

# How has children's body image changed over time?

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Results from a Chinese nationwide survey indicate that the prevalence of childhood overweight/obesity nearly tripled from 6.5 percent to 16.8

percent from 2000-2011, but children's perception of being fat remained at 2 percent. The findings are published in *Obesity*.

The study also found that 49 percent of children underestimated their [weight status](#) at the start of the study. Children who perceived themselves as being fat at the start of the study had a higher increase in [body mass index](#) over time than those with an average body image. Boys, young children, and rural children had higher body mass index increases than their counterparts. Over time, a thin body silhouette became more desirable.

The study analyzed data on 4,605 children aged 6-17 years at baseline.

"Resolving [negative body image](#) among children could bring great self-motivation toward a healthy lifestyle," said lead author Dr. Jungwon Min, of Ball State University.

**More information:** Mismatch in Children's Weight Assessment, Ideal Body Image, and Rapidly Increased Obesity Prevalence in China: A 10-Year, Nationwide, Longitudinal Study. *Obesity*. [DOI: 10.1002/oby.22310](#)

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