

Let's Get Creative

Creating a Body-Inclusive School using Art

Overview

Through activity and discussion, students will connect their individual body image to that of the community they're a part of at school. They will create materials that can be shared at school, to contribute towards creating a body-inclusive school environment.

 **Suggested grade level** Grade 4/5 with adaptation suggestion for grade 6/7.

Big Ideas

- Developing healthy relationships helps us feel connected, supported, and valued. (Physical and Health Education Grades 4-5)
- Understanding ourselves and the various aspects of health helps us develop a balanced lifestyle. (Physical and Health Education Grades 4-5)
- We experience many changes in our lives that influence how we see ourselves and others. (Physical and Health Education Grades 6-7)
- Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health. (Physical and Health Education Grades 6-7)
- Creative expression is a means to explore and share one's identity within a community. (Arts Education Grade 4)
- Engaging in creative expression and experiences expands people's sense of identity and belonging. (Arts Education Grades 5-6)
- Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating. (Arts Education Grades 2-8)
- Through art making, one's sense of identity and community continually evolves. (Arts Education Grade 7)

Key Concepts

- Appearance-based bullying is a significant source of stress and poor mental health amongst students. Being kind and compassionate to yourself and others, in and out of the school environment, can make a big difference in student mental health and well-being.
- It's important for students to become more aware of appearance ideals in broader culture and media.
- Students may need support to develop strategies to build and protect their own body image and to promote a body-inclusive culture.

- A body-inclusive school environment is inclusive of people of all body shapes, sizes, and appearances.
- Everyone can play a role in creating a body-inclusive school environment where all bodies belong.

Curricular Connections

Core Competencies

- **Communication** - Communicating
- **Thinking** - Creative Thinking, Critical and Reflective Thinking
- **Personal and Social** - Personal Awareness and Responsibility, Positive Personal and Cultural Identity, Social Awareness and Responsibility

First Peoples Principles of Learning

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Social Emotional Learning

- Self-awareness
- Social awareness
- Responsible decision-making

Curriculum Learning Standards

- Physical and Health Education Curricular Competencies
 - Describe and apply Strategies that promote a safe and caring environment (Grades 4-5)
 - Explore Strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community (Grades 6-7)
- Physical and Health Education Content
 - Strategies for responding to bullying, discrimination, and violence (Grade 4)
- Career Education Curricular Competencies
 - Demonstrate respect for differences in the classroom (Grades 4-5)
 - Appreciate the influence of peer relationships, family, and community on personal choices and goals (Grades 4-5)
 - Appreciate the importance of respect, inclusivity, and other positive behaviours in diverse, collaborative learning, and work environments (Grades 6/7)



Lesson Outline

Guidelines for creating an inclusive and trauma-informed environment to talk about this topic.

[Guidelines PDF](#)

🕒 Time

30 Minutes

📋 Materials

1. Slides: Let's Get Creative [PowerPoint Slides \(PPSX\)](#) and [Notes \(PDF\)](#)
2. Activity Sheet: Let's Get Creative
3. Supplies for making art posters

Opening

- Sample script to start the lesson - consider including these points:
 - Body image is only one part of who we are. It is part of our self-concept. Self concept is how we see ourselves. It includes our physical appearance, abilities, attributes and aspects.
 - For many reasons, it's easy for us to feel down about our bodies. We may be having a bad day. Or something might make us feel bad about how we look or who we are.
 - During those hard moments, it's nice to remember that we belong to something bigger. We can be admired for aspects of life that have nothing to do with how we look.
- Go through all the slides: "Let's Get Creative" - show examples of different styles of artwork and messages.

Activity

- Explain that students will create an art piece that celebrates all bodies.
- Invite students to think about and complete the Activity Sheet: Let's Get Creative.
- Art time: Invite students to use any type of materials available to create an individual-sized "poster" (e.g., physical, digital, audio). Remind them that these can be as unique as they want!

Closure

- If time allows (or continue this at a future week), gather students in a circle and invite them to share their message, one at a time.
- When students are done, ask them for permission to share these posters/messages with others. For posters, see if these can be put in a common space, like in a hallway, bulletin board, or library; if not, put them up in your classroom as a reminder about a shared value you've cultivated! For audio, see if they can be read out or shared as classroom or school announcements.
- Invite students to complete one of the exit slips found on beingmebeingus.ca

Additional Information

Adaptations for grades 6/7

- Consider adding any of these discussion prompts to the lesson:
 - Think about favourite artists, musicians, activists, or influencers that you know of who promote positive messaging around body image and bodies. How does it make you feel to view their feed and hear their messages? What sets them apart from other advertisers or artists?
 - Do you have a role model/idol that you look up to? This could be someone you know or someone you have never met. What is it about them that inspires you? What character traits would you list as inspiring? Challenge yourself to choose personality and character traits rather than physical traits.
- Allow students to research the topic before beginning their artwork.

Resources

- Being Me, Being Us: Creating a school community where every body belongs

Visit website at beingmebeingus.ca

Further discussion

- Consider brainstorming with students additional ways they can advocate for a more body-inclusive school environment.

Connect to Support

If you or a student is looking for emotional support or more resources on this topic, visit NEDIC.ca. It connects you to a confidential telephone helpline or live chat.

Adapted with permission from the National Eating Disorder Information Centre (NEDIC)
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Let's Get Creative Activity Sheet

Name

Date

Step 1: Think about and respond to these questions

Question	Answer
How can art promote a school environment where every body belongs?	
Compare two art pieces; how do they promote body image?	
Imagine how many people might see your art piece. How could it impact their view on body image?	

Step 2: Look at what you wrote above and circle 1 to 3 key words or phrases that you like.

Step 3: Use these words to help you get started on a poster-sized art piece. Try to create one that sends a message that all bodies are welcomed at school. To help with this, think about:

- What other words express the ideas you circled?
- How do images, shapes, or colours support these ideas?
- Think about how you might use your art piece to develop a campaign in your school. What message do you want to spread?

Step 4: Write a detailed plan for your teacher to approve before beginning the project.