

Escape. Connect. Relate.

Body Image & Eating Disorders

Body image is how we think and feel about ourselves physically, and how we believe others see us.

When we talk about body image, there are lots of ways we can think about our body and the way we look. You might find that there are times when you like your body, or parts of your body, and times when you struggle with how you look.

Body image is not just about our weight, it can also be things like:

- comparing how you look with friends or people you follow on social media
- struggling to love and accept your body
- feeling as though your body shape is not represented in the media
- hiding your body because you feel ashamed by it
- struggling to find clothes for your body, particularly if you have a physical disability
- feeling misunderstood about your body when people make assumptions about things like, why you might need a wheelchair
- feeling like you are not attractive enough
- birthmarks, surgery scars or acne affecting how you feel about how you look
- feeling as though your body does not match your gender.

Eating Disorders - If you're focussing a lot on controlling what or how much you eat, or if you have urges to eat and then make yourself sick (bulimia).

youngminds.org.uk





ECR Suggested Reads

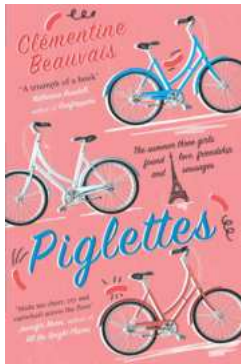
Many of our suggested reads are available from your school library and from [Edinburgh Libraries](#). Some books may contain triggering or upsetting content. Please use the age ratings as guidance and ask your school librarian for help. Books are listed in alphabetical order by author's surname.



Wintergirls, by Laurie Halse Anderson

Lia and Cassie are best friends, wintergirls frozen in fragile bodies, competitors in a deadly contest to see who can be the thinnest. But then Cassie suffers the ultimate loss - her life - and Lia is left behind, haunted by her friend's memory, and feeling guilty for not being able to help save her.

S3+, Anorexia



Piglettes, by Clementine Beauvais

Awarded the Gold, Silver and Bronze troopers after a vote by their classmates on Facebook, Mireille, Astrid and Hakima are officially the three ugliest girls in their school, but does that mean they're going to sit around crying about it? Well... yes, a bit, but not for long! Climbing aboard their bikes, the trio set off on a summer roadtrip to Paris, their goal: a garden party with the French president.

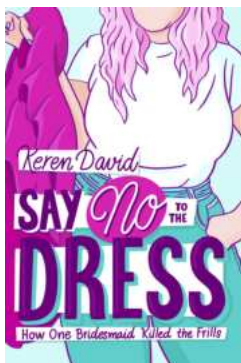
S1+



Skinny, by Donna Cooner

Hopeless. Freak. Elephant. Pitiful. These are the words of Skinny, the vicious voice that lives inside fifteen-year-old Ever Davies's head. Ever knows she weighs over three hundred pounds, knows she'll probably never be loved, and Skinny makes sure she never forgets it. Ever attempts to change with the help of her singing voice, her best friend and risky surgery, but still has to overcome her demons.

S1+, Gastric band surgery



Say No to the Dress, by Keren David

Until last year Miri was small, slim and, best of all, completely flat-chested. She had been happy - and then puberty mugged her. Now taller, randomly spotty and with breasts, she feels awkward and out of place. She copes by hiding under hoodies which works well until she is expected to be bridesmaid. A refreshingly honest and witty account of how one girl goes into battle with the changes in her body but works out that a peace treaty is often the best way to resolve conflict.

S1+, Dyslexia Friendly, Body Positivity



Meat Market, by Juno Dawson

Jana Novak's history sounds like a classic model cliché: tall and gangly, she's uncomfortable with her androgynous looks until she's unexpectedly scouted and catapulted to superstardom. But the fashion industry is as grimy as it is glamorous. And there are unexpected predators at every turn. Jana is an ordinary girl from a south London estate, lifted to unimaginable heights. But the further you rise, the harder you fall ...

