



IDEAS FOR PARENTS
WITH TEENAGERS



For more information and resources, go to
www.familyservices.govt.nz/parentingteens

For helpline support, phone Youthline on
0800 376 633 or free txt **234**

For email support, go to
parenttalk@youthline.co.nz



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

THE CHANGING BODIES OF TEENAGERS



IDEAS FOR PARENTS WITH TEENAGERS

THE CHANGING BODIES OF TEENAGERS

Teenagers undergo massive changes in body shape, size and looks. This can be quite distressing, you have to keep them calm and understand why this is happening to them.

BODIES

Young people are often unhappy with changes to their bodies. Many girls don't like getting rounder and developing body fat. Boys can get frustrated if they're not growing as fast as some of their mates.

BODY SHAPES

Talk about different body shapes. Point out that many models don't have normal bodies and that their shape can be the result of extreme unhealthy dieting.

Get them involved in cooking. Eat together.

HAPPY IN THEIR OWN SKIN

If they talk about how horrible their body is, talk about it. Talk about all the different people you know and if their body shape makes them happy or unhappy, or if you like them less.

BOOST THEIR EGO

Be positive about your teenager's body. Tell them when they look good. Be specific – "your hair looks really shiny."

DON'T BE MEAN

Jokes like "careful you'll break the chair" or nicknames like Fatty or Stick Insect might not have worried them when they were younger. But they can influence what they think about their body later on.

CHANGE

HEALTHY EATING

Serve healthy food. Takes turns with cooking and teach them about healthy living, healthy foods and the reasons for wanting to eat and live well.

HEALTHY EATING NOT DIETING

If they want to go on a diet, help them work out a healthy eating plan instead. Remind them crazy diets don't work and can damage their body.

DO IT TOGETHER

Eat healthily as a family. Make sure there are lots of fruit and vegetables in the house.

EXERCISE

Do physical things together. Go for a walk, take them to the pool, encourage team sports, kapa haka or hip hop.

Talk about their bodies. Get clothes that fit and are comfortable.

