the findings.</p> <p><b>PLAY &gt;&gt;&gt; 2022 Body Kind Youth Survey Digital Clip</b>          YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ48BkHWhuE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ48BkHWhuE</a>          SafeShare.tv <a href="https://safesha.re/3pye">https://safesha.re/3pye</a></p>
<p>2</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask for students' reactions to the clip. What did they find interesting or surprising?</li> <li>2. Highlight the findings about appearance teasing (outlined on the slide).</li> <li>3. Discuss with the group the 2 questions on the slide.</li> <li>4. Reflections to group (using their hand if they feel comfortable):</li> </ol> <p><b>Prompts:</b>          "If you feel comfortable, put your hand up if you've heard someone being teased about their appearance i.e. how they look."          "Keep your hand up or put your hand up, if you've ever been teased about your appearance."          4. Acknowledge and make any observations ("wow, that was more than I thought" OR "That's good to see it's not happening as much as in other schools")</p>
<p>3.</p> 	<p><b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remind students the impact teasing and bullying can affect people in different ways.</li> <li>2. Ask students to write all the different feelings someone might experience and/or the things they might do, if they were teased about their appearance.</li> <li>3. Using pieces of paper and ask students to write these on the paper, scrunch them up and throw them in the middle of the room (you could use a basket/bin and ask students to try to throw into that!)</li> <li>4. Collect the paper and read a few of these out aloud (noting that these are anonymous).</li> </ol> <p><b>Troubleshoot</b> - If you find there are no suitable responses you can add in some to help progress the activity.  <b>Feelings</b> - embarrassed, ashamed, sad, lonely, unhappy, confused, mortified,  <b>Behaviours</b> - change how they look, go to the gym more, avoid parties and friends, cry or go really quiet, retaliate.</p>
<p><b>Body Kind Messages to share:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People look the way they look for many, many reasons. Some of these can be changed, some things cannot.</li> <li>• Hearing those feelings is tough, it's horrible to think that words can have such an impact. But when it comes to words about how we look, they have enormous power and can really sting and hurt – for a long time.</li> <li>• We can't always control what people say or the words they use about how we, or others look. Sadly sometimes, we might even be teasing and bullying our own body and appearance.</li> <li>• The words we use to and about our own bodies and appearance have power too!</li> </ul>	

Educator Guide  
PART ONE continued:

Slide #	Educator Notes
<p>4.</p> 	<p><b>Prompt:</b> How we talk to and about our own bodies has enormous power. Sadly, the words we use aren't always kind or respectful which doesn't help our body image and confidence.</p> <p>Affirmations are strong, positive, short statements that can help counteract some of the unkind things we might say to ourselves. Repeating them often makes a difference, because if we hear something often enough we will believe it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite the students to write a BodyKind Affirmation. They don't need to share this.</li> <li>• Facilitators can share an affirmation they use (or create one for this activity to share with students).</li> <li>• There are suggestions on the slide to help them and some ideas of how they might use them so they can read them often.</li> <li>• If you are a social media user, research shows that following positive affirmation pages can really help your self-esteem and body image!</li> </ul>
<p>5.</p> 	<p>But what about Banter?</p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> Butterfly Foundation also developed a resource called RESET a conversation about boys' body image. Let's take a look at the point in RESET where the young people discuss banter"</p> <p><b>PLAY &gt;&gt;&gt; RESET: A conversation about boys' body image (CLIP ONE)</b>          YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HDXSa4e4U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HDXSa4e4U</a>          SafeShare.tv <a href="https://safesha.re/3pkf">https://safesha.re/3pkf</a></p>
<p>6.</p> 	<p>Share with the group what banter is (this isn't to 'shame' banter, but instead help students identify when it has crossed the line).</p> <p><b>Prompt:</b> Banter is a really common communication style amongst young people. It typically involves two or more people, with the intent to have some friendly fun and is not intended to hurt someone (whereas teasing and bullying often is and does). But sometimes it goes too far.</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b> What are some of the signs to let us know that appearance banter has crossed the line?</p> <p>Suggested answers: Someone might have stopped laughing, they go red, or look visibly embarrassed, they get angry or narky, they go quiet, their body language changes. It can be hard to read, but this is why banter about bodies is always a dangerous and tricky topic!</p> <p><b>PLAY &gt;&gt;&gt; RESET: A conversation about boys' body image (CLIP TWO)</b>          YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srDWjXelIEQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srDWjXelIEQ</a>          ShafeShare.tv <a href="https://safesha.re/3pke">https://safesha.re/3pke</a></p>
<p>7.</p> 	<p><b>Prompt:</b> Within that clip, we heard someone say 'people should just 'toughen up'. Of course how people deal with things matters but what do you think about that response when something has gone too far?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with students the responses on the slide.</li> <li>• Note, some may have strong feelings about this based on what they hear at home.</li> <li>• Invite discussions around whether adopting this approach could be helpful and/or harmful? Can it be helpful, if so how and why? Could it be problematic, why?</li> </ul>

