



Interrupting Unsafe Conversations about Bodies, Food and Movement: In Physical Activity Spaces









If you hear:

"You're doing okay out there, but if you slimmed down you'd see huge improvements in your speed. Carrying extra weight slows you down."

Try saying this:

"I appreciate the feedback on my performance, but comments about my body are not okay. Could we focus on skills and techniques I can improve on instead?"

Or this:

"I disagree. You have a strong foundation! Speed is a trainable skill. With the right combination of drills and strength work, we can push your performance forward.

If you hear:

"You really need to cut carbs if you want to tone up faster. That is probably the reason you're not seeing results."

Try saying this:

"I'm working on my relationship with food for my overall well-being and performance. Can we stick to discussing my exercise program and strength goals instead?"

Or this:

"Athletes need a variety of different foods. It's important to have enough energy to perform well. It's easy to get sidetracked by ideas about how an athletes body "should" look."

If you hear:

"Wow... you're going to eat all that? You should probably skip lunch if you want to stay in shape."

Try saying this:

"I know my own body and what it needs to stay energized and play well. I don't appreciate you policing my food choices."

Or this:

"It's great that you're fuelling up for the game, you're going to be a powerhouse out there. The other team doesn't stand a chance!"

Key Takeaways:

- Focus on skills and strength: Performance is build from training, technique and fuelling, not dieting.
- Encourage Joyful Movement: Present movement as fun and energizing, not only a training requirement
- Normalize body diversity: Athletes come in all shapes and sizes; promote respect for all body types.
- Empower athletes and clients: Support boundaries, self-advocacy and their definitions of health and performance goals.

