

**BODY
BLOCKS**
EMBRACE KIDS.



Building better body
image for early learners

Toolkit

Sept 2024



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Introduction

Body Blocks by Embrace Kids is a groundbreaking new program for early childhood educators that aims to prevent body image issues in young people by getting in early with messages of body appreciation.

It's the world's first publicly available, broadly disseminated body image program for early childhood educators, and empowers young children to develop positive relationships with food, movement and their bodies from the very beginning of their lives.

These engaging, evidence-based resources are based on research that has shown children aged 3-5 have already internalised ideas about bodies and appearance (Spiel, Paxton, Yager, 2013). By getting in early, we have the opportunity to build protective factors and reduce risk factors for the development of eating disorders and mental health issues later in life.

This toolkit contains relevant information and assets to assist with your participation in the Body Blocks by Embrace Kids program.

More information can be found at theembracehub.com





Sign up to stay up to date
with all things
Body Blocks at
bodyimageresources.com

About Body Blocks

Our key messages

- To raise awareness that it's never too early to start building a strong relationship with our bodies.
- To empower early childhood educators to be proactive in helping their students develop a positive lifelong relationship with food, movement and their bodies.
- To promote the vital role that educators (and parents) play in their child's development, including body image.
- To build protective factors and reduce risk factors for the development of body image issues and eating disorders later in life.
- To offer a practical, engaging approach to the prevention of body image issues from a child's earliest years.

The scope of the problem

24%

of childcare professionals
have seen body confidence
issues in children aged 3-5
years old

(PACEY, 2016)

19%

of childcare professionals
have seen children reject
food because 'it will make
them fat'

(PACEY, 2016)

31%

of childcare professionals
have heard a child label
themselves as 'fat'

(PACEY, 2016)

How you can get involved in Body Blocks



Early learning centres

- Early learning centres can download the **FREE** Body Blocks program here: bodyimageresources.com
- Share the news in your parent/caregiver newsletter -we've provided some suggested news items in this toolkit Hold a special Body Blocks staff meeting to watch the video modules together and discuss ideas for your centre

Educators



- Early childhood educators can download the **FREE** Body Blocks program here: bodyimageresources.com Sign up to the EK Support Squad for more advice and tips from our experts to support your kids: bodyimageresources.com
- Tell a friend! Encourage your fellow educators to sign up to the EK Support Squad at the link above

Parents



- Email or print out the letter supplied in this pack and take it in to your centre director along with the 'About Body Blocks' handout
- Sign up to the EK Support Squad for tips and advice about how you can promote positive body image at home: bodyimageresources.com



TIP

Everyone can get involved by spreading the word and telling parents, friends, carers, teachers and local businesses about the program.



Communication assets

Newsletter items

Here are some examples of things you can include in Storypark or your centre newsletter to share the Body Blocks message with parents and loved ones.

MESSAGE 1

Body Blocks by Embrace Kids: Building body image

At [centre name], we know how important it is to get in early to build our kids' body image. It's not about how they look, but how they think and feel about their body. Children with a healthy body image are more likely to feel confident about their bodies, and experience good mental health.

There are two important strategies we're working on in our centre to encourage positive body image, and we'd love it if you could continue them at home!

1. Ensuring that we are not saying negative things about our own or other people's bodies, weight and appearance.
2. Commenting and complimenting kids on what they can do and who they are, rather than what they look like. You can try this at home by praising them for qualities that are not linked to appearance, for example, their kindness, determination or sense of humour.

For more information about how you can support your kids to develop positive relationships with food, movement and their bodies, sign up for more from Embrace Kids at bodyimageresources.com.





Communication assets

MESSAGE 2

Body Blocks by Embrace Kids: Food is fabulous

We are committed to celebrating the joy of food and eating here at [centre name]. The language we use when talking about food really matters, and we have been talking to the children about the taste, smell and look of foods during mealtimes.

