

Kids not negatively impacted by weight management programs

12 December 2014



Weight management programs for overweight children do not negatively impact body satisfaction, research shows.

Published in *Appetite*, researchers at Monash University investigated changes in body perception and satisfaction in overweight and obese children aged five to nine-years-old participating in a [weight management](#) program.

Overweight children experience higher levels of body dissatisfaction, which can lead to the development of extreme dieting behaviours that can be the precursors of eating disorders.

Professor Helen Truby, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics in the School of Clinical Sciences based at Monash Health, said childhood obesity affected both physical and psychological health.

"Despite this, there has been a lack of research on body satisfaction in overweight children and how weight management interventions may alter this over time," Professor Truby said.

The team looked at the Children's Body Image Scale (CBIS) to measure body image and satisfaction in overweight or obese children participating in a weight management intervention delivered to their parents.

The CBIS, developed by Professor Truby, is a widely used pictorial scale that measures pre-adolescent children's [body perception](#) and satisfaction.

The study aimed to determine how well the CBIS worked, and also whether [body image](#) and satisfaction changed in overweight/[obese children](#) participating in the six-month weight management program.

The weight management intervention did not specifically focus on children's weight loss, but provided parents with the knowledge and skills to support them to establish healthy lifestyle behaviours, such as choosing lower fat foods.

"Our research shows for the first time that the CBIS is a valid tool to measure body satisfaction longitudinally in [overweight children](#)," added Professor Truby.

"The results of our study also suggest that delivery of a weight management program via parents has no negative effect on children's [body satisfaction](#)."

More information: Jacklin N. O'Connor, Rebecca K. Golley, Rebecca A. Perry, Anthea M. Magarey, Helen Truby, "A longitudinal investigation of overweight children's body perception and satisfaction during a weight management program," *Appetite*, Volume 85, 1 February 2015, Pages 48-51, ISSN 0195-6663, dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2014.11.009.

Provided by Monash University

APA citation: Kids not negatively impacted by weight management programs (2014, December 12) retrieved 9 July 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-12-kids-negatively-impacted-weight.html>

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