There's something you need to know:

You are more than the sum of your physical parts. Before you start calling me out for being cliché, let me tell you the story of Malala Yousafzai. Malala was born in Pakistan, a country were many women are forced to cover themselves from head to toe. If they don't, they can be executed. Malala was a girl who stayed up late with her father at local political meetings discussing many different topics. Malala was most interested in education, especially for young girls like herself. When she was about fifteen, the Taliban invaded Malala's school and forbade all girls from going to school. Malala fought back, and she was shot in the head by Taliban on a school bus. What does this have to do with body image? *Everything*. Malala survived and has since talked in front of the United Nations and spoken with President Obama about how to achieve universal access to education for young girls everywhere. She is the youngest ever recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and a great example of resilience for all teenagers—we choose our own paths. Malala is famous not for her beauty or her body, but for her mind. A bullet went straight through part of her head and her face was partially disfigured, but this didn't stop her from putting on her sari and sitting on national talk shows to talk about her belief in reforming girls' education. She did not win the Nobel Peace Prize for her looks. As "important" as your body image may seem to you or your peers, your body does not define you. *You* define you. As young people, we're all told to act a certain way and to look a certain way, but I think that just makes us all look the same. That'd be overwhelmingly boring. Malala Yousafzai could not be stopped with a bullet to the head. Similarly, I believe that you cannot be stopped by rude insults or judgements that don't speak to your character whatsoever. It is up to you to forge your own path in life, and your happiness should not be affected by the poor decisions of others.

-Sincerely,

Chris