



Beautiful Girls Curriculum

Developed by:

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Lesson 1: I Love My Body/Song Analysis

Objective: Group members will be encouraged to identify parts of their body that they may feel negatively toward, and then are encouraged to re-define their concept of their body as a whole. Girls will also be encouraged to become more media-literate (i.e., aware of messages portrayed by media).

Materials: Construction paper, Markers, Song lyrics

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1: Introduction

- Group leaders will introduce the topic and their own experiences with body image
- Group members will discuss their prior experience with body image, including any areas of personal discomfort
- What is the most frustrating part of having a growing and changing body?
- Push them to find creative ways to view their body parts in a positive manner, and emphasize the necessity of a healthy body (e.g., one's thighs may feel large, but they are also strong legs that provide muscle and strength for running, biking, etc.)

Part 2: Song Analysis

- Girls will be given lyrics to songs which portray women in a negative or highly sexualized manner.
- In groups, girls will be encouraged to re-write the lyrics emphasizing the positive things about themselves, as identified earlier

Part 3: Name Tags & Group Rules

- Girls will write their names on folded sheets of construction paper to use as name tags
- Girls will establish a list of group rules (e.g., the group is a "safe area" for discussion; what is shared will stay inside the group).

Part 4: Debriefing & Group Rules

- What are the challenges to having healthy self image?
- What ways can we reinforce our own value?

Homework: Behavioral contract w/ parents (see appendix)

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Lesson 2: Find your spark

Objective: To assist the group members in targeting and identifying entertaining ways in which to exercise.

Materials: Magazines, Paper, Glue, Markers

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1: Introduction (10 minutes)

- Group members will be asked to introduce a definition of exercise
- Ideas presented will be written on a board, and then the group will be asked to use consensus to try to agree upon a definition of what constitutes exercise.

Part 2: Media Influence (30 minutes-including room clean-up)

- Group members will be provided with a wide variety of magazines. They will be asked to comb through the magazines to try to find pictures of strong women in the midst of physical activity, and make collages of these pictures
- The members will then present their collages, and will discuss their experience with the process.

Debriefing:

- Was it difficult to find pictures?
- How accurately are the women portrayed?
- What activities appeared to be the most popular?
- Any consistent characteristics of the women?

Part 3: Mindfulness and Running (35 minutes)

- Everyone will go to the track, with appropriate exercise apparel.
- Compliment relay- the girls will space themselves evenly on the track. Each girl will run one lap, and then stop to compliment one girl, at which time the complimented girl starts to run and the running girl continues with walking. This will continue until all girls have run one lap and complimented one of the girls.
- Buddy run- the girls will run in groups of three-four, with intervals of walking and running, this will help them to learn to accommodate each other's pace and skill level.

Part 4: Debriefing (5 minutes)

The group members will be led in a discussion of what they learned, and what they may change as a result of their experience, closing circle on the track.

Homework:

For session 7, the girls need to research a physical activity that interests them, and then present the activity to the group, including a demonstration, if applicable. If there is any paraphernalia, e.g. a baseball, that is accessible and essential to the sport, then they should bring that as well.

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Lesson 3: Lesson: Mirror, mirror, on the wall/Beautiful Poem

Objective: Critique messages inherent in media images regarding beauty, health, and femininity. Create a poem highlighting each girls' inner beauty

Materials: large white paper, magazines, glue, markers, template of two large mirror frames (draw on large paper prior to lesson), video of Photoshop image manipulation:

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U&feature=related>)

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1 (25 minutes)

- Leaders will discuss how the media and marketing use images to convey messages about beauty, health, and femininity by using examples, including video of Photoshop used for advertisements
- Girls will discuss which images they identify with and which they do not
- Discuss what inner beauty means and have each group member identify a quality of inner beauty that they see in at least three other people (make sure everyone is included)

Part 2 (15 minutes)

- Girls will cut out images from magazines which they identify with and use to fill their "positive" mirror
- Girls will cut out images from magazines which they identify with and use to fill their "negative" mirror

Part 3 (30 minutes)

- Girls will write a beautiful poem about themselves
- Poem will use the template BEAUTIFUL (NAME) written vertically and write a word or phrase using each letter
- Each word or phrase will describe something they like about themselves

Part 3 (25 minutes)

- Girls will share their mirrors and poems with the group and discuss how each relates to how they view themselves

Part 4: Debriefing and Closing Circle (10 minutes)

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Lesson 4: Mindful Eating (Part 1 Nutrition)

Objective: The group members will gain a more comprehensive understanding of nutrition and portion sizes.