Educator Guide

# PART TWO: Develop a Body Kind Student Code of Conduct

Slide #	Educator Notes
<p>8.</p> 	<p>Part Two Introduction: Prompt: Imagine a world that was Body <i>Kind</i>, where people didn't tease, make jokes or nasty comments or use bodies as the topic to banter about? It would be pretty great wouldn't it, but we might need to leave changing the world to another day. For now, let's explore what we can do to make our school a Body <i>Kind</i> one – a place where all bodies and appearances are respected and treated with respect and kindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the slide to outline the purpose of a Student Code of Conduct (which many students will be aware of already.)</li> <li>• Ensure that it's clear that this code will specifically aim to include expected behaviours around appearance and body teasing and bullying.</li> </ul>
<p>9.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The slide offers guidance for the activity. This can remain on screen during the entire activity.</li> <li>• Assign small groups. Allocate 10 mins. Provide each group with a handout.</li> <li>• Ask students to discuss their Top 5 expected behaviours to help reduce/prevent appearance teasing and bullying at school.</li> <li>• Groups present ideas and common themes identified.</li> <li>• Work together to establish one whole class/year level/school Body <i>Kind</i> Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Present the Code; in writing, a poster or digital clip to display in common areas.</li> </ul>
<p>10.</p> 	<p>Prompt: The aim of the code of conduct is to help foster a Body <i>Kind</i> School, especially round language, dialogues and comments relating to appearance and body size/shape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the Body <i>Kind</i> Pledge to help students pledge an action so they can be kinder to their own body and also kinder to other peoples.</li> <li>• Provide one Pledge handout to each student to complete.</li> </ul>
<p>11.</p> 	<p>CLOSE SESSION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank students for their participation.</li> <li>• Encourage students to refer to their Body <i>Kind</i> Affirmation and their pledge occasionally as the more they practice the easier it is to be Body <i>Kind</i>.</li> <li>• Remind students that 'Talking Helps' and if anything that's been discussed today has been challenging or they need to talk to someone, there is always someone who will listen. If they don't feel it's a person in their life, the Kids Helpline and Butterfly Helpline are free and confidential services, where people are trained to listen and help young people talk about things that they are worried about.</li> <li>• Close session.</li> </ul>

For questions relating to this activity direct them to [education@butterfly.org.au](mailto:education@butterfly.org.au)

For further information about Body *Kind* and to learn how to involve your young people in the 2023 survey go to [www.butterfly.org.au/bodykind](http://www.butterfly.org.au/bodykind)



Student Handout

# BODY*Kind* STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## Activity Overview:

The 2022 Body*Kind* Youth Survey, reported an alarming 70% of young people, 12-18 have experienced negative comments or appearance teasing, with the vast majority occurring while at school.

While it is important that we build resilience to better manage these experiences, we also need to ensure that our schools, homes, sports and activity clubs are Body*Kind*. Holding each other and ourselves accountable to the language, dialogue and comments we make about appearance and bodies is one way we can help to do this! Let's go...

- Work in small groups, nominate a scribe and a spokesperson(s)
- Discuss the Top 5 expected behaviours in students that would/could help build a Body*Kind* environment, with the overarching aim to reduce appearance teasing and bullying in your school/classroom.
- Present to the class and use all ideas to develop a class/year level/school Body*Kind* Student Code of Conduct.

IDEA	EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR What is that students are expected to do or not do	Why is this important? What would this help to prevent?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Student Handout

## BODY *Kind* PLEDGE

I will be *Kind* to my body by:

---

---

---

---

---

I will be *Kind* to others by:

---

---

---

---

---