

Effect of obesity on mental health among young youth

[Health & Medicine](#), [Obesity](#)



A majority of young youths who are obese have stated poor feeding habits and the adoption of a sedentary lifestyle as the primary causes of their overweight. As such, numerous studies have been steered to establish the effect of obese on general health. A survey conducted by Ickes (2011) reveals that obesity among the young youths is directly linked with some mental health problems. The study as well indicates that mental health disorders are more prevalent among the young teenagers who are obese than those who are normal. Some of the effects of obesity on mental health among obese young youths include depression, stigma and discrimination, bullying, low self-esteem, social marginalization, and psychiatric disorders. Depression is a mental disorder that affects a significant population globally. Currently, several factors are associated with mental health, and one of them is youth obesity. From the biological point of view, young youths especially girls are more likely to experience depression when compared to boys because of regular hormonal imbalance and genetic predisposition (Information et al. , 2018). Whenever the issues are not taken into consideration, some lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and hypertension sets in. The anxiety of these diseases and constrained lifestyle usually leads to depression among the affected youth. Notwithstanding, the affected youths are usually stereotyped and discriminated against by their peers in school and at home. As such, the obese young youth tend to isolate themselves a factor that accelerates depression. The isolation, on the other hand, leads to a moody situation, insomnia, low self-esteem, lack of concentration and reduced appetite.

Currently, being discriminated against is the primary factor that is affecting a majority of obese young youths. Because of the stigma from their extra weight, such teenagers get it hard to realize their goals and dreams.

According to Fox et al. (2018), discrimination and stigmatization among the youth who are obese are relatively high. A majority of people in the community believe that the obese are failures in life apart from being worthless with no help in the community. Additionally, such youth are considered lazy in school and their working place. Whenever critical appointments such as the police and armed forces are recruited, such individuals are not recognized because of their weight. Because of this weight stigma and discrimination, most of the affected youth find it hard to accept themselves. As a result, they develop low self-esteem and depression. Some may argue that the stigma is essential in their weight loss, but the real sense is that depression leads to hormonal imbalance a factor that may influence the addition of more weight. However, some people also regard obesity as a disability because it restricts some obese people from doing work or perform other activity, I feel like this is stigmatizing and with the stigma associated with obesity, it makes them vulnerable. This may associate them to be depressed later on and might reduce their life expectancy and lead to other mental issues, obesity is a determinant of how an individual is considered healthy.

According to Butler, " The impact that obesity has on an individual should not be underestimated, with it being considered to not only impact upon the life expectancy of an individual but also being the cause of death" (Butler,

2014, p 20). This could further lead to unemployment because working in a fast paced environment involves fast movement which they are unable to do. Tsiros (2010) reported in a research using field-based fitness tests that has examined the capacity to perform specific activities. While these studies provide evidence of difficulty in performing some basic daily activities, evidence relating to the effects of child obesity on the performance of other common functional daily tasks is lacking. Lebellig individual have a great impact which is negative on their mental health. Bullying is another effect common among the youths and adolescents both at the workplaces and in education centers. This intimidation is mostly practiced in some education centers and is of great concern globally due to its associated health effects. According to (Vanderloo & Mandich (2013), obese youth and adolescents face peer provocation in the form of pushing, nicknames, and teasing, all these physical and verbal victimization to a greater extent destabilize youth self-esteem and at times cause injury among the affected youths. From this rejection, the involved youth and adolescents usually find themselves in the middle of success destructors.

The low esteem in obese young youth is another cause of mental health in these teenagers in the past 40 years; low self-esteem has been increasing among the obese youths because of the neglect, abuse and discrimination they come across (" Obesity and Self-Esteem - Low Self Esteem and Obesity Child", 2018). Because a majority of the parents and guardians ignore the emotional suffering of their children, the self-denial experienced eventually leads to depression. Since Self-esteem is a vital aspect among the youths

that determines how they perceive life, the adverse ripple effects of depression are usually characterized by poor eating patterns, drug abuse, abysmal academic performance and in extreme cases the affected youth ends up committing suicide. Regarding friendship marginalization, many of obese youths are socially marginalized among their colleagues because of their excess weight. According to Ickes (2011), obese youth have very few friends, and most of the time they exclude themselves from others.

Regrettably, the affected youth isolate themselves because of being teased, bullied, discriminated, and regarded negatively by their peers and the society as well. In situations where this marginalization is too much, some of them will commit suicide because they cannot withstand the negative pressure of stigma. For the school-going teenagers, social marginalization due to obesity contributes to low self-esteem, self-rejection, poor academic performance, and ultimately depression. Therefore, it is imperative for the parents to take note of some behavioral changes such as poor eating habits and solitude in obese teenagers as they are the initial symptoms of depression. The psychiatric disorder is another common effect of obesity among the young youths more particularly in the developing countries.

According to " Obesity's Link to Mental Health Disorders-Dr. Drew Ramsey MD" (2018), psychiatry symptoms are common among the obese youths when compared with regular teenagers. The disorder is mainly associated with the continuous humiliation, stigmatization, self-rejection and peer rejection that causes depression. When unattended, the long-term effect of depression leads to suicide, which is the primary symptom of a psychiatric

disorder. In conclusion, obesity among the young youths is a health issue not only in the developed states but also in the undeveloped nations. Because there is less concern about dealing with the emotional effects of obesity among the young youth, the prevalence of mental disorders among these teenagers is high, and a great concern to all stakeholders. In reality, obesity has significantly contributed to poor mental health among the young youths a factor that hinders a majority of them from realizing their goals.

As such, both developing and non-developing countries should come up with health programs that will help the young youth to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. If such measures are put in place, the adverse health effects of obesity among the young teenagers such as depression, stigma and discrimination, bullying, low self-esteem, social marginalization, and psychiatric disorders will reduce significantly. All in all, a majority of the states are moving in the right direction by coming up with academic programs such as physical exercise that is of benefit regarding managing obesity.