

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES of THE M.O.D. SQUAD (for Moms of Daughters)



1. BE A ROLE MODEL

I will be aware of the powerful role that my words—about my daughter, my own body, and others—play in shaping her beliefs about beauty, fat, appearance, weight, and being female. I commit to eliminating diet-talk and negative body-talk.

2. BALANCE PHYSICAL WITH EMOTIONAL NEEDS

I will encourage my child to honor the wisdom of her body by helping her differentiate the needs of her stomach from the needs of her heart. I will help her respect her body's hunger and fullness signals and I will teach her through my words and deeds healthy, effective ways to cope with difficult feelings.

3. BALANCE HEALTH WITH FLEXIBILITY

I will help my daughter make food choices based on sound nutrition mixed with a healthy dose of flexibility. I will show her that being active is a fun way to stay fit, strong and happy and is neither the road to thinness nor punishment for the sin of eating. I recognize that perfectionism and rigidity are the problem, not the solution.

4. BALANCE BODY-IMAGE WITH SELF-IMAGE

I will help my daughter develop a positive body image based on an appreciation for what her body does for her rather than how it looks. I will help her understand and appreciate the changes that occur as her body grows. I will also help her develop her self-image based on internal qualities, where *body image* plays a minor role.

5. BALANCE EMPATHY WITH ASSERTIVENESS

I will help my daughter develop a mindful appreciation for her own needs and feelings as well as empathy for others. I will encourage her to speak up when her boundaries or those of others are violated or she senses injustice in the world.

6. BALANCE SAFETY WITH CONTROL

While mindful of her need for safety, I will give her age-appropriate opportunities to make decisions and to deal with the consequences of these decisions. Even when her ideas, tastes and preferences are different than mine I will try to support her decisions so that she feels a reasonable sense of "control" over her own destiny.

7. BALANCE ENJOYMENT OF MEDIA WITH A CRITICAL EYE

While recognizing the fun aspects of the media, I will teach her to view media critically, being especially aware of messages promoting intolerance, materialism, sexism, *weightism*, violence against or the objectification of women and the sexualization of children. I will promote systemic change by speaking out (writing letters, e-mails or taking other actions) when companies demean or objectify women and children.