

with public health strategies to reduce overweight and obesity and also depression.

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### Higher odds of depressive symptomatology associated with obesity risk in Australian adolescents



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**Introduction:** Depression and obesity are both significant health concerns among adolescents. This study examined the associations between overweight/obesity, key obesogenic risk factors (physical inactivity, sedentary behaviour, diet) and depressive symptomatology in an Australian adolescent population.

**Methods:** Baseline evaluation data from a community-based obesity prevention project in the Australian Capital Territory were used. In 2012, 800 students (440 females, 360 males) aged 11–14 years, from six secondary schools, completed a questionnaire that assessed physical activity, sedentary behaviour and dietary intake. Weight status was defined by WHO BMI z-score criteria. The Short Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (SMFQ) was completed and a cut-off score  $\geq 10$  indicated symptomatic depression. Logistic regression models were developed to estimate odds ratios for depressive symptomatology.

**Results:** Among the sample, 27% were overweight/obese and 25% reported depressive

symptomatology. After controlling for potential confounders, high levels of sedentary behaviours were associated with increased depressive symptomatology in both males (OR 1.22;  $p < 0.05$ ) and females (OR 1.12;  $p < 0.05$ ). Also, females who consumed greater amounts of sweet drinks were also more likely to report depressive symptomatology (OR 1.18;  $p < 0.05$ ). Significantly increased odds of depressive symptomatology were found among males who were overweight/obese (OR 1.83;  $p < 0.05$ ), but not females.

**Conclusion:** The relationship between obesity, obesogenic risk factors and depressive symptomatology suggest that mental health and physical health are both important targets for community-based interventions. These findings are both important targets for community-based interventions. These findings may be used to inform strategies and clinical practice guidelines for the prevention and treatment of obesity and depression.

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### Cultural considerations in physical activity participation: Perspectives from Chinese pre-adolescents



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Possible reasons for the limited effectiveness of interventions to promote physical activity (PA) to combat the child obesity epidemic are that their design was seldom informed by the children themselves, and when they were adopted for another culture without considering the cultural characteristics of the target audience. With limited evidence of effective PA interventions for Chinese children to date, the main aim of this study is to qualitatively investigate aspects of PA that Chinese children (aged 6–12) enjoy and dislike through PA level-, age- and sex- specific focus group interviews. Out of all physical, emotional and social benefits identified as sources of PA enjoyment, strikingly, the prospect to grow taller from PA participation was primarily favoured by low active girls irrespective of age.

On the contrary, more high active girls derived enjoyment from the sensations during PA. Confidence gained from participation was predominantly through social comparison which also seemed to be a major drive to continued participation. Nonetheless, participation with family and friends and unstructured play (especially for younger children) were also prominent motivators. Surprisingly, weight loss did not stand out as a motivator for PA, but being overweight was indicative of poor health while having a 'moderate' figure was considered as healthy particularly by the eldest girls, and weight concern seemed to be more associated with dietary habits than PA. Regarding factors for PA disengagement, fear of injury and negative PA experiences appeared to be more important for girls, and unexpectedly, more high active girls expressed fear towards certain sporting environments/activities and previous negative experiences. Girls were also more concerned about possible injuries and hygiene during participation, and the eldest low active group appeared to be mindful about their lack of competence and physical tiredness. Together with comparison with existing western data, implications of our findings will be discussed.

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### Parental encouragement of healthy behaviours: Adolescent weight status and Health-related Quality of Life



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**Purpose:** Obesity is a major health concern for adolescents across most Western societies, with one in four persons in Australia being overweight or obese. Adolescents who are obese are more likely to have lower Health-related Quality of Life (HRQoL) but it is unknown if this is a direct relationship

or not. The purpose of this study was to examine whether parental encouragement of healthy behaviors moderated the inverse relationship between adolescent weight status and HRQoL.

**Methods:** Baseline data were collected from 3040 adolescents participating in the Its Your Move project, conducted in the Barwon South-West region of Victoria, in 2005. HRQoL was measured using The Paediatric Quality of Life Inventory, and parental encouragement was derived from purposely designed self-report items. Weight status was calculated according to World Health Organization growth standards from measured weight and height. Linear regression analyses modeled direct relationships and interaction terms. Analyses were adjusted for age, sex, physical activity level, nutrition and school attended.

**Results:** Parental encouragement of healthy behaviours significantly moderated the inverse relationship between overweight status and physical functioning. No other interactions were significant. Analysis of main effects revealed that in comparison to low parental encouragement, high levels of encouragement were associated with higher global HRQoL scores, particularly in terms of physical functioning, and to a lesser extent with higher scores on the psychosocial sub-scale. Obese weight status showed a significant inverse association with all HRQoL scales.

**Conclusions:** Parental encouragement of healthy behavior is associated with higher HRQoL scores for adolescents, however more research is needed to validate the significant interaction effect. Main effects analyses suggest that parental encouragement of healthy behavior is positively associated with adolescent wellbeing and inversely associated with obesity. Thus, parental encouragement may be an additional factor to target when developing preventive and clinical interventions for obesity.

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### What's good about losers? Positive psychological assets in obese Australians during weight loss attempts



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Over the last 30 years, the prevalence of obesity in Australia has increased dramatically. Despite advances in pharmacological, surgical