

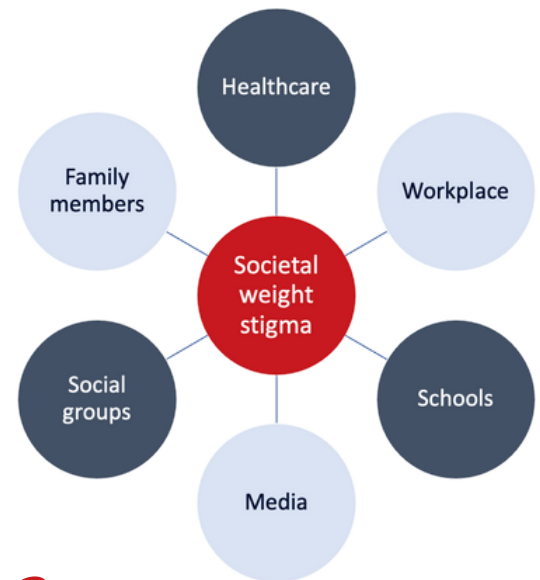
WHAT IS WEIGHT STIGMA?

Definition

Weight stigma refers to societal devaluation of people because of their body weight or body size. At the root of weight stigma are prejudicial attitudes and inaccurate stereotypes that people with higher weight are lazy, lacking willpower, unmotivated to improve health, and personally to blame for their weight. These negative attitudes and stereotypes conflict with scientific evidence and our current understanding of obesity as a chronic disease.

Prevalence

The behavioral manifestation of weight stigma results in unfair treatment of people with higher weight, known as weight discrimination. Prevalence rates of weight discrimination in our society are high, and range from 19%-40% among adults who have higher weight. Rates of weight discrimination are elevated in women and among adults at the highest weight categories.



Where does weight stigma occur?

Weight stigma is common in many societal settings. It can occur in healthcare, employment, educational settings, the mass media, and even in close interpersonal relationships with friends and family members.

Who is affected by weight stigma?

Anyone can experience weight stigma. It affects people of all ages, different racial/ethnic backgrounds, different sexual and gender identities, and diverse body sizes. Weight stigma has been documented in countries around the world and is a global problem.

Relevant Published Research Citations

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