



confident me

School Workshops
for Body Confidence



FIVE SESSION



WORKSHOP 4

Banish Body Talk

Workshop Guide for Teachers



Learning outcomes:

In this workshop students will:

- **Understand what is meant by body talk** and why people engage in conversations about appearance.
- **Recognise the problems that body talk can cause** and develop strategies to challenge the use of body talk.
- **Commit to taking action** to build their body confidence.

Resources you will need:

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

- **Workshop guide**
- **Workshop presentation**
- **Two activity sheets**
- **Going further sheet**
- **Films embedded in the workshop presentation:**
 - [“Body Talk Conversations with the Team”](#)
 - [“Body Talk Conversations with Friends”](#)
 - [“Body Talk Conversations with the Mirror”](#)
 - [“Body Talk Soundtrack to School”](#)

FROM YOUR SCHOOL

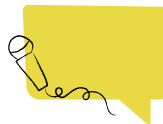
- **Projector (with sound) and whiteboard**
- **Students will each need a pen**

Optional

- **Spare paper**
- **Flipchart and markers**

What is body talk?

Body talk is any conversation or comment that reinforces and perpetuates appearance ideals. Whether a comment or conversation is intended as negative (e.g., ‘my thighs are too big’) or positive (e.g., ‘you look good – have you lost weight?’), all body talk has the potential to be harmful. This is because it places emphasis on appearance and appearance ideals at the expense of valuing our intrinsic qualities, actions, interests, and activities.



Overview of workshop modules



Total Time: 45 Minutes

Page
05

Introducing body talk

20 Minutes

What have we learned?

What are we learning today?

How do we talk about appearance?

What is body talk?

How do we use body talk?

Page
11

Challenging body talk

20 Minutes

What is the impact of body talk?

How can we challenge body talk?

Page
13

Be a champion for change

5 Minutes

What have we learned today?

How will you be a champion
for change?

Going further

Congratulations!




How to use this guide

Presentation

These are visual cues and learning objectives to help you steer the workshop and deliver it effectively.

Navigation Icons

These icons indicate planned activities for the classroom, such as playing a video or completing a worksheet.

Confident Me / 4 Banish Body Talk / Teachers' Guide			
Challenging body talk			
Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
 <p>What is the impact of body talk?</p>	<p>Explain that now that we have identified different examples of body talk, we are going to consider the impact of body talk. Play the "Body Talk Soundtrack to School" video.</p> <p>Initiate a class discussion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many times a day do you estimate body talk occurs? 2. What is the total effect of all these appearance-based conversations? 3. How can it leave us feeling? 	<p>Body talk occurs more frequently than people think. It can lead to focusing too much on appearance and not on what matters, and this can be harmful for self-esteem.</p> <p>These kinds of conversations can negatively influence our mood on a day-to-day basis and also in the long-term. We are left feeling that appearance is more important than it really is, and we could forget to focus on qualities and activities that we value and enjoy.</p>	<p>If students suggest positive reasons for engaging in body talk, use questions to help them see the other point of view and emphasise that both positive and negative body talk is counterproductive. Here are two examples to illustrate the point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person compliments a friend on their weight loss. That person enjoys the compliment when given, but later on, wonders whether they were liked a little less when they weighed more, and whether they might feel unhappy should they put on weight in the future. Three friends are together when one compliments another about their appearance, such as on their hair or muscles. The other friend is left unhappy because their appearance didn't warrant a compliment and feels they don't measure up to their friends' looks and expectations.

Suggested Time Allocation

This is the amount of time generally recommended for students, to achieve learning outcomes and improve body confidence. This may be adapted to suit the needs of your class.

Teacher Notes

Ideas and guidance for optimising the effectiveness of the workshop for students.

Teacher Actions – What to say

Numbered points in bold are instructions of what to **say** to the students. These highlight important questions to ask students to ensure key concepts are addressed with optimum impact on body confidence.

