

# The Body Project E-Portfolio

## Did You Know?

\*the following facts are brought to you by the National Eating Disorders Association

- The best-known environmental contributor to the development of eating disorders is the sociocultural idealization of thinness.
- By age 6, girls especially start to express concerns about their own weight or shape. 40-60% of elementary school girls (ages 6-12) are concerned about their weight or about becoming too fat.  
This concern endures through life.
- Over one-half of teenage girls and nearly one-third of teenage boys use unhealthy weight control behaviors such as skipping meals, fasting, smoking cigarettes, vomiting, and taking laxatives.

## Facts About VT Students

In the last 12 months, 33.4% of Virginia Tech females reported personal appearance as “traumatic or very difficult to handle” (Virginia Tech National College Health Assessment).

## More Information About Disordered Eating

**National Eating Disorders Association** - If you are concerned that yourself or somebody around you may have or be at risk for developing an eating disorder, use this resource. The NEDA website has helpline information, a screening tool, as well as statistics regarding eating disorders. <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/>

National Eating Disorders Association Screening: This short screening designed for people ages 13 & up, can help determine if it's time to seek professional help.

<https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/online-eating-disorder-screening>

**Virginia Tech HEART Program** (Healthy Eating Assessment and Referral Team): This multi-disciplinary team addresses disordered eating for students at Virginia Tech. The team includes a dietitian, counselors, and medical and rec sports personnel. Students can make an appointment by contacting the Case Manager at Schiffert Health Center 540-231-6445, or by discussing HEART with a counselor, medical provider, or dietitian on campus. If you are calling on behalf of another person, we cannot discuss any individual patient without their consent. But, we can give you information about the program and general advice about how to handle certain situations.

**VT Counselors** are available through the Cook Counseling Center. Set up an appointment by phone 540-231-6557. Check out their website for all offerings and services <https://ucc.vt.edu>

\*All Virginia Tech Resources are services which are included in your tuition. There are no additional fees.

## Great Resources for Nutrition

### **VT Nutrition Services**

[https://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/ourservices/nutrition\\_services.html](https://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/ourservices/nutrition_services.html)

**Healthy Hokie Workshops- Nutrition 101** a great place to start if you are looking to learn more about nutrition fundamentals, what impacts a healthy weight, building healthy plates, and online resources.

<https://hokiewellnes.vt.edu/students/workshops.html>

**Registered Dietitian** - Individual appointments with a registered dietitian for personalized nutrition counseling are available through the Schiffert Health Center Medical Clinic. Call 540-231-6444 to make an appointment.

**Human Nutrition Food and Exercise Nutrition Counselors** - Individual nutrition sessions are available with upper-level nutrition students in the human nutrition, food, and exercise field of study. Sessions cover basic nutrition and wellness tips and support.

**Social Media Resources** - If you are looking for healthier, body positive messages to have on your social media feed, these are some great accounts and pages to follow:

@rawbeautytalks, @victoriagarrick, @healthyisthenewskinny,  
@aerie @bodypoispanda, @hummusapie, @beauty\_redefined, @thebodypositive,  
@jennifer\_rollin

### Hokie Wellness:

- If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Hokie Wellness at [healthed@vt.edu](mailto:healthed@vt.edu)
- If you are interested in registering for more Healthy Hokie Workshops, please visit <https://hokiewellness.vt.edu/students/workshops.html>
- Follow us on social media
  - [Facebook](#)
  - [Instagram](#)
  - [Twitter](#)

