

DIY WYRED BODIES

Expressing and sharing our feelings about gender, bodies and body image

What you'll need:

- Coloured pipe cleaners or craft wire
- Cardboard boxes (1 per group)
- Felt tips
- Sticky tape
- Popular music track with affirmative lyrics around diversity and body image

Preparation

- A** Before you get started, read the **Safety and Support** section for ideas on how to create safe, affirmative and inclusive learning environments.
- B** Read the EveryBODY Matters case study for ideas and links to resources on gender, bodies and body image.

Consider how gendered expectations of the way people look, feel and move will always be shaped by other social, cultural and physical differences.
- C** Put a handful of craft wire strips in each box and lightly seal with sticky tape.

Activity

- 1** Working in small groups (e.g. 4-6), give each group a card board box and set of felt tips.
- 2** Ask the group to decorate the box with feelings about gendered societal pressures on people (any age) to look or move a certain way in different areas of their lives (e.g. sports, school, work, at the park; online etc.).
- 3** Play the sound track. Ask a volunteer from each group to pick up their box. Ask them to move in between the groups. Like musical chairs, when the music stops, the volunteers give their box to the nearest group (but not their own). Encourage discussion of the messages in small groups and as a whole class.



- 4** Ask a different volunteer to open the box, and another volunteer to reach inside and pull out the wire strips. A final volunteer distributes the wires so that every member of the group has three each.
- 5** Demonstrate first, and then invite children to make a body structure from the wire strips. There are youtube videos on how to make wire persons **here**.
- 6** Invite children to choose one of the feelings on the box, and then shape their wire bodies to express that feeling. This session could be accompanied by music.
- 7** Turning to the person next to them, see if their partner can 'guess the feeling' expressed by the wire body.
- 8** Repeat with different feelings. Take it in turns to share and guess feelings.

WYRD (n) - in Old English wyrd came from the verb weorpan, meaning "to come to pass, to become". The term then developed into the modern English adjective weird.