



Module 4 – Teacher’s Guide

How to Talk About the Body

Introduction

The SPEED programme module includes three activities of approximately one hour total to be carried out with the class. Materials and instructions for conducting the lessons are provided.

Module Objectives:

- Understand how often we make comments about bodies in general.
- Reflect on how comments about the body can make other people feel.
- Reflect on how we can change the way we talk about bodies to make others and ourselves feel better.

Duration:

1 hour

Materials:

Presentation slides and student worksheets

Teacher’s Worksheet

Activity 1 – How Do We Talk About the Body? (20 minutes)

The teacher encourages reflection on how and how often we talk about the body in general — our own and other people’s:

We may not even realise how often we make comments about people’s bodies and physical appearance. Comments can be positive or negative and can concern friends, ourselves, or people we see on social media.

There are many different contexts in which we talk about bodies — for example when we notice certain aspects while looking at a person or their photo or video, or when we are somewhere where the body is more exposed, such as at the gym, or even when we are alone in front of the mirror.

When we talk about the body, we often make judgements about the attractiveness of various body parts and express a wish that they were different from how they are. It is quite common for comments about our own body to be negative.





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We also comment on people's bodies in relation to weight or muscle tone, or even on aspects that cannot be changed, such as body shape or particular features. It is important to reflect on how and how often we talk about physical appearance, and what the consequences may be for ourselves and others.

Student Worksheet: How Do We Talk About the Body?

Activity 2 – What Are the Consequences of Talking About the Body? (20 minutes)

The teacher encourages reflection on the consequences that talking about the body in certain ways can have for ourselves and others:

There are different ways of talking about the body — whether to ourselves or to others — and comments about physical appearance can have serious consequences for some people.

When we make comments about bodies, we can have different intentions — such as giving a compliment, offering advice to a friend, or even criticising someone. We must always remember that sensitivity to the topic of the body varies from person to person, and that even a single comment can give rise to very negative thoughts and emotions.

This also applies to ourselves and to what we think when we look at ourselves in the mirror, in a photo, or in a video. As we have already seen, we often compare ourselves and express the desire to be different — thinner, more muscular, and so on.

Student Worksheet: What Are the Consequences of Talking About the Body?

Activity 3 – How Can We Change the Way We Talk About the Body? (20 minutes)

The teacher introduces a reflection on how we can change the way we talk about the body, and how this change can influence the way we and others feel:

Knowing that talking about the body and physical appearance can be difficult for some people, and that our words can greatly influence how they feel and behave, we can try to change the way we comment.

It is important to remember that comparison is never positive, and that using comments about the body to hurt someone can have serious consequences for that person.

It would be important to learn to appreciate ourselves — including our physical appearance — accepting it and valuing the elements that make each of us unique.



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Student Worksheet: How Can We Change the Way We Talk About the Body?



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