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## Self-Esteem

Discussions on childhood obesity often include information on the physical effects of being overweight. One such fact is that nearly 61 percent of children considered to be overweight have more than one cardiovascular disease risk factor such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol (Thompson, C., Shanley, E., 2004).

It is less common to hear about the emotional effects of childhood obesity. We know, however, that there is much emotional distress and low esteem in children dealing from obesity. For adolescents, particularly, who are in a period of their life where people are intensely critical of appearance, obesity can lead to poor self-image.

There are many things you can do for young people to help them increase their self-esteem, such as highlighting the positive traits or skills of individual. For more information on how to increase self-esteem in young people struggling with obesity, as well as other tips and recipes, check out the University of Illinois Extension “Less is More” Web site at <http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/regionwc/lessismore>.

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