Teacher Actions – What to do

This text indicates instructions to help structure workshop activities, e.g., when you should play films or use worksheets. You can adapt these to suit the specific needs of your class.




Desired Responses from Students




Text not only indicates possible answers to look for from students, but also offers ideas for guiding their responses as they develop their understanding of key concepts and improve their body confidence.


Introducing body talk




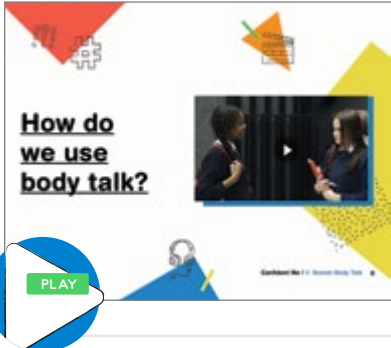





20 Minutes

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Welcome students to the 'Banish Body Talk' workshop. Remind students that the workshop series aims to help them explore helpful ways to manage appearance pressures and build body confidence.</p>		
	<p>Invite students to share what they learned in the previous workshop.</p>		
	<p>Briefly explain the areas of focus for today's workshop. Also remind students of the ground rules to help create a supportive, non-judgemental environment throughout the five-session programme.</p>		

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p><i>Initiate a class discussion.</i></p> <p>1. What different ways do we talk about appearance?</p> <p><i>Explain that when we are talking about appearance, we are engaging in body talk.</i></p>	<p> We offer compliments based on appearance; we might tease people based on appearance; we might comment on our own appearance by sharing what we think about our appearance or by comparing ourselves to others.</p>	
	<p><i>Invite a student to read aloud the definition of body talk.</i></p>		<p><i>Ensure students understand that body talk is any conversation about appearance, whether the intention is positive or negative. Reinforce that body talk includes comments about the appearance of anyone: you, your friends, celebrities, and even strangers.</i></p>

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Explain that we are going to watch a few short films about body talk.</p> <p>Play “Body Talk Conversations with the Team”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a class discussion. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Where/when is this conversation taking place? What is being said? Does it seem well-meaning or harmful? Why do you think they are talking about appearance? How do you think this episode makes all three of them feel about their appearance? 	<p>The conversation is taking place in a changing room at school, before they go off to play football.</p> <p>One of the students comments on another student’s weight and build, saying they might ‘blow over’. Another student joins in with similar comments. The student being teased eventually responds, and the student initiating the conversation acts like it was all a joke, but it doesn’t seem well-meaning.</p> <p>The student who initiated the comments might be talking about appearance as a way of wanting to feel better about his own body. Another student joins in, perhaps as a way to please his friend. The student receiving the comments wants to stand up to the others.</p> <p>The student who is being teased might feel insecure about not having a larger or more muscular body. The students doing the teasing might think about becoming more muscular. All three of them are likely to think more about their appearance and make comparisons with others.</p>	<p>In this instance, encourage students to consider the overall sentiment of the students engaged in appearance teasing rather than the long-term or unintended consequences.</p> <p>You may want to touch on some of the other reasons people engage in body talk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it’s a common form of greeting to make small talk the desire to fit in to receive reassurance about our appearance to reassure others about their appearance to express worry or anxiety about appearance to seem modest to prevent teasing to praise someone who you think matches appearance ideals

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>1. How do you think this conversation will affect their feelings about their appearance in the long-term?</p> <p><i>Instruct students to complete Activity 1 with their responses.</i></p>	<p>This situation is likely to be repeated. The student who was teased may become more focused on their appearance. They may start to change their behaviour, such as going to the gym more often.” said suited her.</p>	