## EXTRA PRACTICE RESPONDING TO FAT TALK

### Fat Talk List:

1. I wish I could be as skinny as you! **It makes me uncomfortable when you talk about my body that way.**
2. Do I look fat in this? **I think a better question is how do you feel in that outfit?**
3. You look amazing! How much weight have you lost? **Weight is just a number, however, I feel great!**
4. No one will date me if I don't drop a few pounds. **If someone is only dating you for your body perhaps they aren't the right person for you.**
5. You think you're fat? Look at my love handles! **I don't like to hear you talk about yourself that way. Your personality is what is important to me!**
6. Did you see the girl he is dating? She is such a whale. **Please don't talk about other people like that in front of me. I'm sure she is a genuine person.**
7. She totally shouldn't be wearing those pants. Her butt is huge. **It's not up to you to decide what she can wear; I bet she feels great in those pants.**
8. I look disgusting at this weight. **When you talk about yourself like that it makes me uncomfortable.**
9. I'm so fat. **Let's not talk negatively about our bodies, they allow us to do so much!**
10. She has gained so much weight since last semester. **That is rude of you to say, you don't know what is going on in her life.**
11. I'm trying to get ride of everything that jiggles, except my boobs. **Why would you want to get rid of pieces of yourself? I like all of you!**
12. I think I'm going to try that new diet. Do it with me; you could afford to drop a few. **No.**
13. Buy it a size smaller, it'll be good motivation for you. **I am happy with where I am today. That is a complete waste of money.**
14. My thighs are so big. **Your thighs allow you to do so many things. Anyways, let's talk about something else.**
15. I am too fat to wear a swimsuit. **If you don't wear a swimsuit you can't have fun with all of us at the pool. We're going to have such a good time!**
16. I hate my flat chest. **I wish you wouldn't talk so negatively about yourself.**

### **Some of the common responses to the Fat Talk list:**

"You're perfect just the way you are!"

"You're beautiful, don't say that."

"I don't know what you're talking about, you look awesome."

"Instead of going on that diet let's go to the gym together instead."

"You're not fat, you can eat as many cookies as you'd like!"

A lot of these statements, though well-intentioned, keep the conversation focused on "body". Body positivity or acceptance is not the same as body love. Body acceptance is a healthy relationship that a woman can have with her body through which she can appreciate what it allows her to do as well as honor qualities that she likes. By telling someone they are "beautiful" or "perfect" it can actually reinforce the thin-ideal by placing an emphasis on physical appearance as a measure of someone's worth. The purpose of this workshop series is to create a space for women to begin to appreciate and accept their bodies, rather than try to manage them with unhealthy weight control behaviors. In the same vein, we don't one you to moralize certain foods or behaviors as "good" or "bad". However, it is not beneficial to one's health if they eat 10 cookies or 6 pieces of pizza. Why? How might that make them feel? Most likely sluggish and sick to their stomach. If possible, try to redirect the discussion from food, exercise, or physical appearance and instead towards positive language strategies to encourage body acceptance.

### **What is fat / bulk talk? (Body Talk)**

It is a conversation focused on the negative aspects of your body or someone else's body that can lead to feelings of shame or embarrassment. Women typically engage in fat talk, conversation that focuses on the need to lose weight to achieve the thin ideal, while men typically engage in bulk talk, conversation that focuses on the need to gain muscle mass and definition. Sometimes body talk may sound like a compliment but it keeps the conversation on unrealistic standards placed on us by society and the media.

### **Why is it a problem?**

Fat / bulk talk is linked with body shame, body dissatisfaction and eating-disordered behavior. It does not motivate women and men to make healthier choices or take care of their bodies; in fact, the feelings of shame it brings about tend to encourage the opposite. Body talk is contagious! The more you talk negatively about yourself or someone else, the greater the chance that whoever you're talking to will do the same.

### **How can you start talking more positively about your body?**

You can ask a friend to be “fat talk” or “bulk talk” free with you and make a pact to avoid making negative remarks about your body or someone else’s body. You can spend a day consciously recording how many times you engage in body talk and try to cut back to half of it the next day. If you feel unhappy with a certain body part, make a list of other parts of your body you appreciate. Ask a friend, family member or romantic partner what they appreciate about you and start reminding yourself of these positive traits!

### **Here are several STRATEGIES to combat body talk:**

- a) Changing the subject - “Are you doing anything fun this summer?”
- b) Calling the speaker out on it - “That was rude. You don’t know what she’s going through.”
- c) Ignoring it - “Anyways, what were you saying before that?”
- d) Putting it back on the speaker - “How would you feel if someone said that about you?”
- e) Complimenting someone in a meaningful way - “She’s such a great friend, it doesn’t matter what she weighs.”
- f) Recognizing how the body feels or what it can do - “I don’t know how much my weight has changed but I feel great!”
- g) Pointing out a cost to trying to achieve the “perfect” body.

### **THINGS TO AVOID WHEN RESPONDING TO BODY TALK**

- a) Saying “You look perfect.” Perfection is an impossible standard.
- b) Giving weight loss, bulking, or how to improve the look of the body advice. This continues to place value on weight and appearance.
- c) Joining in the negative fat / bulk talk conversation by insulting your body in order to fit in. This will make you feel bad about your body and perpetuates the cycle.