

LIST OF CONTENTS:

Overweight, Obesity & Bullying: ABSTRACT	2
Introduction	3
Part one: The Problem	6
Part two: Some Possible Solutions	11
Conclusion	13
Bibliography	15

Overweight, Obesity & Bullying

ABSTRACT

This essay has as its main premise the otherness of overweight and obese people in our society. It claims that people whose size is considered too big in the eyes of society are excluded and bullied, since they are perceived as unfit and even threatening, from a very early age; this exclusion may be done verbally as well as physically; it crosses boundaries of gender, race, skin-color, nationality and origin of different social groups.

The essay explores mainly the social aspects of this problem, as well as its sources and reasons. It clearly indicates that the phenomenon of exclusion of people with bigger-body-size and shape than the one seen as appropriate by society does not start at school and at the time of adolescence, as many people think, nor is it caused by the media. On the contrary, we claim that this exclusion starts at the home, within the family, and is already expressed at the age of three or four. Furthermore, there are indications that this exclusion seems to stem from deep, ideological and religious roots.

This essay also intends to suggest different ways through which some eventual solutions might be seen. Further study, reevaluation of views and a change of attitudes from parents, educators and the society as a whole could start solving the problem of excluding overweight and obese people from society, mainly through the acceptance of diversity, and through tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

For a kid, growing up is hard. There's a lot going on in their lives with school, family, friends, and after school activities. There is pressure from the media to be a certain way and that certain way is the only way, usually this is all about body focusing mainly on body image. And for a select group of children in the United States, as well as the rest of the world, it is even harder growing up in this superficial society because they are being bullied by their peers. Among the bullied are kids that might not wear the 'right' clothes or have an interest different from the norm. There is another type of kid that might be bullied and that is the overweight, or obese kid. These are the kids that, for whatever reason, have extra body fat that is deemed unacceptable by their peers and the world around them.

Overweight, or obese, children in the United States today are more likely than an average weighted kid to be bullied (International Journal of Obesity, 2014). Obese children are considered the "other" in Western society because they are different than from what society calls "normal". There are so many outside external factors that lead to a child's weight and for that to be the root cause of bullying is just sad because there are many factors that go into a child's weight and it's not always their fault that they are the way that they are. They should not be punished by their peers for their anatomy.

Bullying has been defined as physical or verbal harassment by a peer that repeatedly appears to have some power over the bullied individual (International Journal of Obesity, 2014). Also known as peer victimization, bullying isn't always physical or verbal but can also be psychological (Jeong, Davis, Rodriguez, and Han, 2016). These actions can harm a child and leave lasting impacts on their mental and physical state as well as their social lives and how they interact with people for the rest of their lives. And obese children seem to be the victims more often than others (International Journal of Obesity, 2014). Being bullied for one's size can lead to further weight problems because the victim may then begin to binge or purge, or in some cases, both. This all because a peer told them they weren't good enough due to their bigger size. Another discovery is that while girls are bullied for their weight more often than boys (International Journal of Obesity, 2014), boys are more likely to fall victim to physical bullying