We are moving away from giving food labels, such as “good/bad” or “healthy/junk”, and focusing on the sensory elements and enjoyment of all foods.

Some ideas you might like to try at home include:

1. Encourage your child to listen to their body cues and talk with them about feelings of hunger or feeling full after their meals. Try to avoid pressuring children to eat more.
2. Use the real names when talking about food and avoid labeling foods as “good” or “bad”.

For more information about how you can support your kids to develop positive relationships with food, movement and their bodies, sign up for more from Embrace Kids at [bodyimageresources.com](https://www.bodyimageresources.com).



Communication assets

MESSAGE 3

Body Blocks by Embrace Kids: Movement is marvelous!

We are committed to encouraging kids to explore and have fun in a physical way. Our main focus is on the fun! We are trying to be great role models by joining in the activities, and talking about how good it feels to move our bodies, rather than talking about exercise as punishment.

You might like to also get into the fun by:

1. Role modelling this attitude to movement by riding, walking or playing with your child, dancing in the lounge room, or talking about how good you feel when you go to your gym or yoga classes.
2. Talking about physical activity as a fun thing to do, that makes us feel good, healthy and confident. Avoid any suggestion that we exercise to lose weight, be thinner or more muscular.

For more information about how you can support your kids to develop positive relationships with food, movement and their bodies, sign up for more from Embrace Kids at [bodyimageresources.com](https://www.bodyimageresources.com).

Email/letter for parents to send to your child's centre

Hi [Director's name],

As a parent, I'm really passionate about making sure [Child's name] develops a healthy and positive lifelong relationship with food, movement and their body. In fact, I think it's important for all young people - especially when you read concerning statistics like this:

- 24% of childcare professionals have seen body confidence issues in children aged 3-5 years old (PACEY, 2016)
- 31% of childcare professionals have heard a child label themselves as 'fat' (PACEY, 2016)
- 19% of childcare professionals have seen children reject food because 'it will make them fat' (PACEY, 2016)

Luckily, there is a solution! I've recently come across this great initiative from The Embrace Collective called Body Blocks by Embrace Kids. It's a FREE professional development program for early childhood educators to help them teach 0-8 year olds how to build a strong body image and positive ways of thinking about food, movement and their bodies.

Starting early with these lessons can make a huge difference in how our kids view themselves, and helps to improve protective factors and minimise risk factors for body image issues and eating disorders later in life.

I've attached a document here with some more information about Body Blocks by Embrace Kids. Would you be open to discussing the possibility of introducing this program to the team? I'm positive it would set [Centre name] apart as a place that not only educates our kids but also empowers them to grow and thrive.

