

Tips for Choosing Classroom Resources

One way educators can [support their students in developing and maintaining a healthy relationship with food](#) and their body is to ensure that the resources used in the classroom are positive and inclusive. Use the questions below to help you choose resources for your classroom or school environment such as videos, books, posters, images, worksheets, assignments, and lesson plans.

Ask (where applicable), “Does this resource...”

- ☒ include a variety of foods without pressure, judgment, guilt, or commenting about food and bodies, by using neutral language, such as calling food by its name rather than ‘good’ or ‘bad’?
- ☒ emphasize the many aspects of healthy eating patterns, such as enjoyment, connecting with others, comfort, or energy to grow, play and learn?
- ☒ recognize that factors such as taste, culture, traditions, access, and availability play a role in food choices?
- ☒ promote exploring food and building food skills?
- ☒ avoid individual comparisons of food intake and/or body sizes?
- ☒ show that healthy bodies come in a variety of shapes and sizes?
- ☒ focus on the overall benefits of physical activity, eating well, mental well-being, and sleep?
- ☒ promote physical activity and movement for people of all sizes and abilities?
- ☒ teach students to critically assess how food and bodies are portrayed in the media?

My resource does not promote a healthy relationship with food and body, now what?

When assessing a resource, you may find that it does not “check all of the boxes” for promoting a healthy relationship with food and body.

Here are a few tips for what to do:

- ☒ If possible, find a different resource or tool that better promotes a healthy relationship with food and body.
- ☒ Edit or remove sections of the resource that may lead to judgment or shame about food and bodies.
- ☒ If it is not possible to edit or remove, (for example, in a documentary), help your students develop critical literacy skills. Talk with your students about a healthy relationship with food and body. Ask them questions like:
 - Does this resource judge how, what, or why we eat (for example, labels a food as ‘junk’ instead of calling it by its name)?
 - What does this resource tell me I should value, think, or believe?
 - Is this resource different from what I have learned, think, or value?
 - Does this resource make judgements about body size, shape, food choices, or ways of eating?
 - What other ways might there be to look at this topic?
 - Does this resource favour certain ideas, values, or groups while leaving others out?

Developing critical literacy skills is especially helpful in later grades. It can help students learn to question health and media messages that over-emphasize appearance and undermine a healthy relationship with food and body.

More support

If you have questions about finding resources that promote a healthy relationship with food:

- visit www.ahs.ca/SchoolNutrition and click on Healthy Relationship with Food
- contact an AHS public health dietitian at publichealth.nutrition@ahs.ca

For K – 3 educators, if you’d like suggestions for books that align with a healthy relationship with food, please contact us at publichealth.nutrition@ahs.ca.

