



Work2BeWell Monthly Newsletter

March 2026

March often brings messages about change—new routines, new goals, and sometimes pressure to “fix” ourselves. At Work2BeWell, we want to pause and shift that conversation. Healthy body image isn't about loving how you look every single day or meeting unrealistic standards. It's about learning to respect your body for what it does, listening to what it needs, and treating yourself with kindness, even on the days that feel hard.

In a world filled with filters, comparisons, and highlight reels, it can be easy to forget that bodies are meant to be different. This month, we're focusing on building a healthier relationship with your body, rooted in self-acceptance, balance, and compassion. Because your worth isn't measured by appearance, and taking care of your mental health includes how you talk to yourself and your body.

How Are You #Working2BeWell?

“The way we talk to ourselves matters – be your own biggest supporter.”
– Yara Shahidi
Acclaimed American actress, producer, and activist



As Yara Shahidi reminds us, the way we speak to ourselves truly matters. March is a chance to check in on that inner voice, especially when it comes to our bodies. Choosing healthier self-talk doesn't mean ignoring insecurity; it means responding with patience instead of pressure. When we learn to support ourselves the same way we would a friend, we create space for a more balanced, respectful relationship with our bodies... a space built on care, not comparison.

Mental Health Tip for March: Notice Your Self-Talk.

Pay attention to how you talk to yourself about your body, especially on tough days. If you catch yourself being critical, pause and ask:

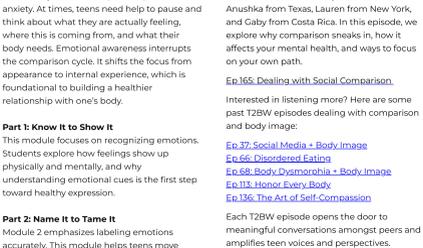
- **Would I say this to a friend?**

Try replacing judgment with something neutral or kind, like:

- **“My body is doing its best today.”**

You don't have to love your body every day—respecting it is enough.

What You'll Need for March



Know It, Name It, Feel It: Work2BeWell's NEW Identifying Feeling Modules

Healthy body image isn't just about appearance. It's also deeply connected to emotions. When teens struggle with body image, what they're often feeling underneath is insecurity, shame, comparison, pressure, and anxiety. At times, teens need help to pause and think about what they are actually feeling, where this is coming from, and what their body needs. Emotional awareness interrupts the comparison cycle, it shifts the focus from appearance to internal experience, which is foundational to building a healthier relationship with one's body.

Part 1: Know It to Show It
This module focuses on recognizing emotions. Students explore how feelings show up physically and mentally, and why understanding emotional cues is the first step toward healthy expression.

Part 2: Name It to Name It
Module 2 emphasizes labeling emotions accurately. This module helps teens move beyond “I'm fine” or “I'm stressed” and develop more precise emotional vocabulary, empowering them to respond rather than react.

Part 3: Feel It to Heal It
The final module teaches healthy processing strategies. Instead of avoiding or suppressing emotions, students learn coping tools and reflection practices that support resilience.

Click Here to Access:
[W2BW's Identifying Feelings Modules](#)

Talk2BeWell Podcast: “Dealing with Social Comparison”

Scrolling and stressing about everyone else's life? Check out our new podcast where Dr. Robin Henderson, Work2BeWell's Chief Clinical Officer and Chief Executive, Behavioral Health for Providence Oregon, talks with three of our National Student Advisory Council teens. Anushka from Texas, Lauren from New York, and Gabby from Costa Rica. In this episode, we explore why comparison sneaks in, how it affects your mental health, and ways to focus on your own path.

Ep.165. Dealing with Social Comparison.
Interested in listening more? Here are some past T2BW episodes dealing with comparison and body image:

- [Ep.17. Social Media + Body Image](#)
- [Ep.65. Disordered Eating](#)
- [Ep.68. Body Dysmorphic + Body Image](#)
- [Ep.113. Honor Every Body](#)
- [Ep.136. The Art of Self-Compassion](#)

Each T2BW episode opens the door to meaningful conversations amongst peers and amplifies teen voices and perspectives.