S3+



Big Bones, by Laura Dockrill

Bluebelle is being made to write a food diary and she is not happy about it. Sure, she knows she is above average weight, but she also knows her own mind and that she is pretty, nice and kind and knows how to make every kind of delicious food from the perfect millionaire's shortbread to the ultimate comforting shepherd's pie. She likes her food...and why should she change?

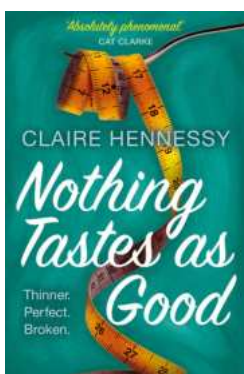
S3+, Body Positivity



Paperweight, by Meg Haston

Seventeen-year-old Stevie is trapped. In her life. And now in an eating-disorder treatment centre on the dusty outskirts of the New Mexico desert. Life in the centre is regimented and intrusive, a nightmare come true. Nurses and therapists watch Stevie at mealtime, accompany her to the bathroom, and challenge her to eat the foods she's worked so hard to avoid.

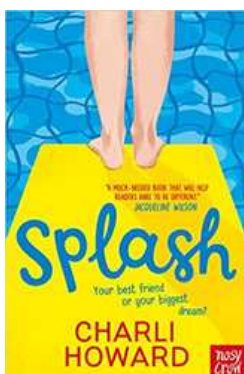
S3+, Anorexia



Nothing Tastes as Good, by Claire Hennessy

Annabel is dead, but she has to shadow her old classmate Julia's life. Julia is fat. And being fat makes you unhappy. Simple, right? In the pressured final year of school, Julia gradually lets Annabel's voice in, guiding her thoughts towards her body, food and control. However, nothing is as simple as it first seems. Spending time in Julia's head seems to be having its own effect on Annabel . . . And she knows that once the voices take hold, it's hard to ignore them.

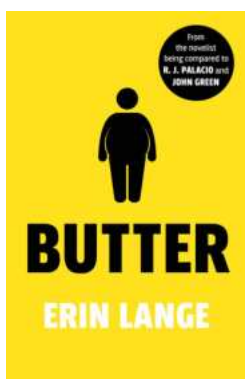
S3+



Splash, by Charli Howard

Molly is in her final year of primary school, with secret dreams of becoming an Olympic swimmer. Having always lived in the shadow of her manipulative friend, Chloe, Molly finally has the chance to compete in a regional swimming contest and define herself on her own terms. But with the pressure of fitting in, and the sudden arrival of her mysterious mum, will she give up on her dreams for a shot at popularity?

S1+, Body Positivity



Butter, by Erin Lange

"Butter" is lonely and obese and about to make history. He is going to eat himself to death - live on the Internet - and everyone is invited to watch. Butter expects pity, insults, and indifference. What he gets are morbid cheerleaders rallying around his deadly plan. Yet as their dark encouragement grows, it begins to feel a lot like popularity - it feels good. But what happens when Butter reaches his suicide deadline? Can he live with the fallout if he doesn't go through with his plans?

S3+



Tulip Taylor, by Anna Mainwaring

Tulip may be a make-up vlogger with thousands of followers but she is fiercely intelligent and her vocabulary is awe inspiring. When she is pushed into signing up for a reality TV survival show, she is determined to show that she's more than just a plastic.

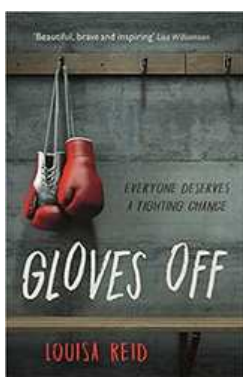
S1+



Dumplin', by Julie Murphy

Self-proclaimed fat girl Willowdean Dickson has always been at home in her own skin. With her all-American beauty best friend, Ellen, by her side, things have always worked...until Will takes a job at Harpy's, the local fast-food joint. There she meets Private School Bo, a hot former jock. Will isn't surprised to find herself attracted to Bo. But she is surprised when he seems to like her back.

