

Body Image – Giving Compliments

KS3

30 mins

An activity to help students identify and share positive attributes about themselves and each other

What you need:

- White paper plates or A4 sheets of coloured and white paper (6 sheets per student)
- Markers for each student
- Space to lay out sheets of paper on the floor
- Small prize for the winning team

Method:

- Each student is given 5 sheets of paper or paper plates. They write their name on each sheet.
- The class gets into groups of 5/6. (It's best to allow the inclusion of friends)
- All groups should have the same number of pieces of paper. Therefore if there are groups of 6 the groups of 5 should be given 5 extra sheets of blank paper.
- Place all the sheets of paper in the centre of the group including any blanks
- In their group they must write a compliment on each sheet, relating to the person named on the sheet. The blank sheets can be used to compliment anyone in the team.
- Explain that the groups are competing with each other. Everyone should participate and write at least one compliment about themselves and at least one about another person in the group. All sheets must be completed - the more participation the more likely they are to win.
- Once the sheets are all filled in they should be laid on the floor in a line.
- If you wish you can monitor the comments and explain that any that are not appropriate/suitable can be exchanged for a blank which will need to be completed before they can finish.
- The first team to have a complete line of 30 sheets of paper are the winners.
- All teams should complete the line and then the sheets can be returned to the person named on the sheet.
- Ask them how it feels to read the compliments they have received? Was it easier to compliment others or write a compliment about ourselves? Discuss our common reluctance to recognise or acknowledge things we like about ourselves particularly in relation to our physical appearance.

Alternative:

- If the groups are supportive as an alternative you can ask them to write two compliments on each sheet of paper but using 3 sheets per person.
- On each sheet one compliment should relate to physical appearance and the other to something else.
- When the groups have finished ask them how they it feels to read the compliments they have received? Is there a difference reading and giving compliments about appearance vs qualities and other characteristics?

- Next provide groups with statistics from the recent SHEU survey in relation to perceptions of weight among students.
- Ask groups to choose 5 key points they would like to highlight from the statistics
- They should also suggest what they think may be the reasons for each of the points they have highlighted
 - E.g. You might choose to highlight the greater number of Yr10 girls than boys that wish to lose weight and your reason might relate to media images of models
- After 10 minutes groups feedback to the class
- Next in groups discuss what could be done in school to improve the confidence of young people in relation to the way they look.
- Each group then shares one or two of their best ideas.

Some statistics from the 2015 BaNES SHEU survey

| Q10. Percentage answering that they would like to lose weight. BaNES | | |
|--|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 31 | 30 |
| Girls | 56 | 68 |

| Q4. Percentage answering that they feel they are 'overweight'. BaNES | | |
|--|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 9 | 10 |
| Girls | 15 | 19 |

| Q10. Percentage answering that they would like to put on weight. BaNES | | |
|--|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 8 | 14 |
| Girls | 4 | 5 |

| Q4. Percentage answering that they feel they are 'underweight'. BaNES | | |
|---|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 7 | 7 |
| Girls | 5 | 5 |

| Q4. Percentage answering that they feel their weight is 'about right'. BaNES | | |
|--|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 77 | 80 |
| Girls | 65 | 63 |

| Q4. Percentage answering that they feel their weight is 'about right'. BaNES | | |
|--|------|-------|
| | Yr 8 | Yr 10 |
| Boys | 77 | 80 |
| Girls | 65 | 63 |

- Choose 5 key points you would like to highlight from these statistics
- Suggest what you believe are the reasons for each of the points you have highlighted
 - After 10 minutes groups feedback
- Discuss what we could do to in school to improve the confidence of young people in relation to the way they look.
- Feedback one or two of the best ideas.