

Parent Fact & Action Sheet



There are many consequences that influence a child's physical and emotional health and his or her own attitudes about body weight and obesity.

- Disordered eating behaviors such as binge eating or chronic dieting
- Low self-esteem
- Poor body image
- Negative attitude towards persons with overweight

Weight bias in the media occurs when the news, entertainment, or social media portray persons with overweight in a negative, stereotypical way, feature them simply for ridicule and humor, or promote harmful messages about weight.

Bias in the media can include:

- News reports about obesity with negative images of people who are overweight or obese
- Television shows or films with thin characters who are idealized for their appearance, versus characters with overweight being negatively stereotyped because of their weight
- Ads claiming that weight loss is simple and easy
- Social media pages with "fat shaming" comments

Children who are exposed to more media (e.g., television, movies, video games) express greater stigmatization of children with overweight or obesity¹

Act! 3 things YOU can do RIGHT NOW as parent advocates.

Be on the lookout for weight bias in the media that you want to limit your child's exposure to.

→ See [Identifying Weight Bias](#) and [Social Media](#) handouts

Teach your kids to become critical viewers about messages related to body weight and appearance.

→ See [Teach Kids about Weight Bias, For Kids & Teens](#) and [Web Resources for Youth](#) handouts

Positive body image can promote resilience against negative media influences.

→ See [Healthy Body Image](#) handout

¹Latner JD, Rosewall JK, Simmonds MB: *Childhood obesity stigma: association with television, videogame, and magazine exposure*. Body Image 2007;4:147-155.

