



# BODY IMAGE

**What is it?** Body image is how someone thinks and feels about themselves physically, and how they believe others see them. Someone's body image is affected by comparing to friends or people on social media, feeling like their body shape is not represented in the media, hiding their body because of being ashamed by it, birthmarks / scars / acne affecting how they feel about their looks etc.

**How can it affect mental health?** Negative body image can lead to feelings of low self-esteem, low mood or anxiety. It can also lead to disordered eating. These issues are all looked into separately within the Barlby Wellbeing tip sheets.

## Tips for managing negative feelings about body image:

### 1. Social Media



Check whether social media is affecting the way you feel about your body. There can be lots of pressure online to have the 'perfect' body. This can cause worry about how you look and compare with others online. Cut out the negative social media. There are positive influencers if you want to follow them as a replacement.

### 2. Focus on Positives



Focus on the things that you like about yourself and the parts of your body that you like. Write a list to remind yourself when you feel down.

### 3. Positive People



Spend time with people who make you feel positive about yourself. Remember that people value you for a wide range of reasons. Think about what your friends would say to you too – are you being tougher on yourself?

### 4. Self Care



If you are feeling very negative, doing things that are positive and that you like can be helpful. For example, listening to music that you love, talking to a friend or close family member, having a luxurious bath, listing good things about yourself etc.

### 5. Can Do!



Focus on what your body can do instead of negatives perceptions. When you play a sport, walk, run, dance or swim, that's your body in action. Try to be mindful of how amazing your body is and what it allows you to do. Be amazed and be thankful!