

## **Overweight and obesity in youth with developmental disabilities: a call to action.**

J Intellect Disabil Res. 2013 Sep 10. doi: 10.1111/jir.12090. [Epub ahead of print]

### **Overweight and obesity in youth with developmental disabilities: a call to action.**

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#### **Source**

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#### **Abstract**

Elevated weight status has become a leading problem for adults and children around the world, regardless of the presence or lack of disability. Youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities are more vulnerable than the typical population to overweight in recent decades, and these individuals often experience overweight and obesity at higher rates than their typically developing peers. Young people with disabilities have many circumstances, beyond those of typically developing children, which increase their risk for greater body mass. These include greater medication use, having syndromes with obesity as an associated symptom, and possessing altered eating habits related to their disability. We discuss obesity-related health risks, possible weight management options, recommendations for weight maintenance or loss, and future research. Although most professionals who work with youth having developmental disabilities do not have great expertise in nutrition and weight management, we must collectively recognise the importance of weight issues for quality of life of these individuals and work with them in maintaining healthy lifestyles. Intervention options, both for caregivers and for health professionals, are discussed.

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#### **KEYWORDS:**

autism, carers, intellectual disability, learning disability, parents

PMID: 24020517 [PubMed - as supplied by publisher]