Through open, honest conversations, we help students better understand one another and work towards breaking the stigma around mental health.

Want to easily find episodes to accompany lesson plans and activities? Check out this ready to go list of all the [T2BW Episodes categorized by W2BW Curriculum!](#) It's a great resource for Counseling Offices and Wellness Rooms!

From Our National Student Advisory Council (NSAC) Advisor & Special Projects Intern

“Make Something Happen: Growing Into the Changemaker You Already Are”



On the first day of my Freshman year of high school (about one million years ago, in 2018), the Principal gave a speech at the first-day assembly which changed my life. He told us that all of us had the power to “make something happen,” we just had to choose to do so. I knew right in that moment: I wanted to make something happen. That dream is what led me to join the Work2BeWell National Student Advisory Council in 2019.

What must happen in a world now dictated by the double-edged sword of the digital ecosystem, where the rise of social media has catalyzed an out of control youth mental health crisis? For the founding students of Work2BeWell, the answer was clear: use the power of the internet and social media to fight back against the trends. We made the National Student Advisory Council, so that students like me could get the chance to make something happen about mental health in our communities, the country, and the world at large.

Now I'm in my Senior year of college, seven years after I hopped onboard with Work2BeWell. As it turns out, my time on the NSAC not only provided me and other amazing NSAC alumni with the opportunity to make the change we wanted to see as teens, but professional endeavors in young adulthood. I now hold the privilege of serving as Advisor to the current National Student Advisory Council, where I get to pull from my past experiences to help these amazing teens make things happen. But more often, I sit in awe as I learn something new from them each day and admire how far this program has come.

In this month of March, we once again cast our world-wide search for the next cohort of changemakers. NSAC applications are now LIVE, and are open to any high school student (or equivalent in any country) who will not be graduating in the 2025-2026 school year. If you are a young person that wants to make something happen and curb the mental health crisis (or you support one as a parent, teacher, mentor, etc.), the NSAC is a place where that is possible. If that sounds incredible to you, then visit our website to get started (it goes without saying, I can't recommend it enough).

Finn Jacobson (he/him) is a fourth year student at the University of Oregon, majoring in Linguistics and Chinese with a minor in Global Studies. Born in Portland, OR, Finn began his involvement with Work2BeWell in 2019, when he joined the #BeWell Student Advisory Council, an early iteration of the National Student Advisory Council, helping shape the program's national expansion. He co-developed the Access, Education, and Activation Framework for the National Student Advisory Council, helped finalize the organization's branding, and led the Activation Team from 2020 to 2022. At Oregon, Finn served as Student Body Vice President in his sophomore year, advancing sustainability initiatives and securing recurring funding for student food access programs. He is a Wayne Morse Scholar, a member of the Chinese Flagship Program, is active in state and federal-level legislative advocacy, and spends his 9-5 designing no-code AI-integrated systems that streamline wildfire dispatch operations for Dust Busters, a company based in Eugene, Oregon. As advisor to the National Student Advisory Council, Finn mentors high school students nationwide as they develop mental health advocacy initiatives and leadership skills. His responsibilities include providing guidance on projects, facilitating team collaboration, ensuring youth perspectives remain central to Work2BeWell's decision-making, and providing all other support for student teams in their world-changing work.



<https://www.wamswag.com/shops/work2beWell>

Partnership Update

Stronger Together: Building Healthy Body Image with Work2BeWell & Dove

March invites us to reflect on growth—not just how we look, but how we feel about ourselves. At Work2BeWell, we know that healthy body image is deeply connected to mental health. The way young people see themselves impacts confidence, relationships, academic performance, and overall wellbeing. That's why partnerships that center empowerment and education matter—especially in a digital world filled with comparison.

One powerful example is our alignment with Dove and its **Proud to Be Me Body Positivity** curriculum. For years, Dove has worked to challenge narrow beauty standards and promote body confidence among young people. The Proud to Be Me curriculum provides research-based tools and classroom-ready resources that help students build media literacy skills, question unrealistic appearance ideals, and strengthen self-esteem.