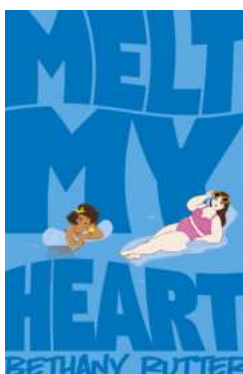
S3+, Series



Gloves Off, by Louisa Reid

After a particularly terrible bullying incident, Lily's dad determines to give his daughter the tools to fight back. Introducing her to boxing, he encourages Lily to find her own worth. It is both difficult and challenging but in confronting her own fears she finds a way through that illuminates her life and friendships. Meeting Rose, and seeing that there is another world out there, enables her to live her own life fully and gives her the knowledge that she is both beautiful and worth it.

S3+, Verse Novel



Melt My Heart, by Bethany Rutter

Lily is used to people paying attention to her gorgeous twin sister, Daisy. But even though Lily loves her own fat body, she can't shake the idea that no one would ever choose her over Daisy - not when they could have the thin twin. That is, until she meets Cal, the gorgeous, sweet guy who can't seem to stay away - who also happens to be Daisy's crush. With Lily desperately trying to keep Cal a secret from Daisy, summer is set to be far from relaxing.

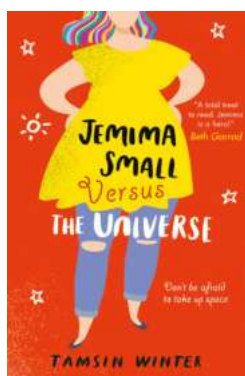
S3+, Body Positivity



No Big Deal, by Bethany Rutter

Emily is fat and she doesn't care. And why should she? She has killer fashion sense, great taste in music, jaw-dropping make-up and razor-sharp wit. Unfortunately, everyone around her seems to think 'fat' is unattractive and a problem. As Emily enters her final year of high school, her body confidence begins to wither away.

S3+, Body Positivity

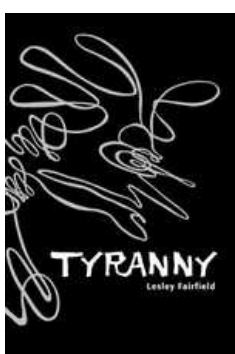


Jemima Small Versus the Universe, by Tasmin Winter

Jemima Small finds it hard to measure up. Especially because she's the very opposite of her name. And being forced to join a healthy eating group at school means no one will let her forget that. But if there's one big thing she has going for her it's her attitude – and she's determined to prove that Jemima Small is a Big Deal.

S1+

Picture Books and Graphic Novels

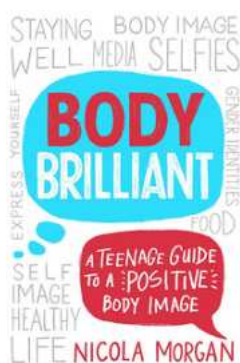


Tyranny, by Lesley Fairfield

A stark portrayal of a young woman's struggle with anorexia that draws on the author's own experiences of an eating disorder to give a powerful and candid story of hope and survival. 'Do I know you?' 'You've always known me, silly... I'm Tyranny, your other self. I keep you thin.'

S3+, Anorexia, Graphic Novel,

Information Books



Body Brilliant: A Teenage Guide to a Positive Body Image, by Nicola Morgan

We're all bombarded with information and images - through the media and our peers - about being too big, too small, being cool, being popular or having the 'right' kind of clothes. This book addresses the body issues that nearly everyone worries about at some point in their lives and gives practical and mindful solutions to work through worries, using real-life examples, quotes and anecdotes from young adults interviewed especially for this book.

S3+



Resources

Disclaimer: the ECR team does not take credit for these links, which are all offered and maintained by external providers

Young Minds

Advice on how to cope when struggling with your body image

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/body-image/>

Beat: Eating Disorders

Help and support for all types of eating disorders

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>

Young Minds

Advice on how to cope when struggling with anorexia

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anorexia/>