

Every BODY is a bikini body: Fostering body positivity and supporting campers with eating issues

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Summary: This session will explore how to identify and foster body positivity and mindful eating with campers.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Participants will be able to recognize overt and covert messages that contribute to harmful body image narratives.
- 2) Participants will be able to describe the “Health at Every Size” movement.
- 3) Participants will engage in experiential exercises to support their social modeling around body image and food issues with campers.

Audience: Open to all camp professionals and staff

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Hershey Kisses (1 per person), music, paper and pencils, index cards, magazines with body focus

Room: Works best when room has large open space for experiential work

Opening (5 mins)

Goal: Asses the group on knowledge and feelings about the topic

Introduction: Who I am, goals for today's session.

Spectrogram/walk the line: Participants will be asked a number of questions or shown an image from a magazine that relate to, eating and body image. The group will place themselves in the physical space on the spectrum regarding their answers. Facilitator will ask different people why they placed themselves where they did.

Sound and movement circle: Do a sound and movement about how you feel when a camper displays an issue around:

Overeating
Body Image
Not eating
Over exercising

Possible Prompts for using the Spectrogram:

- 1) I can define size-sim: on one end of the spectrum, you 100% can define it and understand the principals, on the other side you have no idea what size-ism is. Please place yourself on the spectrum.
- 2) When I see a fat body I feel: On one end of the spectrum you feel 100% comfortable and that fat bodies are worthy in the world and on the other side you feel uncomfortable around fat bodies and believe a fat body needs to get healthy. Please place yourself on the spectrum.
- 3) I feel comfortable talking with campers about bodies, on one end of the spectrum is you 100% feel comfortable and have done it quite a bit, on the other end of the spectrum you feel very uncomfortable or haven't experienced this. Please place yourself on the spectrum.
- 4) About my own body: on one end of the spectrum is you feel 100% great about your body, you love it and are proud. On the other end of the spectrum you hate your body and are always on a quest to change or improve it. Please place yourself on the spectrum.
- 5) Eating issues: on one end of the spectrum I feel like I understand eating issues and their underlying causes on the other end I don't understand why people can't just "eat the food" or cant "stop eating the food" They need to work on their willpower.

Information sharing (15 mins)

Goal: Teach about overt and covert messages and the Health At Every Size Model

Overt and covert messages

Team list game: Break the room into groups and in 1 min they have to try to guess as many things, both covert and overt that teens say about their bodies or hear about their bodies. Compare the lists with actual results from a 12-year-old female.

<u>Actual Phrases from a 12-year-old between peers:</u>	<u>Phrases a 12-year-old reported hearing adults say:</u>
<p>You are fat You are anorexic Did you see how she... Her clothes are too tight She is a cow He is so scrawny I am skinnier than you are, I should do XYZ A kid is eating Oreos: you're such a fatty I have a food baby How did you even do XYZ being so big? Comparing comments She is so thick You don't get to wear that swim suit I am on a diet</p>	<p>I eat too much My rolls are so ugly I have to work out more She should not wear something like that That is not flattering to you My thighs are so big We have to get fit I'm fat I need to go on a diet</p>

Demystifying facts about the body, introducing HAES Model

True and False game: teams have true and false signs and have to guess regarding body based facts.

- Sugar causes hyperactivity in kids: False
- Athletes need a ton of protein to be their most successful: False
- 95% of people who lose weight gain it back in 1-5 years: True
- Dieting and compulsive weighing or exercising highly contribute to the development of eating disorders: True
- Obesity has links to early life trauma: True
- Weight does not dictate health: True
- Yo-yo dieting can increase your body fat percentage at the expense of muscle mass and strength, and can cause fatty liver, high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease: True
- Anywhere between **30 to 70%** of our body weight is influenced by our genes: True
- Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses: True
- You can tell someone has an eating issue by looking at their body: False

Discuss the Health at Every Size (HAES) Model and Principals

“We’ve lost the war on obesity. Fighting fat hasn’t made the fat go away. And being thinner, even if we knew how to successfully accomplish it, will not necessarily make us healthier or happier. The war on obesity has taken its toll. Extensive “collateral damage” has resulted: Food and body preoccupation, self-hatred, eating disorders, discrimination, poor health, etc. Few of us are at peace with our bodies, whether because we’re fat or because we fear becoming fat.” (www.haescommunity.com)

This chart can be cut-out for quick reference or made into a poster in the dining hall:

Respect

Celebrates body diversity;

Honors differences in size, age, race, ethnicity, gender, dis/ability, sexual orientation, religion, class, and other human attributes.

Critical Awareness

Challenges scientific and cultural assumptions;

Values body knowledge and lived experiences.

Compassionate Self-care

Finding the joy in moving one’s body and being physically active;

Eating in a flexible and attuned manner that values pleasure and honors internal cues of hunger, satiety, and appetite, while respecting the social conditions that frame eating options.

HAES in a Jewish context

- No “shanda” shame.
- Torah principals in relationship to our holy bodies.
- “*The human body was created b’tzelem Elohim--in the image of G-d (Genesis 9:6).*”
- “We learn from the virtue of *sh’mirat ha-guf* (guarding the body) what it means to be responsible for our actions, appreciate ourselves and our bodies, and lovingly care for this gift that we have been given.” (www.jewishlearningmatters.com)

Intervention Experientials (15 mins)

Goal: practice active interventions in real time

1) Mindful eating: Hershey kiss demo

Notice the chocolate in your hand. What color or texture do you see? As you unwrap it, what sounds do you hear? Bring the chocolate up to your nose, and inhale deeply. Do you notice any thoughts, feelings or associations? Smell the chocolate again. Do any critical thoughts come up like, "I shouldn't eat this"? If so, notice the thought, as then see if you can let it sail out of your mind coming back to the smell or texture. Place the chocolate in your mouth. Notice the flavor, richness, and texture. Notice how the chocolate changes in your mouth. See if you can avoid chewing for a moment. Notice how you feel participating in this exercise.

2) Joy movement dance exercise: experiential

Allow the group to move their body with the focus of joy rather than calorie/weight loss. Then do an exercise with only calories as the focus. Discuss with a partner.

3) New ways of talking about the body

With team, members discuss ways and situations you might encounter at camp.

4) Courageous conversations: food as control, banning weight and diet talk

Model for the group ways to discuss with campers at the table:

- What my body does for me
- What I love about my body
- What's unique about me
- What I can do to help it stay strong and healthy

5) Compassionate self-modeling

Have small groups discuss ways they hope to personally shift their own self-talk to be a better model for campers.

- My worth is not defined by my weight
- I am allowed to take up space
- I take care of my body by doing _____
- My body deserves love and respect
- I love my body as it is today
- Food isn't an enemy
- Fat is not a feeling

Closing (10 mins)

Goal: Educate about warning signs when to contact a professional and Q and A

Warning Signs of an Eating Disorder:

Alterations in Weight
Preoccupation with Body Image
Disruptions in Eating Patterns
Preoccupation with Nutritional Content of Foods
Changes in Exercise Patterns
Use of Laxatives, Diuretics, and Diet Pills
Mood Fluctuations
Physical Symptoms

Questions and Answers

Resources:

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/8-steps-to-mindful-eating>

<https://www.jewishlearningmatters.com/AC2-Protect-Your-Body-287.aspx>

Closing exercise: Make a circle and take one thing from the pot that you are holding onto from the talk.