Together, Work2BeWell and Dove share a common belief: young people deserve to see themselves represented in authentic, diverse, and empowering ways. While Work2BeWell focuses on teen-led mental health education and creating spaces where students feel seen and heard, Dove's curriculum offers structured learning experiences that help teens unpack the pressures they face—especially online.

Healthy body image isn't about loving every photo or feeling confident every single day. It's about respect—for your body, your mind, and your individuality. When education, advocacy, and positive representation come together, young people gain the tools to navigate pressures with resilience. This March, as we focus on healthy body image, we're proud to highlight partnerships that move the conversation forward. Because when we empower teens with the right tools and the right support, they don't just feel better about themselves—they become leaders who help others do the same.

For more information about Dove's Self Esteem Resources, including their “Proud to Be Me” curriculum and more, visit <https://www.dove.com/uk/en-gb/yourself-care/self-esteem-respect/self-esteem-resources-for-youth-groups.html>



PhotoSource: [Dove](#)

A Word from NSAC

W2BW's National Student Advisory Council

“The Weight of Perfection: How Body Image Impacts Mental Health”



Body image—how people perceive and feel about their body—has become a fundamental factor in mental health worldwide. According to a study by Stanford Medicine, there has been a significant spike in eating disorders in 2020, which can be attributed to a negative body image, and lead to poor mental health. Body image exists in every culture and differs greatly throughout the world, but the media has globalized an “expectation of perfection” which further escalates mental health issues.

A negative body image can induce a variety of mental health complications, including eating disorders, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Comparison creates a scale of self-worth, and constantly comparing yourself to others can ultimately reduce your confidence and increase insecurity. In our modern age, it is almost impossible to escape this feeling due to digital platforms popularizing unnatural features and determining standards.

Social media is a major contributor to body image, influencing standards worldwide. People may find themselves constantly comparing themselves to others online, as algorithms increasingly feed them distorted, unrealistic material. A 2021 study by City University of London surveyed 175 young women and non-binary people, ages 18-30, aiming to gain information on filter usage and effects. The results were surprising; 90% of participants admitted using filters or editing their photos because they felt pressured to look a certain way on social media. An overwhelming majority of subjects feel this way, which suggests that this is not an isolated nor small issue—it's a widespread social norm. Photo editing is driven by insecurity, and when almost everyone edits their photos, it creates a cycle where distorted images become the standard. We can see a direct correlation between increased filter usage and photo editing, and declining mental health.

Body image exists in all genders, but differs greatly for each based on gender norms and cultural values. Body image is usually perceived as “a female experience” but it is important to note that all genders are subject to high, unrealistic standards that can erode their mental health. These physical standards can have major impacts on mental health, crossing over gender lines.

A healthy body image is vital to a healthy mind, no matter your age or identity. If you or someone you know is struggling with body image issues, get help. There are many resources such as the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) who specialize in body image and eating disorders, or the 988 Crisis line for general mental health concerns. As the media continues to shape perception, promoting realistic and inclusive standards becomes crucial to helping people develop healthier relationships with their bodies.

“Do You Use a Filter Every Time You Post?” Headquarters 4 Mar. 2022. <https://www.work2beWell.org/2022/03/04/do-you-use-a-filter-every-time-you-post/>

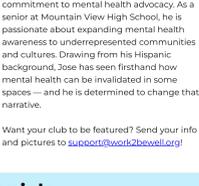
DigitalE, Erin. More Kids are Being Hospitalized for Eating Disorders - Researchers Learned Why. Stanford Medicine News Center, 16 Jan. 2024. https://med.stanford.edu/news/stories/2024/01/kids-hospitalized-eating-disorders-why.html#:~:text=4%20and%20body%20image%20issues%20are%20rising%20at%20an%20alarming%20rate,20%20and%20more%20of%20them%20are%20girls.&utm_source=work2beWell.org

Juliana Lee (She/Her) is a rising sophomore at Adienne C. Nelson High School in Hazel Valley, Oregon. She is a new member of the Work2BeWell team this year. Juliana is very active in her school and community through volunteer work, different organizations, and extracurriculars. She is currently involved in Speech and Debate, Key Club, Red Cross Club, National Honors Society, Make-A-Wish Club, Model UN, and Member Advancements Club. She is the founder and president of her school's Work2BeWell Club, as well as a member of Student Council. Through these, she strives to raise awareness on mental health as well as reading, playing the guitar, listening to music, travelling, and spending time with friends, family, and her pets.

