

# Supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children with higher weight

Webinar will start soon

---

**Emerging  
Minds.**

**National Workforce  
Centre for Child  
Mental Health**



## Webinar 29

# Supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children with higher weight

7:15 pm to 8:30 pm AEDT  
Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022

---

**Emerging  
Minds.**

**National Workforce  
Centre for Child  
Mental Health**



Emerging Minds and MHPN wish to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across Australia upon which our webinar presenters and participants are located.

We wish to pay respect to the Elders past, present and future for the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australia.

# Welcome to Series Five

This is the third webinar in the fifth series on infant and child mental health, presented by Emerging Minds and the Mental Health Professionals' Network.

## **Upcoming webinars in Series Five that will be delivered in 2023 include:**

- Supporting children who have disclosed trauma
- First Nations children – family violence
- Bullying

Subscribe to receive your invitation:

[www.emergingminds.com.au/Subscribe](http://www.emergingminds.com.au/Subscribe) OR sign up to the MHPN Portal

# How to use the platform

To interact with the webinar platform and to access resources, select the following options:



**Options:** Click on this button to access Web-player features such as 'Info' and 'Ask a Question'.



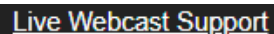
**Information:** To access presentation information, links for live chat, resources and technical support click on this icon located in the lower right corner of your screen.



**Ask a question:** To ask the speakers a question, click on the speech bubble icon in the lower right corner of your screen.



**Chat:** To open the audience chat box, click on this icon located in the top right-hand corner of your screen.



**Help:** Should you need any technical assistance throughout the webinar, please click 'Live Webcast Support' under the 'Info' tab.



# Learning outcomes

At the webinar's completion, participants will be able to:

- Discuss how children with higher weight are at greater risk of negative mental health outcomes.
- Outline strategies to address the effects of weight stigma and bullying on children with higher weight.
- Discuss how to explore the child's best and healthiest life, rather than weight and weight loss.
- Identify strategies to develop a team of supporting adults around the child, who provide cohesive and encouraging messages for children with higher weight.
- Discuss how to use positive and non-judgmental language when working with children with higher weight and their families.

# Tonight's panel



**Amanda**  
Lived Experience



**Dr. Michaela  
Baulderstone**  
General Practitioner, SA



**Megan McClintock**  
Dietitian, NSW



**Facilitator:  
Dr. Daniel Moss**  
Workforce  
Development  
Manager, SA

# The Lived Experience perspective



Amanda



My experience of  
having a child with  
higher weight



# The Lived Experience perspective



Amanda

## Seeing our GP about my son's weight

For us it has been mostly a positive experience

- Speaks with my son and took the time to get to know the context
- Shows respect and support
- Considered medical perspectives
- Has been really reassuring
- Helps us feel like we're a team



# The Lived Experience perspective



Amanda



...and seeing our GP, but not about my son's weight

# The Lived Experience perspective



Amanda

## What we need from practitioners

- Be non-judgemental
- Don't make assumptions
- Respect and support
- Gentle strategies and recommendations
- Reassurance



# The Lived Experience perspective



Amanda

It takes a lot of strength to go  
and see someone about  
your child's weight



# General Practitioner's perspective



Dr Michaela  
Baulderstone

## Health for all populations

Acknowledge genetic and physiological differences.

Children of Maori descent will have a very different phenotype to children of Southern Indian descent.

There are different growth charts by ethnic origin or known phenotypic patterns:

- Typical “western population” CDC charts
- South Indian
- Down Syndrome



# General Practitioner's perspective

## Health at every age



Dr Michaela  
Baulderstone

- Positive language: Lessons from attitudes to infant weight.
- Worried, anxious parents means a sensible reduced focus on “the numbers”.
- We can learn from this and take the same sensitive language into the older years.
- Language for long term use:
  - Thriving
  - Alert
  - Active
  - Reaching milestones
  - Healthy development
  - Tracking



# General Practitioner's perspective



Dr Michaela  
Baulderstone

## Use a Strengths-Based Approach

Instead of “You need to lose weight” use instead:

- We want to ***keep those muscles strong*** so you can enjoy play time on the oval.
- It is great you are playing netball at school. Netball is ***great for your brain and fitness.***

Help families shift their focus away from statistical norms or societal pressures:

- Healthy bodies come in ***all shapes and sizes***
- A healthy body is determined by ***what a body can do***
- Being able to ***enjoy everyday life activities*** and stay healthy for life is what matters.



# General Practitioner's perspective



Dr Michaela  
Baulderstone

## When a higher weight needs help for long-term health

- Children with significantly high BMIs do benefit from treatment.
- This can be done sensitively.
- Talk about the goals to gain, not the weight to lose!



