

Cheryl Burke: 'You Don't Have to be Anorexic to be Beautiful'

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When bloggers called out Cheryl Burke for putting on a few pounds, the *Dancing with the Stars* pro fought back. But what upset her most, she says, is the unhealthy body image issues promoted by such stories.

"I want kids or women out there to realize you don't have to be anorexic to be beautiful," the two-time *Dancing* champ tells PEOPLE exclusively. "There's a lot of pressure living this Hollywood life. People expect to see you at a certain weight and when you gain a few pounds then all of a sudden it's the talk of the week."

Burke, 24, says she is secure with her looks—and she advises fans to be true to themselves.

"People will always have an opinion about you, whether it's good or it's bad," she says. "But most important is to have a secure feeling about yourself and know that you're beautiful regardless of what people think of you."

Burke, who owns her own dance studio in San Francisco, admits it's taken years for her to learn to embrace her curves.

"When I was younger, I wasn't stick thin. I wasn't tall. I don't have long legs. I wasn't naturally skinny," she confesses. "As I grew older, I just became more comfortable in my own skin." — *Monica Rizzo*