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Play the “Body Talk Conversations with Friends” video.</p> <p>Instruct students to discuss briefly the details of the conversation in pairs.</p>		
	<p>Instruct students to complete Activity 2.</p> <p>Invite a few students to share their responses with the class.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where/when is this conversation taking place? 2. What is being said? Does it seem well-meaning or harmful? 3. Why do you think they are talking about appearance? 4. How do you think this conversation makes each of them feel about their appearance? 5. How do you think this conversation will affect their feelings about their appearance in the long-term? 	<p> The conversation is taking place as students arrive at the school gate to start their day. Two students greet each other.</p> <p> One student compliments the other on their hair. The student receiving the compliment acts self-consciously and rejects the compliment. The comment seems well-meaning.</p> <p> They could be talking about appearance because they want to say something nice, to make their friend feel good, or out of habit.</p> <p> The student giving the compliment could like the other student's new haircut or might feel a bit jealous. The student receiving the compliment probably feels pleased.</p>	<p>Reinforce that in the long-term this compliment can cause both students to increase their focus on their appearance.</p>

Presentation



Teacher Actions

Play the “Body Talk Conversations with the Mirror” video.

Instruct students to briefly discuss the details of the conversation in pairs.

Invite students to answer the following questions in a class discussion:

1. **Where/when is this internal conversation taking place?**
2. **What is this person thinking? Is it harmful?**
3. **Why do you think she is thinking about appearance?**
4. **How do you think these thoughts makes her feel about her appearance?**
5. **How do you think this internal conversation will affect the person in the long-term?**

Desired Responses

- ▶ It is taking place in a bedroom. She is looking in the mirror, probably at the end of the school day.
- ▶ She says, ‘Urgh. I look huge in this’. She wishes she had a flat stomach and comments that she looks ‘ugly’.
- ▶ She is trying on clothes, hoping she looks good in them. She is comparing her appearance with her friends, wishing she looked more like them.
- ▶ She will start to feel worse because she can’t live up to appearance ideals. She will keep comparing her appearance to that of her friends rather than focusing on her positive qualities or more important things.
- ▶ She may feel less confident about her appearance, which may make her feel self-conscious about taking part in activities.

Teacher Notes


Highlight that our inner conversations or our internal thought processes can be just as problematic and harmful as body talk conversations we have with others.

Reinforce that in the long-term, inner dialogues like this can lead to an increased focus on appearance that can cause other areas of life to suffer.

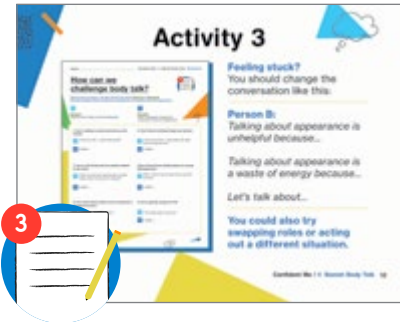
Challenging body talk



20 Minutes

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Explain that now that we have identified different examples of body talk, we are going to consider the impact of body talk. Play the “Body Talk Soundtrack to School” video.</p> <p>Initiate a class discussion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many times a day do you estimate body talk occurs? 2. What is the total effect of all these appearance-based conversations? 3. How can it leave us feeling? 	<p>Body talk occurs more frequently than people think. It can lead to focusing too much on appearance and not on what matters, and this can be harmful for self-esteem.</p> <p>These kinds of conversations can negatively influence our mood on a day-to-day basis and also in the long-term. We are left feeling that appearance is more important than it really is, and we could forget to focus on qualities and activities that we value and enjoy.</p>	<p>If students suggest positive reasons for engaging in body talk, use questions to help them see the other point of view and emphasise that both positive and negative body talk is counterproductive. Here are two examples to illustrate the point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person compliments a friend on their weight loss. That person enjoys the compliment when given, but later on, wonders whether they were liked a little less when they weighed more, and whether they might feel unhappy should they put on weight in the future. • Three friends are together when one compliments another about their appearance, such as on their hair or muscles. The other friend is left unhappy because their appearance didn't warrant a compliment and feels they don't measure up to their friends' looks and expectations.

Presentation



Teacher Actions

Explain that now that we understand how widespread and harmful body talk is, we must challenge it so that we can help reduce the pressures to match appearance ideals.