Materials: Prepared foods, napkins, plates, utensils

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1: Food & Nutrition discussion (20 minutes)

- The group members will be led in a discussion about food and energy intake. The discussion is designed to bring to the forefront some of the ideas that we all hold about food, and some of the misconceptions that exist. The discussion will include the following questions:
 - What concepts/ hang-ups do we have for food?
 - How do you define the word “diet?”
 - What are your eating patterns through the day?
 - What problems/difficulties do you have with food, if any?
 - What types of food are most nutritional and what are some of your favorite ones?
- The group members will discuss their prior experience with cooking. They will be asked to share whether or not they take an active role in the preparation of evening meals, and what experience they have had with cooking. They will be invited to discuss ways that they can help empower their friends and family members to make healthy food choices. What are the challenges of being a middle-school student who wants to eat right?

Part 2: Cooking (50 minutes)

The group leader will walk the students through the preparation of a dish (no bake cookies) that require no cooking and minimal prep work.

Part 3: Eat! (10 minutes)

- Girls will be encouraged to eat their cookies, focusing on taste and nutrition. Specifically, leaders will emphasize imaging the food eaten as valuable nutritional resources entering the body and highlight how healthy food and nutrition can taste.

Part 4: Debriefing and Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Homework: For the next lesson, the girls will compose a family tree. To prepare, they should be asked to talk to their family about their heritage and identify one significant family story to share with the group (e.g., how their parents met, where their ancestors immigrated from and when).

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Lesson 5: Family Tree

Objective: Identify and discuss how your family and heritage effects who you are

Materials: large white paper, pencils, markers, template of family tree

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Prior homework: Each girl should discuss with her caregiver(s) their family heritage

Part 1:

- Girls will discuss what they know of their family heritage and what it means to them
- Leaders will have identified prominent role models (e.g., musicians, athletes) from different ethnic backgrounds and lead group discussion about how they have served as role models for others who identify with their ethnicity
- Leaders will discuss their own family heritage and how it has influenced them

Part 2:

- Girls will draw a large family tree of their immediate family, grandparents, and great-grandparents to the best of their knowledge
- Girls will identify at least one positive characteristic in each family member which they wish to emulate
- Backgrounds can be decorated with cultural and ethnically symbolic art

Part 3:

- Girls will be invited to share their family trees and praised for strengths
- Similarities across different ethnicities will be identified and discussed

Part 4:

- If time allows, girls can be encouraged to write a letter to someone on their family tree about how they serve as a role model. They can chose to keep their letter private or give to their role model.

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Lesson 6: Relationship Advertisements & Role Play

Objective: Define standards for future friendships and romantic relationships

Materials: large white paper, pencils, markers, template of relationship advertisement

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1:

- First, girls will discuss how friendships and romantic relationships are important to them
- Leaders will discuss characteristics of healthy friendships and romantic relationships, including unhealthy behaviors like relational aggression
- Group members will discuss how relationships will change as they enter high school and adulthood

Part 2:

- Girls will brainstorm a list of requirements of what they look for in a friendship and dating partner
- Girls will use templates to create an advertisement for future friends and romantic partners
- When finished with advertisements, group members will share and comment on one another's advertisements
- Strengths will be identified in every advertisement

Part 3:

- Girls will be placed into groups and given a script in which unhealthy behaviors are demonstrated in relationships
- Girls will be encouraged to re-write the script to behave in a more healthy manner
- Girls will share their skits to the group and discuss

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Lesson 7: Share your Spark

Objective: To share the types of physical activity that interests you.

Materials: none

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1: Your Spark (10 minutes)

Group members will present their physical activity, which they should have identified and investigated over the preceding week. The group members will be asked to answer the following questions:

- Have they ever participated in the activity?
- What particularly interests them in the activity?
- Are there any relevant outcomes that can be expected from participation?
- Pros and cons of participating in the activity?