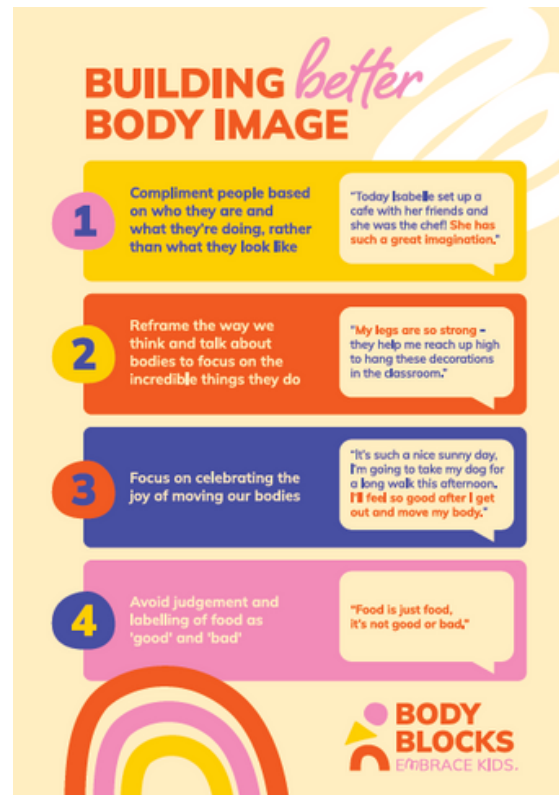
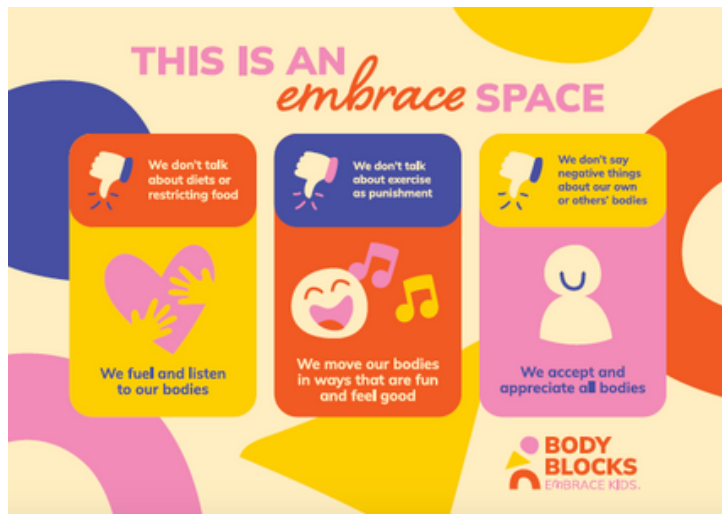
Thanks so much for taking the time to consider this. Looking forward to making [Centre name] even more amazing!

Kind regards,
[Your name]

Creative assets

[Download here](#)

Posters



Social media tiles

Tile



Caption

Our educators are proud to be doing Body Blocks by Embrace Kids to help our kids build a positive relationship with food, movement and their bodies.

At [Centre name], we know how important it is to get in early to build our kids' body image. It's not about how they look, but how they think and feel about their body.

Children with a healthy body image are more likely to feel confident about their bodies, and experience good mental health. Knowing this, we are committed to providing a positive environment where your child can come to learn about and discuss food & movement in a positive way.

If you want to learn more about Body Blocks, head to @theembracehub and theembracehub.com #bodyblocksbyembrace



Body Blocks by Embrace Kids is a world-first program to help early learners build a positive relationship with food, movement and their bodies - for life.

By attending [Centre name], you can rest assured that we're laying the foundations for your child to build these positive relationships. We're also helping to reduce risk factors for the development of eating disorders and mental health issues later in life.

If you want to learn more about Body Blocks, head to @theembracehub and theembracehub.com

#bodyblocksbyembrace



About The Embrace Collective

The Embrace Collective has a vision for a world where young people are empowered to grow and thrive, free from feelings of judgement and shame about their bodies. Through our suite of age-appropriate programs and resources, we can get in early to teach the message of body appreciation to young people; and educate their parents, educators and coaches to embed these positive messages in the environments where young people live, learn and play to minimise their lifetime risk of issues like eating disorders, depression and anxiety. Find out more: theembracehub.com

ABOUT TARYN BRUMFITT

Taryn Brumfitt is an award-winning filmmaker, bestselling author, internationally sought-after keynote speaker and the 2023 Australian of the Year. She is the co-Executive Director of The Embrace Collective and director of the inspiring documentaries EMBRACE and EMBRACE KIDS. Taryn is a fiercely passionate advocate for social change and her message has reached more than 200 million people around the world.

ABOUT DR ZALI YAGER

Dr Zali Yager is an internationally-recognised body image expert who has worked in research and academia for nearly 20 years. She is the co-Executive Director of The Embrace Collective and an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Institute for Health and Sport at Victoria University. Zali co-authored the Embrace Kids book with Taryn Brumfitt and was the body image expert advisor on the EMBRACE KIDS film.

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CONNECT WITH US!



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LinkedIn

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Web

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