

# WELL-BEING SNAPSHOTS K-7

## POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

The best way to nurture your child's positive body image – the way they perceive their physical appearance – is to positively attend to *all* aspects of their development, evening the value they attribute across the “parts” of who they are.

Social and developmental psychology set frameworks for understanding how a person develops a positive sense of self. Areas of personal growth and development include social, spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual parts. If you imagine your child's sense of self like a filing cabinet, a variety of internal and external factors influence or contribute to each drawer. If any one drawer is over-filed and another neglected, we experience an imbalance in our sense of self.

Positive body image, which is just one file folder in the physical drawer of our cabinet, requires us to have a broader appreciation of and connection with our physical sense of Self. The other file folders include how we experience being in our body, such as how strong, agile, capable, and in control of our body we feel, or how we experience sensations that bring pleasure, discomfort, or pain. In addition, how do we balance input into each drawer, nurturing a positive sense of who we are spiritually, emotionally, socially, and intellectually? When balanced, each

drawer holds the same amount of value, not taking from one another, but contributing to our overall health, wellness, and self-worth.

We can contribute to our child's drawers positively or negatively. Paying attention to HOW we file into their drawers is really important. Being intentional about our messaging in each area of their development is one way to contribute more positively. We can help shape the way in which our kids come to know who they are in the world. Another way is where we spend our time and energy pouring into those drawers.

Be mindful that you are not your child's only main drawer contributors. Kids learn about who they are from social environments like churches, peer groups, schools, and teams. They take in feedback from multiple sources. You can, however, help your child learn what to file and what to shred, and how much value to place on the feedback. You cannot protect your child from the world's messages, but equipping kids with critical thinking tools grows their self-esteem – a fantastic filter for potentially harmful filing.

Consider ways you'd like to intentionally file positive messages and experiences into each drawer of their developing sense of self. How will you foster confidence in each area of your child's development? ●

### RESOURCE LINKS:

[Parenting in the Trenches Podcast, Series 3 Episode 3](#)

[Free to Be Talks](#)

