

PEOPLE COME IN MANY SHAPES AND SIZES!

Part of healthy living is being comfortable with your body. Parents, teachers and caregivers play an important role in helping children feel good about themselves.

Children's bodies change and grow over time. It is normal for children to gain weight before a "growth spurt" (an increase in height). When this happens, they may appear chubby. Most children will outgrow this when their height catches up with their weight.

Here are some tips to help children cope with changes in their bodies:

- ◆ Avoid making too many comments about your child's appearance as this puts too much focus on looks.
- ◆ Avoid making negative comments about your appearance; role-model acceptance of your own body.
- ◆ Avoid making negative comments about other people's appearance.
- ◆ Let children know you love them just the way they are.
- ◆ Teach children to value qualities such as honesty and kindness in themselves and in others.

Remember, there are a variety of body shapes and sizes that are healthy. Active, healthy living and self-esteem are more important to health than size or shape.

The most important thing you can do for your child is to role model healthy behaviours and attitudes. If you feel good about yourself, your children are more likely to feel good about themselves too.

For more information contact:

- ◆ HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian or www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian/