



Quality Theatre In Education

ABN: 31 012 483 301

# The Best I Can Be

## Teachers Notes

### Introduction

The Best I Can Be seeks to give students a better understanding of how and why they can improve their lives by maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Dealing with both physical and mental processes, the performance gives a broad overview of what a healthy lifestyle is, and how to go about leading one.

The show was created at the suggestion of teachers Australia-wide, and is an introduction to issues relevant to the prevention of childhood obesity, but is a non-confrontational, uplifting experience, which serves to increase the self-esteem of those with a poor body-image.

### Balance

A running theme throughout The Best I Can Be is the importance of “balance” in a healthy lifestyle, and large scales are used for participatory exercises which balance various aspects of students’ lifestyles. Blocks are used to represent lifestyle factors, including foods from the various food groups and activities that constitute a balance between what students choose to do and what they ought to do. The exercises are easy to duplicate or extend upon in the classroom.

## The Best I Can Be

The play opens with a song and sketch designed to promote the idea that it is not important to judge yourself by the standards of others, but instead to strive for constant personal improvement – to enjoy the journey and the small, regular developments, rather than becoming depressed about the distance to long-term goals or the achievements of others. In other words, to become “The Best I Can Be”.

## You Are What You Eat

The next section is about what students put into their bodies. Balance is the key, and a list of foods is collected to see which ones students like and which ones they don't like. It is shown that, whilst it may not be healthy to eat everything you want, a balanced diet can usually be constructed from foods students actually like. Other foods that students may not like on their own, may become enjoyable when combined with foods they do like, eg. carrots may be either dipped in honey or chopped in spaghetti bolognese.

\* The “Terrifically Tasty Tongue-Twister” is sung to support the above.

## The Journey Within

Characters in the play next embark upon a journey along the human digestive tract to see what happens to the food after it is eaten. They visit the mouth, oesophagus, stomach, intestines, colon, and rectum, explaining the function of each. In this way, students see the importance of what they put into their bodies, especially when they visit the liver and perform the “Inside Outside” song, which covers the need to avoid drugs and other toxins.

## Exercise

The next step towards a healthy lifestyle is using enough energy to ‘burn-off’ all the food students ingest, by participating in activities. A list is made of what activities students enjoy doing, separating them into those that are active and those that are inactive. It is shown that there are just as many

active things, such as sports, that are enjoyable to students, as there are inactive things, like video games. It is not, therefore, necessary for students to participate in many activities they don't enjoy. Rather, it is a matter of striking a balance between the active and the inactive.

\* A brief aerobics-style routine is conducted with students.

### A Healthy Mind

One character is concerned about her weight and her desire to look like a supermodel or movie-star. The idea of being "The Best I Can Be" is reiterated, rather than basing one's body-image on the bodies of others. It is, therefore, important to maintain a healthy mind as well as a healthy body. This can be done through mental exercise.

\* Students participate in a creative visualisation/relaxation exercise.

### Lifestyles of the Fit & Healthy

The performance recaps its messages, by interviewing students to see how they intend to lead a healthy lifestyle. This humorous exercise is conducted in the style of a television program.

*Enjoy the show!!*