



Body Positive Guidelines - A Guide for Parents and Families

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The Body Positive Guidelines have been developed by Gymnastics Australia – in consultation with body image and sports nutrition experts - to support gymnastics clubs, coaches, staff, gymnasts and families understand how, together, we can all contribute towards environments where everyone is supported to feel good in the body they have.

It is very common for parents to have a strong desire for their children to grow up having confident and positive relationships with their bodies. These guidelines have been designed to support all gymnasts, at all levels, ages and genders, by specifically outlining ways in which clubs can adopt a culture of positive and inclusive communication. In this way, gymnastics and gymnastics clubs can support families to promote messages and environments which reflect the desires you have for the younger people in your lives.

Tips for parents:

Take the time to reflect on the way bodies are spoken about at home

The language we use can be powerful; we all grow up with different messages about bodies – our own and others – in ways which can unintentionally filter down to our kids. Take the time to reflect on words and phrases you use at home & consider ways you may become more aware of using either neutral (neither good, nor bad) language, or steer away from appearance-based comments altogether.

Share these guidelines with your gymnast in an age-appropriate way and explain why they are important

The way we would speak with a younger child, an older child and a teen would naturally vary, and even young people in a similar age group may require different amounts or depth of information.

Including young people directly in conversations about body confidence is an important way to communicate boundaries (what is OK, and what is not OK) and understanding helpful pathways of communication (who would I tell if something doesn't feel OK). See resources below for a variety of helpful ways to speak with your young person about bodies and body image.

Encourage gymnasts to become more aware of the way they speak about bodies – their own and others – ensuring that it is clear that they would not be admonished or “in trouble” as they learn to shift their language.

Resources for parents:

Books	Websites
Love Your Body by Jessica Sanders (age 5-12)	Confident Body Confident Child - www.confidentbody.net
Your Body Is Awesome by Sigrun Danielsdottir (age 3-8)	Pretty Foundation – http://prettyfoundation.org
No Weigh! by Aggarwal, Darpinian& Sterling (age 12+)	Butterfly Foundation – www.thebutterflyfoundation.org.au
	A Mighty Girl – www.amightygirl.com