

Mother Of 5 Writes Facebook Post To Body-Shaming Beach Trolls **News**

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA (RNN) — One mom would not stand for being made fun of by a few 20-somethings at the beach.



The experience happened to Tanis Jex-Blake at Alberta Beach, a small village on the shores of Lac Ste. Anne outside of Edmonton on July 28. The married mother of five's body, changed from giving birth, was found unsuitable to three beachgoers — two men and a woman. Jex-Blake said she was taunted for her stretch marks as she wore a bikini while sunbathing.

She said it was the first time she had worn a bikini since the birth of her first child 13 years ago, and she wanted to work on her tan for an upcoming vacation with her husband.

— Although my open letter seems to send the message that I am a confident woman who is proud of her body, I am sad to say that I am not, — Jex-Blake said. "I was embarrassed. That's why it took me 13 years to wear a bikini in public."

Her emotions were not shown at the beach but through angry tears at home, a bikini picture in her living room and in an impassioned Facebook post.

— I wanted to reach out and slap them, via the internet, — Jex-Blake said.

She wrote:

This is an open letter to the 2 guys and 1 girl who decided to skip work today in Sherwood Park where they were building a house, but instead decided to come to Alberta Beach to relax in the sun, enjoy the water and some beers. I'm sorry if my first attempt at sun tanning in a bikini in public in 13 years "grossed you out."

I'm sorry that my stomach isn't flat and tight. I'm sorry that my belly is covered in stretch marks. I'm NOT sorry that my body has housed, grown, protected, birthed and nurtured FIVE fabulous, healthy, intelligent and wonderful human beings. I'm sorry if my 33-year-old, 125 lb. body offended you so much that you felt that pointing, laughing, and pretending to kick me.

But I'll have you know that as I looked at your 'perfect' young bodies, I could only think to myself, "what great and amazing feat has YOUR body done?" I'll also have you know that I held my head high, unflinching as you mocked me, pretending that what you said and did had no effect on me; but I cried in the car on the drive home. Thanks for ruining my day.

It's people like you who make this world an ugly hateful place. I can't help but feel sorry for the women who will one day bear your children and become "gross" in your eyes as

their bodies change during the miraculous process of pregnancy. I can only hope that one day you'll realize that my battle scars are something to be proud of, not ashamed of.

Jex-Blake's open battle against body shaming has taken flight across the internet, especially when a radio station in Edmonton picked it up. On Hot 107 Edmonton's Facebook page, it has more than 1 million likes and 240,000 shares.

She said her struggle with her body image and the sad anger she felt after the incident is what made her piece the post together.

"When I posted it initially, I was angry - angry at them, and at myself for not saying anything right then and there," she said. "Now, I could care less if they ever read or heard about how they made me feel. Because my one moment of feeling horrible has empowered millions of women to embrace who they are and love their bodies. So it was all worth it."

For Jex-Blake, she said she never expected this type of response and called it "crazy and overwhelming." But to her only daughter, who is almost 7 years old, she wanted to show that there is something beautiful in sticking up for yourself, even though your bullies might not ever see it.

"I want my kids to know that they never need to be ashamed of how their bodies look, and at the same time, I never want them to belittle or judge anyone else for how that person's body looks," she said.