Sticks and stones: The association between weight discrimination and mental and physical well-being

Angela Meadows, Suzanne Higgs

**BACKGROUND**

Societal stigma

- You’re FAT!

Internalised stigma

- I’m fat

Impacts on physical & mental health

**METHODS**

Online survey

Recruited from forums & social media sites:

- Health and fitness
- Diet and weight-loss
- Plus-size fashion
- Body image etc.

**RESULTS**

Participants

- N = 379
- Overweight/Obese adults
- 88% female
- Average age = 37.6
- Average BMI = 36.8

Societal stigma common:

- Friends, family, strangers
- Doctors
- Employment
- Physical attacks

**IMPlications**

Internalised stigma in particular strongly predicts disordered eating, reluctance to exercise and poor self esteem & body image

Can size acceptance improve health & increase health behaviours?