

10 Key Ideas About Dieting

1. **Be "full of yourself" in the very best sense of the phrase** and throw your weight around in healthy ways. Girls need to feel comfortable taking up space in the world and expressing their opinions without hesitation, even in the face of disagreement.
2. **"Weightism" is a form of prejudice.** Just as it's cruel and unfair to judge a person by the color of her body, it's prejudicial to judge someone solely by the size and shape of her body. Research suggests that "weightist" bullying put girls at greater risk for the development of low body-esteem and eating disorders.
3. **Bring a critical eye to media images.** Research suggests that, after reading popular fashion magazines, girls show increased signs of depression and a drop in body satisfaction. We need to teach girls to bring a discriminating eye to all mainstream media: to take what's healthy, and leave the rest behind.
4. **Choose powerful role models,** women and girls who are doing exciting and powerful things.
5. **Nourish your body with nutritious, "powerful" foods,** not junk foods.
6. **Fad diets don't work!** If a girl needs to lose weight for health reasons, she should see a school nurse, doctor or nutritionist and learn how to have a healthier all-around lifestyle.
7. **Tune into and feed all of your many appetites.** Many people eat for reasons other than to satisfy physiological hunger. It's important to teach girls how *not* to turn to food for non-nutritional reasons; e.g., when they're "hungry" for companionship, solitude, intellectual stimulation, or physical activity.
8. **No matter what your size, it's fun to move and exercise.**
9. **Relational health is a key aspect of overall well-being.** When girls know how to resolve conflicts, express themselves clearly, and build strong connections with others, they're less likely to use food as a source of comfort.
10. **It's not that looks don't matter...** but what matters *most*?