

What's a Girl To Do?



What are some things we can do to have a better body image? Moms, can you help us out? Discuss this around your tables and make a list. Each table can share several ideas with the group. Be sure to write some ideas in your journals also.



Help each other.

Whether we're relating to our moms, daughters or friends, we can help each other like our bodies better by:

- Talking positively about ourselves
- Choosing to do something fun together that makes us feel good about ourselves instead of worrying about our weight or trying another diet
- Taking up a new sport
- Going hiking (Getting active)
- Trying something that scares us a little



Applaud yourselves.

Peggy Orenstein, author of *Schoolgirls: Young Women, Self Esteem and the Confidence Gap*, found that middle school girls repeatedly dismissed their academic triumphs but willingly embraced their failures (*Shortchanging Girls* by Susan E. Murray, Lake Union *Herald*).

Talk about more than just your appearance. Show that you value your accomplishments. That "A" on a test. The new recipe that was fantastic. Running the 5K 5 minutes faster than last year. Celebrate yourselves! Orenstein found that without a strong sense of who they were, girls would never be satisfied by their accomplishments and would remain focused on their failures.



Do more than talk.

Some of the things we say about ourselves may be right. We may be a little overweight. We may need to exercise and firm up. We may sometimes dress sloppily.

Don't just talk about it. If you want to lose weight or exercise or dress nicer... do something!

Make healthy lifestyle choices. Don't diet. Learn to eat better. Begin by making one healthier choice. Once that's a habit, make another. One example is giving up soda. For every 20 ounces of Coca-Cola you drink, you're consuming 250 calories. Drink several glasses a day and you can easily down 1,000 liquid calories. If you're attempting to consume around 1,500 to 1,600 calories a day

in order to lose weight, you've almost blown your entire calorie budget on soda! Another important thing is exercise. Just adding ten minutes of walking a day is better than no exercise at all. Exercise with a friend—the time will go faster and you'll have someone helping to keep you on track.

Not sure what clothes look best on you? Shop with a friend. Find someone who has a style you like and ask her to help you.

Baby steps are fine, but make steps in moving forward.



Make home a safe place.

Let your home be a safe place when it comes to image. Talk positively. Don't criticize. Talk to each other about how words and comments impact you. Focus on your relationship and not on food or dieting or looks or calories or any of the other things that can innocently send messages that you're not really saying.



Be aware.

Be aware of what you say about yourself—moms and daughters—when you're with friends. Notice how often you say something negative. Change the subject when the topic gets on calories or food or dieting or image.



Let's end this section with a prayer time for grace and courage regarding this particular aspect of our lives.