Club Spotlight

Mountain View High School, Lawrenceville, Georgia “Mirror Mirror on the Wall” A Self-Affirmation Activity

March is all about building a healthier relationship with ourselves—and sometimes, that starts with looking as simple as a mirror and a marker.



At Mountain View High School, students were recently invited to participate in a powerful self-affirmation activity organized by Jose Tabares (he/him), a Work2BeWell Access Team Co-Lead and senior who is turning awareness into action.

Instead of critiquing reflections, students replaced negative self-talk with affirmations. Instead of focusing on perceived flaws, they focused on kindness. The mirror became more than glass—it became a reminder that how we speak to ourselves matters. Because sometimes, making change starts with one kind sentence.



Jose's leadership reflects his broader commitment to mental health advocacy. As a senior at Mountain View High School, he is passionate about expanding mental health awareness to underrepresented communities and cultures. Drawing from his Hispanic background, Jose has seen firsthand how mental health can be invalidated in some spaces—and he is determined to change that narrative.

Want your club to be featured? Send your info and pictures to support@work2beWell.org!

Testimonials



Aditi Ediga, a high school junior from North Carolina, is a Work2BeWell Access Team Co-Lead. Aditi has a passion for mental health advocacy and encouraging open conversations that break the boundaries of stigma. She is inspired to use her voice to promote mental health, cultural advocacy, and digital wellness by leveraging her personal experiences. She engages with her interests actively through her involvement in her town's local council, on the board of her school's FBIA program, and through research projects.

“Work2BeWell has had such a huge impact on me as a leader, mental health advocate, and individual. Whether it's the opportunity to participate on Talk2BeWell Podcasts, create social media content, or co-lead the Access Team I have gotten the opportunity to be a part of an uplifting community. Every NSAC member is incredibly supportive and genuinely wants to create change and support each other.”

Through W2BW's NSAC, I was encouraged to share my voice and I realized how much youth voices matter. Not only does W2BW offer teens the amazing opportunity of joining NSAC, it also gives young people the opportunity to create their own mental wellness clubs. Additionally, W2BW has clinically vetted resources to support mental health. These resources include a state-by-state guide, educational modules/curriculum, and ways to get involved with important policy and legislation.

Work2BeWell promotes vulnerability, authenticity, and student conversations. This organization ensures that teen voices are heard and that individuals have access to the mental health support they need and deserve.”

Growing Together: Share Your Feedback

Healthy body image starts with recognizing that every voice has value—including yours. Just like we encourage everyone to trust their perspective and honor their experiences, we're doing the same as an organization. If you've explored a Work2BeWell module, we'd love to hear what resonated with you and where we can grow. Your feedback helps us continue creating meaningful, supportive resources that strengthen student mental health and confidence.



The survey only takes a few minutes, but your voice plays a powerful role in shaping what comes next. (Be sure to select the correct module title when responding.) Thank you for helping us build healthier conversations—together.

WHERE TO FIND US THIS MONTH

Dates / Location	Event
March 4-6 Reno, NV	California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA) State Convention
March 13-15 Monroe, NC	North Carolina Association of Student Councils (NCASC) State Convention
March 29-31 San Antonio, TX	Texas Association of Student Councils (TASC) Annual Conference
April 1 Renton, WA	Renton SD Student Symposium



How are you using W2BW resources to make a difference in your school or community? Have they helped you start conversations, plan events, or bring people together around mental health? We'd love to hear how you're making an impact!

[Share your story with us](#) and be featured in an upcoming newsletter or on social media!

