

Parent Viewing Guide

Bad Messages, Good Eyes

This guide helps you continue the conversation about body image, media messages, kindness, and belonging after watching the explainer.

Ages 6–9

What this video teaches

Kids learn that:

- Some messages from screens or people are **bad messages**.
 - Many pictures online are **changed by computers**.
 - They have a **friend voice** inside that tells the truth.
 - Words can hurt — or help.
 - If something doesn't feel good, they should **tell a grown-up**.
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Before watching

Ask:

“What do you think a bad message is?”

or

“Has anything ever made you feel bad about yourself?”

Keep it simple and calm.



After watching

1. Practice the Message Decoder

Say together:

1. Who made this?
2. What do they want me to think or do?
3. How does it make me feel?

Then say:

“If it makes you feel bad about yourself or other people, it’s a bad message.”

2. Practice the Friend Voice

Ask:

“What can your friend voice say?”

Examples:

- “That’s not real.”
 - “I don’t need to change.”
 - “I’m more than how I look.”
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3. Teach about being left out

Say:

“Being left out hurts.”

“But it does not mean you are not special or important.”

“Other kids don’t get to decide who you are.”

Repeat this over time.



4. Teach the Kindness Test

Ask:

“Would you say that to a good friend?”

If not, don’t say it.

Family rule

We don’t talk about bodies.

We talk about kindness, effort, and being a good friend.

One sentence for your child

Say this often:

“You matter even when someone doesn’t see it. We see you, and all the people who love you see it too.”

You can also add sometimes:

“You don’t have to match someone else’s idea of beauty to be enough. You already are.”

Ages 10–13 (Tweens)

What kids this age face

- more comparison to classmates
- group chats and social ranking
- body changes
- fear of standing out
- pressure to fit in

They may not always tell you when they’re hurting.



Conversation starters

- “What kinds of posts make people feel bad about themselves?”
- “Do filters change how kids see their real bodies?”
- “Have you ever felt worse after scrolling?”
- “What does belonging mean to you?”

Listen more than you speak.

Upgrade the Message Decoder

Teach:

1. Who made this? (friend, influencer, company, algorithm)
2. What do they gain if I believe this?
3. How does this change how I see myself?

Say:

“If a message makes you feel smaller or ashamed, it’s not healthy.”

Friend Voice – stronger version

Practice swapping thoughts:

- “I’m ugly.” →
“**That’s not true.**” / “**That’s my brain being mean.**”
 - “Everyone else looks better.” →
“**Online isn’t real life.**”
 - “I don’t belong.” →
“**Something is wrong with the message, not me.**”
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When your child feels like an outsider



Use these exact lines:

“Being excluded is painful, but it’s not a measurement of your value.”

“Other people don’t get to decide who you are.”

Then add:

“You don’t have to change to deserve respect.”

“You don’t have to match someone else’s idea of beauty to be enough. You already are.”

The Kindness Test (tween version)

Before saying or posting:

- Would I say this to a good friend?
 - Would I be okay if this was said about me?
 - Would I want an adult to hear this?
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Red flags to watch for

- constant self-blame
 - hiding their body
 - deleting photos repeatedly
 - sudden diet rules
 - secret accounts
 - withdrawing from friends
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One sentence for your tween

“You don’t have to match someone else’s idea of beauty to be enough. You already are.”

Ages 13+ (Teens)



What teens are dealing with

- constant comparison
- sexualized images
- likes/comments as social currency
- public rejection
- identity pressure
- performance culture

They want independence — but still need emotional safety.

Start with respect

Say:

“I’m not here to control you.”

“I’m here if something feels off.”

“You don’t have to explain everything.”

Deepen the Message Decoder

Ask:

- Who profits from this message?
- What insecurity is this pushing on?
- Would I think this way without social media?
- Does this help my life — or sell something?

Teach:

Insecurity is profitable.

Inner advocate (teen version)

Practice:



- “I’m ugly.” →
“That’s insecurity talking, not reality.”
 - “Everyone else looks better.” →
“I’m comparing myself to edited highlights.”
 - “I don’t belong.” →
“I’m not the problem — this environment is.”
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When they feel excluded

Say clearly:

“Being excluded is painful, but it’s not a measurement of your value.”
“Others don’t get to decide who you are.”

Optional:

“Belonging that requires you to change yourself isn’t real belonging.”
“You don’t owe anyone a different version of you.”
“You don’t have to match someone else’s idea of beauty to be enough. You already are.”

Kindness Test (teen version)

Before posting or speaking:

- Would I stand by this in a year?
 - Would I say this to my younger self?
 - Could this be screenshot?
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When to seek support

- extreme body hatred
- restrictive eating
- substance use to cope
- isolation
- identity collapse



- self-harm talk

Professional help = strength, not failure.

One sentence for teens

“You don’t have to match someone else’s idea of beauty to be enough. You already are.”

“You don’t exist to be judged.”

“Your value isn’t negotiable.”

Final reminder for parents

You are parenting against:

- billion-dollar platforms
- edited bodies
- algorithms
- peer pressure

Your voice still matters more.

