

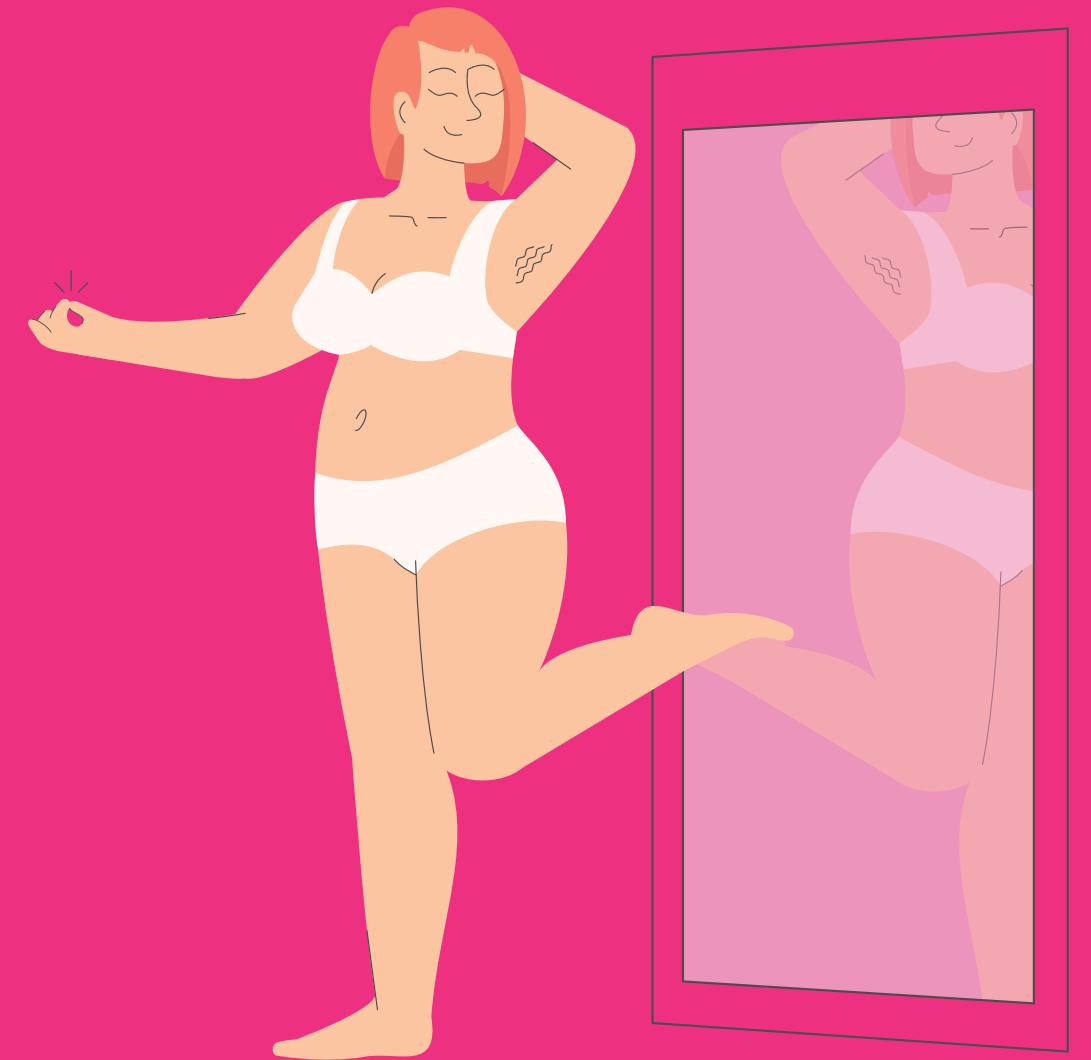
BODY IMAGE & SELF-ESTEEM

Confidence Over Comparison

WHAT IS "BODY IMAGE"?

- How you see yourself in the mirror or in your mind
- What you believe about your appearance
- How you feel about your body (height, shape, weight)
- How you sense, move, and control your body
- How you physically experience being in your body

Anyone can experience negative body image, regardless of gender, age, or other factors!



WHAT IS POSITIVE BODY IMAGE?

Feeling comfortable in your body and having a healthy relationship with how your body looks and feels.

Having a positive body image includes:

- Accepting and appreciating one's body
- Having a broad concept of beauty
- Practicing body neutrality, taking steps to care for one's body and appearance in ways that feel healthy and fulfilling



WHAT IS NEGATIVE BODY IMAGE?

Feeling dissatisfied with your body and its appearance.

The person may:

- compare themselves to others and feel inadequate when doing so
- feel compelled to monitor their body such as measuring, weighing, or looking in the mirror frequently
- feel ashamed or embarrassed
- feel uncomfortable or awkward in their body
- see parts of their body in a distorted way (body dysmorphia)

Negative body image can lead to mental health issues like depression, eating disorders, unsafe weight loss, unnecessary surgery, or hormone misuse.



