

Body Positivity Program for Teens

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Need a feminist program idea? How about a body-positive, craft-centred discussion group for female-identified youth aged 11 to 14 (with flexibility). An ongoing once a month group that would serve as a space for young women to get together and talk about issues relating to bodies, food, self-image, self-worth, self-esteem, the media, and more.

The pressure on teenaged girls to have very specific and idealized bodies is extremely difficult to handle, and we believe it is radical to facilitate a group where it is okay for female youth to have these discussions. This program would be a comfortable and casual environment that would introduce concepts of body positivity, fat acceptance/fat activism, and health at every size. It would allow young teens to engage with crucial subjects, unlearn and challenge negative messages often found in mainstream media, and offer each other peer-to-peer support. By centring the group on a craft, it also allows the youth to be creative, learn new skills, and make art.

Some activities we think would work include...

Arts and crafts

- Collaging/vision boards
- Self-care kits
- Knitting/sewing/embroidery
- Paper dolls

Film:

- Documentary showings
- YouTube Film Festival

Guest speakers

- In-person or via Skype!

Leadership workshops

- Reaching out to community organizations who offer workshops like these, such as the YWCA!

You know your community best – work with community partners to construct workshop ideas that would engage young teens and encourage critical thinking.

Bodies are a contested site, one where many young people struggle with eating disorders/disordered eating, self-harm, self-hatred, and bullying. A program that creates a safe(r) space with positive, open, and critical facilitators who encourage participants to challenge notions of idealized and deviant bodies can radically change lives! ☐