Part 2: Mindfulness and Running (20 minutes)

- How can running be a way to process emotions?
- All girls will identify a problem, and then try to concentrate on that problem as they run the track.
- How does it feel to try to concentrate on a problem while moving?

Part 3: More Track Time (40 minutes)

The girls will be encouraged to come up with some of their own running/ activity games. Here are a few others:

- Partner run- each girl runs a lap with a partner, and the partners have to change with each lap. During the lap, discuss with your partner ways in which you think she is a successful, beautiful girl. What do you think that your partner struggles with? What is one new thing that you learned about your partner?
- Simon says- each girl takes a turn leading the group.
- Freeze-tag or two-person tag (pairs of girls link arms and an “open” person links onto a pair, thus making the end person become “open” and run to a new pair. Meanwhile an “it” person chases the “open” person trying to tag them to make them “it.” You are safe if you are on a pair and can’t be tagged “it”).

Part 4: Debriefing and Closing Circle (10 minutes)

The group will discuss what was enjoyable about the activities, and what was challenging. Each girl will be asked to share some words of encouragement to their peers. What is a reasonable pattern of activity for you?

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Lesson 8: Mindful Eating (Part 2 Mindfulness)

Objective: The group members will gain a more comprehensive understanding of mindfulness eating practices

Materials: Prepared foods, napkins, plates, utensils, blindfolds

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1: Discussion (30 minutes)

- Girls will discuss how they've tried to incorporate mindful eating into their lifestyles, including their family's reactions and favorite new recipes they may have discovered

Part 2: Cooking (50 minutes)

- The group leader will walk the students through the preparation of a salad and salad dressing that require no cooking and minimal prep work.
- Girls will be encouraged to experiment making their own salad dressings and to create a salad using foods that they may not associate with a typical salad (e.g., dried cranberries, nuts).

Part 3: Eat! (10 minutes)

- Mindfulness eating exercise. All group members will try to consume some of the food blindfolded.
- What sensory experiences do you block with distractions? How is portion affected by the lack of visual input?

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Lesson 9: Designing of mentor lesson

Objective: Create a 20-minute lesson for elementary school girls highlighting what it is to be a beautiful girl

Materials: as needed (e.g., markers, paper, pens)

Prep: Call local elementary schools and identify a willing and an appropriate after-school program to visit

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Part 1:

- Team leaders discuss how helping others can improve one's self efficacy and self-esteem. Also, mentoring can help educate younger girls about the Beautiful Girls program.
- Group will brainstorm what they want to teach elementary school girls (i.e., anything learned during Beautiful Girls up to this point)
- Group will vote and choose one lesson (two smaller groups can be created if needed, each choosing one lesson to prepare and teach to two separate groups of elementary girls)

Part 2:

- Girls will write a lesson and assign roles for each other to use when demonstrating to elementary girls
- Girls prepare any needed materials
- Girls will practice, team leaders will give feedback, girls may revise lesson and practice again

Part 3:

- Finalize any needed materials needed to present the next week

Review plans on visiting elementary school and what it means to represent the program

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(after school program)

Lesson 10: Teaching elementary girls

Objective: Visit elementary school and teach lesson identified in lesson #9

Materials: as needed

Length of lesson: 1.5 hours

Activity:

- Go to local elementary school and conduct 20-minute lesson to elementary school girls
- Team leaders can video tape or take photos to use during the Wow!

Debriefing:

- Return to middle school and discuss how the lesson went
- Ask each girl to answer the questions, "How did it feel to mentor the elementary school girls?" and "What does being a beautiful girl mean for your life after the program?"
- Prepare for the Wow! (can be extended during other Citizen Schools time). The Wow! can be a presentation to parents of what they presented to the elementary school girls or a Q&A panel type presentation where parents ask girls to discuss Beautiful Girls and what it means to be in the program. Other ideas include a "fashion show" where girls walk to a microphone and tell why they are beautiful on the inside or a video of a "movie documentary" made from footage from all previous lessons.