WHAT INFLUENCES BODY IMAGE?

Body image is influenced by many factors including:

- Family
- Friends
- Culture
- & More

Body image is heavily influenced by the media we consume

- Influences what the “ideal” body should look like
- Bodies in the media are unrealistic and lack diverse representation



BE PRESENT, BE CONFIDENT HOW BODY IMAGE IMPACTS DAILY LIFE

- Practicing body neutrality and body positivity can promote our ability to interact with others at social settings and events (Example: shopping for new clothes, going to the beach, etc.).
 - When you aren't hyper-fixated on your appearance, you can be more present with what and who is around you!
- With higher self-esteem, you'll have the confidence to pursue incredible opportunities in education, building a career, or other personal growth endeavors!
- Seek partners and friendships in which you are truly loved, valued, and respected.



SELF-ESTEEM AND ITS CONNECTION TO BODY IMAGE

- Low self-esteem could increase body dissatisfaction
- Healthy self-esteem supports mental well-being and helps people avoid comparing their appearance to others.
- Positive thoughts, perceptions and attitude towards body image contribute to making a positive personality
- Positive body image helps build self-esteem in teens, while negative body image can lead to low self-esteem and distress.



PUBERTY AND BODY IMAGE

For those with a **vulva** and **uterus**...

Some changes include:

- Breast development
- Widening of hips
- Body hair growth in the pubic and underarm areas
- Menstruation
 - Cramps
 - PMS
 - Headaches
- Changes in skin
- Body odor



For those with a **penis** and **testes**...

Some changes may include:

- Body hair growth in the pubic and underarm areas
- Changes in skin
- Body odor
- Growth of penis and testicles
- A noticeable increase in height
- Vocal changes
- Increased muscle mass



During this time, it's completely normal to feel clumsy as your body goes through changes. It's also common to experience body dissatisfaction, especially if you're unhappy with how your body is developing or find yourself comparing it to peers who are also going through changes.

BODY IMAGE & GENDER

Body image ideals vary depending in aspects such as time period, place, and culture

Expectations of Women:

- Thin
- Be feminine; can't be too "bulky"
- However, more conversations are encouraging authenticity and individuality of our bodies!

Expectations of Men:

- Athletic
- Muscular
- High muscle mass and low body fat percentage

Expectations of gender-non-conforming individuals:

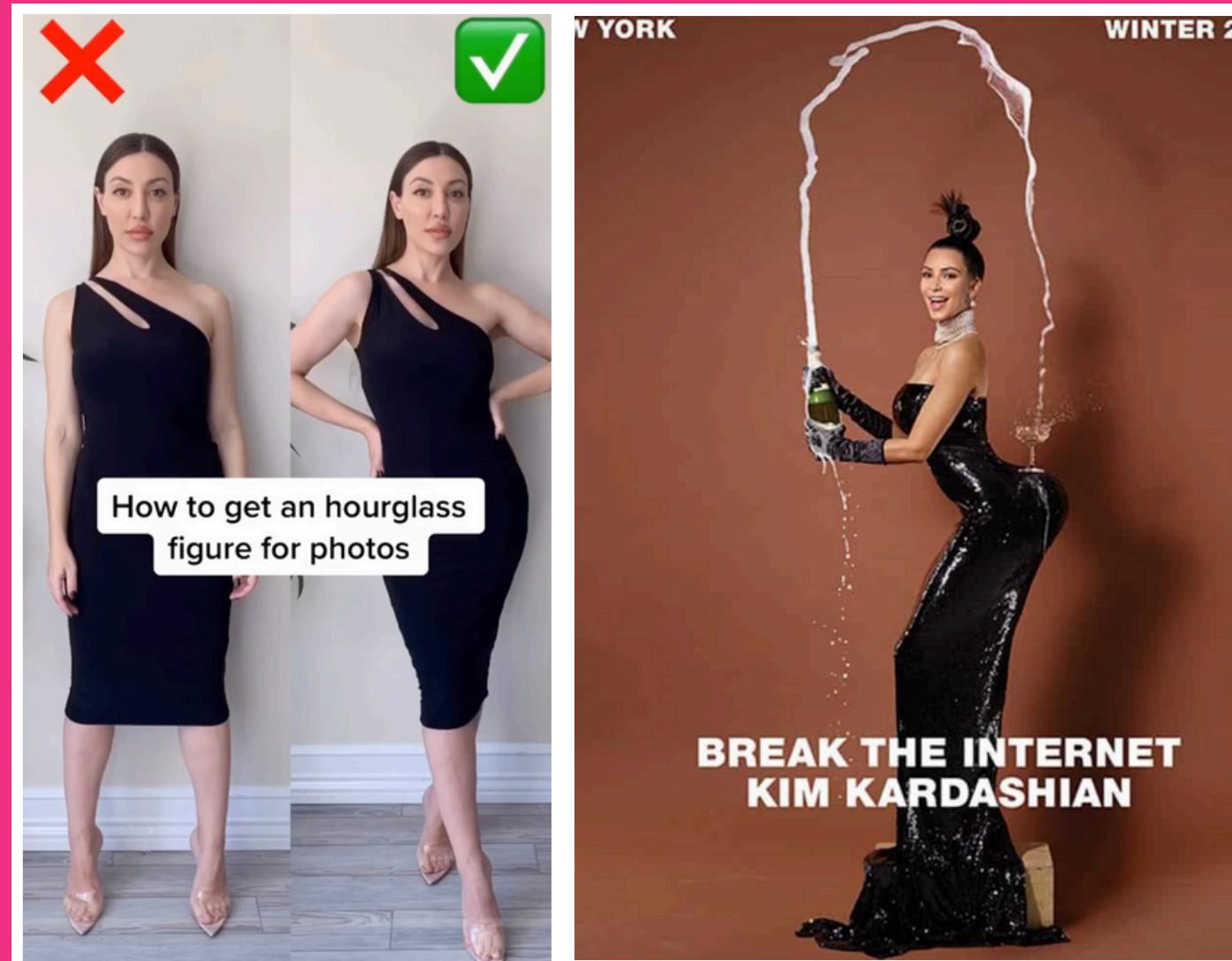
- Expected to conform to society's ideas of femininity and masculinity



