

# Free to Be...

## TALKS

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INFORMATION PACKET



**IN A WORLD OF "FLAWLESS" WE ARE EMPOWERING YOUTH TO  
HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO BE THEMSELVES TO THE FULLEST.**

**DEVELOPED BY:**

RENAE REGEHR, RHEA OWENS, & HILLARY MCBRIDE



# Free to Be...

## WHAT IS FREE TO BE?

Established in 2015, Free To Be is a research-backed positive body image program for youth in grades 5-8 (ages 10-14). It empowers boys and girls by developing media literacy awareness, cultivating individual and group strengths, building resilience to social pressures and nurturing a positive social environment. While the program is primarily run in classroom settings it can easily be tailored and successfully adapted to other contexts and settings.

## OUR MISSION

To remove imposed distractions that negatively impact body image so youth can cultivate their entire selves and develop into leaders who will positively impact their communities and families.

## SESSIONS

The Free To Be program is a total of 6 sessions. Each 1 hour session is interactive and includes small and large group discussions, role-playing, brainstorming, sharing, and positive activism activities.

## WHY THIS MATTERS

**We have finite mental resources and our appearance is one aspect of who we are.**

We don't want young people's limited attentional energy being used up on unhelpful or destructive thoughts or beliefs about their appearance or body. We want young people to cultivate their potential, to become stronger, healthier and more resilient so they are capable of uncovering meaning and purpose in their life.

## THE IMPACT

We started bringing Free To Be to schools in Vancouver and surrounding cities in 2015. In September 2017 we licensed Free To Be to be available for teachers, parents, counsellors and community leaders across North America.

- Over **2500 youth**, ages 10-14, have become equipped through the program since 2015
- Over **50 facilitators** trained and licensed **across North America**



## RESEARCH STATS

- **FTB Increases positive body image, body image coping strategies,** and decreases body dissatisfaction for both girls and boys.
- Majority of students have agreed or strongly agreed the program is **enjoyable, interesting, informative** and they **would recommend** the program to others.

*"I think Free to Be is a great program for kids who are self-conscious about themselves to love their looks/body."*  
- **Grade 6 student**

*"I really enjoyed Free to Be because everyone felt comfortable and we learned a lot and had a lot of fun along the way."*  
- **Grade 7 student**

## WHAT THEY SAY:

*"Free To Be is a valuable program that has enabled our students to enhance their overall well-being. They are developing strategies to build positive relationships and demonstrate the ability to care for themselves and others in a supportive and cooperative manner. The mental, physical and social growth has improved relationships across the school with students taking on leadership roles and run programs that develop themselves, others and the community in a positive way."*

-- Shahzyah Juma, Teacher & Community Coordinator for Lochdale and Windsor Elementary, Burnaby

# Free to Be...

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand and explain the **impact of appearance pressures**
- Identify messages that reinforce and maintain appearance pressures
- Reflect on personal experiences where **happiness and confidence was not contingent on appearance**
- Understand the extent to which images in traditional and social media are changed
- **Identify problems that arise from viewing manipulated images**
- Describe and develop **healthy coping strategies** for bad body image day
- **Demonstrate body image flexibility** by identifying multiple ways different bodies have positive and **diverse capabilities**
- Identify **strengths and internal characteristics** students like about themselves



- **Identify activities and values**, not based on appearance, that are important to them
- Formulate plans of how to encourage a **positive body image with their peers**
- Explain and **identify common stereotypes**
- Understand the **negative impact of constraining stereotypes**
- Develop **counter-narratives** to common stereotypes
- Identify creative ways to respond to stereotypes in social situations
- Develop and create a **plan for social change** related to body image and material covered in program
- Identify a **future version of themselves**, which they admire, not based on appearance.

# WHY CHOOSE *Free to Be*...



## YOUTH FEEDBACK

*"I think Free to Be is a great program for kids who are self-conscious about themselves to love their looks/body."*

*"Thank-you very much for coming to teach us all of these wonderful & useful things I learned a lot that I could really use and benefit from."*

*"I really enjoyed learning how photoshopped photos were fake. To be honest, I didn't know that those photos were fake!"*

*"I really enjoyed the whole unit. I learned a lot and it changed my perspective and affected my knowledge a lot in a positive way."*

**70%-80%**

ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Are dissatisfied with their bodies.

**1/3**

TEENAGE GIRLS

Who are at a healthy weight try to diet.

**40%-70%**

ADOLESCENT BOYS

Are dissatisfied with their appearance.

**9 HRS**

PER DAY

Of entertainment media consumed by the average youth.

**INSTAGRAM**

RANKED WORST

For adolescent health.

**55%**

PLASTIC SURGEONS

See patients who want to improve their selfies.

**BOTTOM LINE**

**IT MATTERS**

Girls and boys grow up seeing limiting portrayals of what femininity and masculinity encompasses.

The unrealistic depictions we see in media are the norm in our Western culture and we are being negatively affected mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

## MORE YOUTH FEEDBACK

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*"I never knew they Photoshopped photos ads, and you taught me so now I can help people who feel bad about themselves."*

**- Grade 6 student**

*"My favorite activity was when we did our posters or skits because we got to explain what we learned and we taught some stuff that people might not know."*

**- Grade 6 student**



## MORE LEADER FEEDBACK

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*"FTB was an incredibly relevant and engaging program that closely tied in with our BC curriculum. My students were able to grapple with mature topics in a very age-appropriate way, and I noticed that it led to deeper questions about the topics we had discussed."*

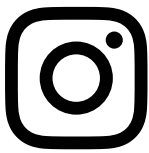
**Lindsay - Grade 6 & 7 Head Teacher**

*"NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF  
THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE  
THE WORLD; INDEED, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT  
EVER HAS."*

MARGARET MEAD

# WILL YOU JOIN US?

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU:  
**RENAE@FREETOBETALKS.COM**



/FREETOBETALKS



WWW.FREETOBETALKS.COM



/FREETOBETALKS



## RENAE REGEHR

REGISTERED CLINICAL COUNSELLOR  
& FOUNDER OF FREE TO BE TALKS

Through her MA of Counselling Psychology she developed and tested a research-based curriculum, Free To Be. Renae is also a contributing blogger for the Huffington Post and her work has been featured in Time, Darling, Good Men Project, and Everyday Feminism among others. Renae is passionate about equipping others with practical tools to thrive now, irrespective of what their appearance is.

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WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU!  
TO CHAT FURTHER, CONTACT:

604.309.5309  
RENAE@FREETOBETALKS.COM

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