Arrange students in pairs and instruct each pair to complete the role plays on Worksheet 2.

1. How long can you continue a conversation without resorting to body talk?

Instruct each pair to join with another pair to present their role plays, demonstrating how they would divert attention away from body talk.

Invite one or two pairs to present their role plays to the class.

Facilitate a short class discussion.

1. How easy or hard did you find avoiding body talk?

2. Who managed to keep the conversation going the longest, and how did you achieve this?

Desired Responses

Teacher Notes

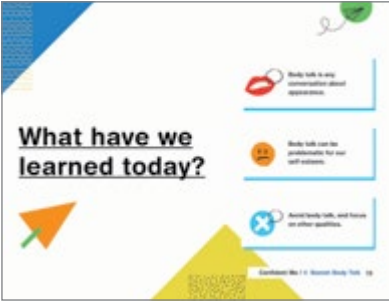

Role play is a really powerful way to help students change their behaviour. Working in pairs allows less confident students role play without exposing themselves to the whole group. Be careful not to reinforce any of the situations or scripts and make sure that students aren't singled out during role plays.


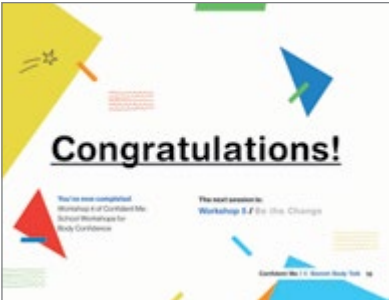
Some students may take this opportunity to point out that it's not easy to challenge body talk and might try to exclude it from their group's conversations. Acknowledge that body talk is a conversation piece because it helps people socialise and feel included in a group. Therefore, trying to stop this kind of talk might risk that individual being teased or even excluded. Explain that body talk can become a habit that people rely on in social situations. However, if students lead by example by avoiding body talk, they can help change their group's behaviour.

Be a champion for change



5 Minutes

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Ask for volunteers to recall what they learned in today's workshop.</p> <p>1. What have we learned in today's workshop?</p> <p>Invite volunteers to read out the key learning points from the slide, and summarise any points students have missed.</p>	<p>Students articulate the key messages in their own words.</p>	
	<p>Ask one or two students to share:</p> <p>What different strategies have we learned to avoid body talk?</p> <p>How else can you show your commitment to changing the way you personally talk about appearance?</p>	<p>For example, students could challenge body talk online or in face-to-face conversations, share what they have learned with other friends and family members or focus on starting conversations with others without using body talk.</p>	<p>Help students to choose a small and specific action, which will make it easier for them to keep to their commitment.</p>

Presentation	Teacher Actions	Desired Responses	Teacher Notes
	<p>Encourage your students to explore the ideas raised in today's workshop by completing the 'Going further' sheet before the next workshop.</p>		<p>If possible, offer to stay behind or speak to students at another time about anything you have covered in the workshop.</p>
	<p>Thank students for their participation in today's workshop, and draw the workshop to a close.</p> <p>Ask students to bring their notes with them to the next and final workshop, 'Be the Change'.</p>		

Next Steps

You have now completed **Workshop 4: Banish Body Talk** from the **Confident Me: School Workshops for Body Confidence**. The final workshop in the series is: **Be the Change**.

ABOUT THIS WORKSHOP:

The workshop brings together everything students have explored and learned during the course of the five-session programme.

Each workshop has already helped students identify when and why they should challenge the desire to match appearance ideals. In this final workshop, students are able to review and reflect on the ideas and their progress. They prepare to lead by example, planning how to improve the body confidence of themselves and others by creating a more positive culture around body image. The school's culture and community are important influences that can help or hinder students' progress towards improving body confidence. You may want to invite school leaders and patrons to this workshop to ensure teachers and leaders are working collaboratively to achieve a school-wide change.

Access the materials for this workshop session programme and others in the Confident Me: Five-Session Programme at: dove.com/selfesteem



