



# Selfies & Self-esteem

## Information for Students



Selfies – pictures people take of themselves– are **everywhere**.

The craze is now so popular that it's guessed that **1.2 billion** selfies are taken every year in the UK.

There are lots of reasons why people take selfies: it could be to copy celebrities, for fun, to show off, as a way of talking to friends, or to express yourself.

In your Be Strong Online session with the Be Strong Online Ambassadors you will have looked at selfies and what the positives and negatives of the craze are.

On one hand, people are able to show others what they're up to and taking selfies could be a way of exploring their identity. It also gives people control of their own image – they can choose exactly how they want the photo to look.

But they could have a negative effect: taking lots of selfies makes people concerned with their appearance, instead of their personality and positive qualities. By sharing selfies on social media people are often looking for lots of 'likes' on their image and might feel bad about themselves if they don't get them.



**Try not to compare yourself to others** when it comes to selfies. Remember that there is more to you than just your appearance!



**Use selfies in a positive way** by sharing things that reflect your interests and hobbies or to spread positive messages.



Remember that most social networks have a **minimum age of 13**. This is in place to protect you so it's important to wait until you're this age before you sign up.



It can be tempting to listen to people who say 'picture or it didn't happen', but **you shouldn't feel pressured** to take selfies of everything you do just to prove to other people that you've done something or been somewhere.

## Self-esteem

Self-esteem is the way we think about ourselves.

If you have healthy self-esteem you generally feel good about yourself, be proud of your abilities and achievements, and accept yourself.

People with low self-esteem, on the other hand, don't feel good about themselves, focus on their failures and mistakes, and think mostly bad things about themselves.

Self-esteem is something which can change with your personal circumstances – such as your friends, family, achievements and setbacks. We all go through times where our self-esteem feels low and other times where it feels high. But it is possible to develop self-esteem.

The mental health charity Mind has the following tips for increasing your self-esteem, with more information available on [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk):

1. Do activities that you enjoy
2. Spend time with positive, supportive people
3. Be helpful and considerate to others
4. Try not to compare yourself to other people
5. Try to do regular exercise, eat healthily and get enough sleep
6. Be assertive – don't let people treat you with a lack of respect
7. Use self-help books and websites to develop helpful skills, like assertiveness or mindfulness
8. Learn to challenge your negative beliefs
9. Acknowledge your positive qualities and things you are good at
10. Get into the habit of thinking and saying positive things about yourself

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## Sexting

Selfies *can* have consequences if they become sexting.

'Sexting' is when people send and receive naked or near-naked photos online and on mobile phones.

Sometimes it's done to show off, show interest in someone, prove commitment or just as a joke.

But sexting can have extremely serious consequences for everyone involved - the person in the picture, the sender and the person who receives the picture.

If you're under the age of 18, sexting is illegal.

It's also important to remember that the internet isn't a private place. Photos can be very easily copied or sent to others. So what started out as a private conversation can become public very quickly and seen by anyone.

If you're feeling pressured to share naked images, remember:

- You should never feel pressured into doing something you don't want to do.
- Think before you post – once you send an image, it can be very difficult to get back. How would you feel if a parent, sibling or teacher saw this image?
- You can talk to Childline on 0800 1111 or visit the sites below for help and advice. You can also check out [www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/sexting](http://www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/sexting)
- If somebody is sharing an image like this, don't pass it on – it's illegal and could also be seen as bullying
- Have you been sent naked pictures? Or has someone made contact with you that you're uncomfortable with? In the UK, you can contact the Internet Watch Foundation ([www.iwf.org.uk/](http://www.iwf.org.uk/)) or the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre to report it ([www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk))

## More information

If you would like more information on anything you've discussed in the lesson today, have a look at the following charities, support groups and campaigns:

### **The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign**

The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Campaign involves a number of different programmes aimed at reducing bullying in schools. The Anti-Bullying Ambassadors programme which has trained over 20,000 young people across the UK to lead on anti-bullying campaigns in their schools, and the Anti-Bullying Pro website provides lots of information on bullying.

[www.antibullyingpro.com/](http://www.antibullyingpro.com/)

### **Beat**

The UK's leading charity supporting anyone affected by eating disorders or difficulties with food, weight and shape.

[www.b-eat.co.uk/](http://www.b-eat.co.uk/)

### **Body Gossip**

A campaign which explores people's experiences of body confidence

[www.bodygossip.org/](http://www.bodygossip.org/)

### **Changing Faces**

A charity for people and families who are living with conditions, marks or scars that affect their appearance.

[www.changingfaces.org.uk/Home](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk/Home)

### **Childline**

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to the age of 19. You can email them, go to their website for a 1-2-1 chat online, or call for free on 0800 1111.

[www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/Pages/Home.aspx)

### **Dove Self-Esteem Project**

Practical resources for teens, parents and teachers to boost self-esteem

## OUR PROGRAMMES...

### Diana Award



[www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)



@dianaaward

### Network/Training & Mentoring



[www.facebook.com/thedianaaward](http://www.facebook.com/thedianaaward)



@dianaaward

### Anti-Bullying Ambassadors



[www.facebook.com/antibullyingpro](http://www.facebook.com/antibullyingpro)



@antibullyingpro

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK!

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thedianaaward](http://www.facebook.com/thedianaaward)



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