

Attitude of Parents, Peers and Teachers towards Obese Teenagers

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ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken exclusively in Ludhiana city to assess the attitudes of parents, peers and teachers of obese and non obese teenagers towards obesity. The sample consisted of 160 adolescents (between 13 to 19 years of age), their parents (mothers: 80 and fathers: 80), randomly selected classmates (n: 80) and teachers (n: 40). Half of the sample (n: 80) consisted of randomly selected normal-weight teenagers, equally distributed over the two sexes (girls: 40 and boys: 40). The other half of the sample consisted of obese teenagers (n: 80), distributed equally over the two sexes (girls: 40 and boys: 40). Attitudes were evaluated by administering a scale prepared by Rudd Institute, Yale University (2004). The parents of obese boys were found to be more positive towards obesity than both parents of normal-weight teenage boys. Both parents of normal-weight girls were more and equally positive towards obesity than their counterparts of obese girls. Peers were the only group showing more of negative than positive attitudes towards obesity. Teachers were far more positive than peers and well matched the parents' groups in their positivity towards obesity. The overwhelming positive attitude towards obesity indicates acceptance of obesity in the present socio-cultural context.