THE UNFILTERED TRUTH

With the rise of AI, filters, and edited photos on social media, media literacy is key to building a positive body image

- A 2018 study found that “exposure to manipulated Instagram photos directly led to lower body image.”
- Social Media influencers often utilize...
 - Specific poses
 - Filters
 - Wealth
 - Editing
 - Shapewear



SELF-ESTEEM AND ITS CONNECTION TO SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Those with higher self-esteem and positive body image are more likely to...

- Advocate for their sexual and emotional needs with their partner(s) and therefore achieve empowerment!
- Make informed decisions that feel right to them (e.g when to start birth control)
- Seek out accurate information and advocate for themselves in medical settings.
- Decrease the likelihood of engaging in high-risk sexual behaviors.



TOOLS FOR BUILDING A HEALTHIER BODY IMAGE

Spend time with people who have a body-positive outlook.

Practice positive self-talk.

Wear comfortable clothes that you feel good in.

Appreciate what your body is capable of.

Be critical of media that fuels self-doubt

Spend less time on social media.

See yourself as a whole person, not an imperfect body part.

Practice self-care to support your body's abilities.



WAYS TO HELP FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND YOUTH BUILD A HEALTHIER BODY IMAGE

 **Avoid negative body talk- don't criticize your own or others' bodies**

 **Emphasize that health doesn't look the same for everyone.**

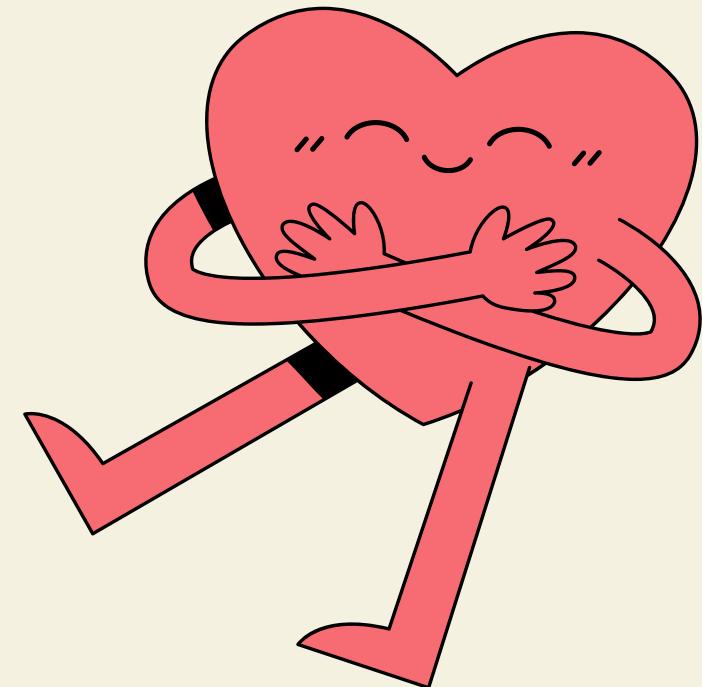
 **Affirm that beauty exists in all body shapes, sizes, and abilities.**

 **Give Compliments That Go Beyond Looks; kindness, innovation, courage, and intelligence**

 **Listen with compassion and validate their feelings when they share their struggles.**

 **Support Intuitive Eating by promoting nourishment, not restriction or punishment.**

 **Use body-positive language**





Q&A

**Have a question you'd prefer to discuss privately?
Feel free to reach out to Marie Garcia at
megarcia@fpawomenshealth.com
for a confidential conversation.**

THANK YOU

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*This presentation was made possible in part by the valuable contributions of our Community Engagement Interns,
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