# General Practitioner's perspective



Dr Michaela  
Baulderstone

## Example Goals:

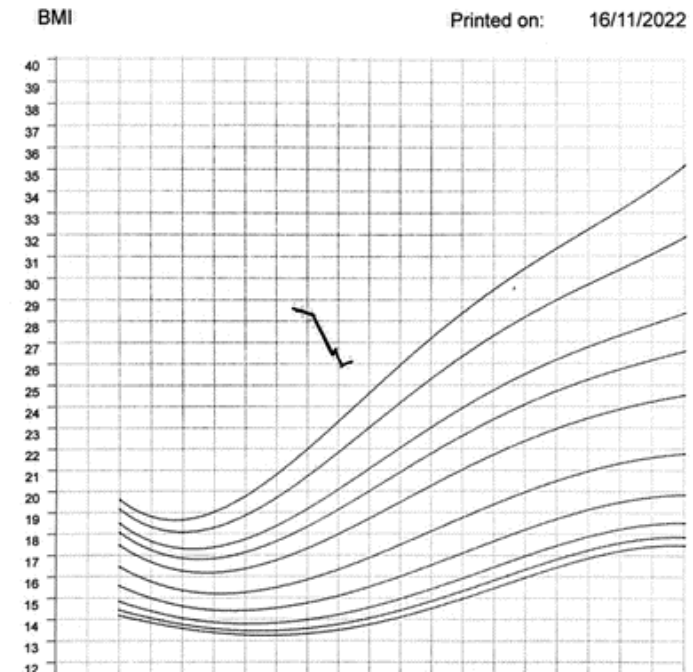
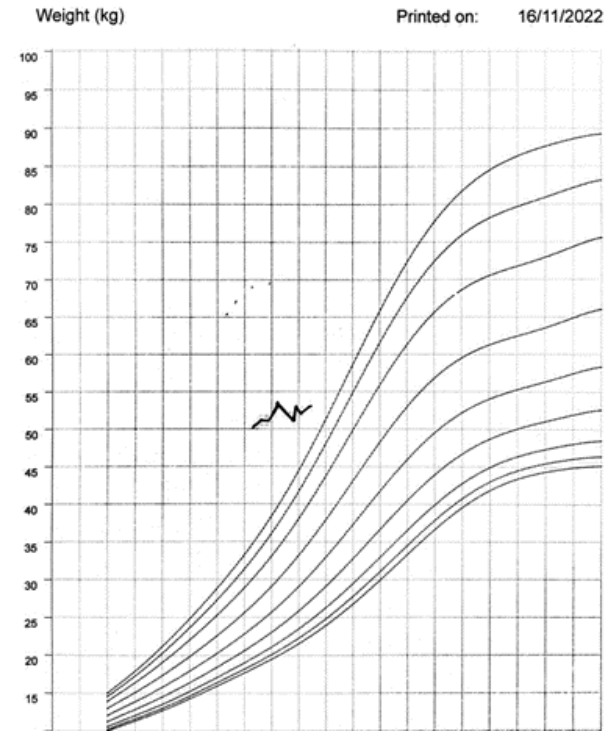
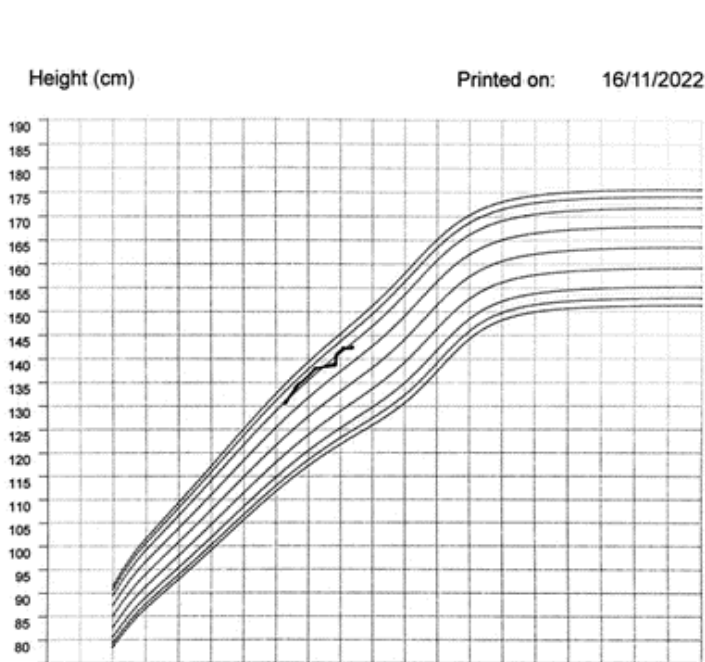
- We are ***looking after your heart*** by making sure your body is getting the right sort of fuel in your foods (Heart disease prevention).
- Your body is working hard right now releasing extra insulin. Our goal is to increase your exercise/start a medication so your body can ***make exactly the right amount of insulin***. (Hyperinsulinaemia).
- Your liver stores extra energy. At the moment it has more than it needs. With exercise and ***just the right energy*** your liver can work exactly right (Hepatic steatosis).
- Muscles and joints etc, etc.

# General Practitioner's perspective

## Healthy Higher Weight for Kids: Growth Chart



Dr Michaela Baulderstone



# Dietitian's perspective



Megan McClintock

Consider the whole person – mental health, social health, wellbeing matters

- Weight stigma and weight bias in medicine, education and society at large is likely responsible for a significant proportion of worse health outcomes associated with larger bodies.
- Centering weight as the problem and weight loss as the solution to Tom's concerns will most likely make his physical and emerging mental health concerns worse.



# Dietitian's perspective



Megan McClintock

## Factors influencing risk of ED and higher weight

### Negative influence/increase risk

- Dieting – caloric control with the intention of weight loss
- Weight based teasing – especially within the family
- Weight talk – even if well intended

### Positive influence/reduce risk

- Family meals
- Healthy body image – more difficult for kids in larger bodies due to weight bias/weight stigma



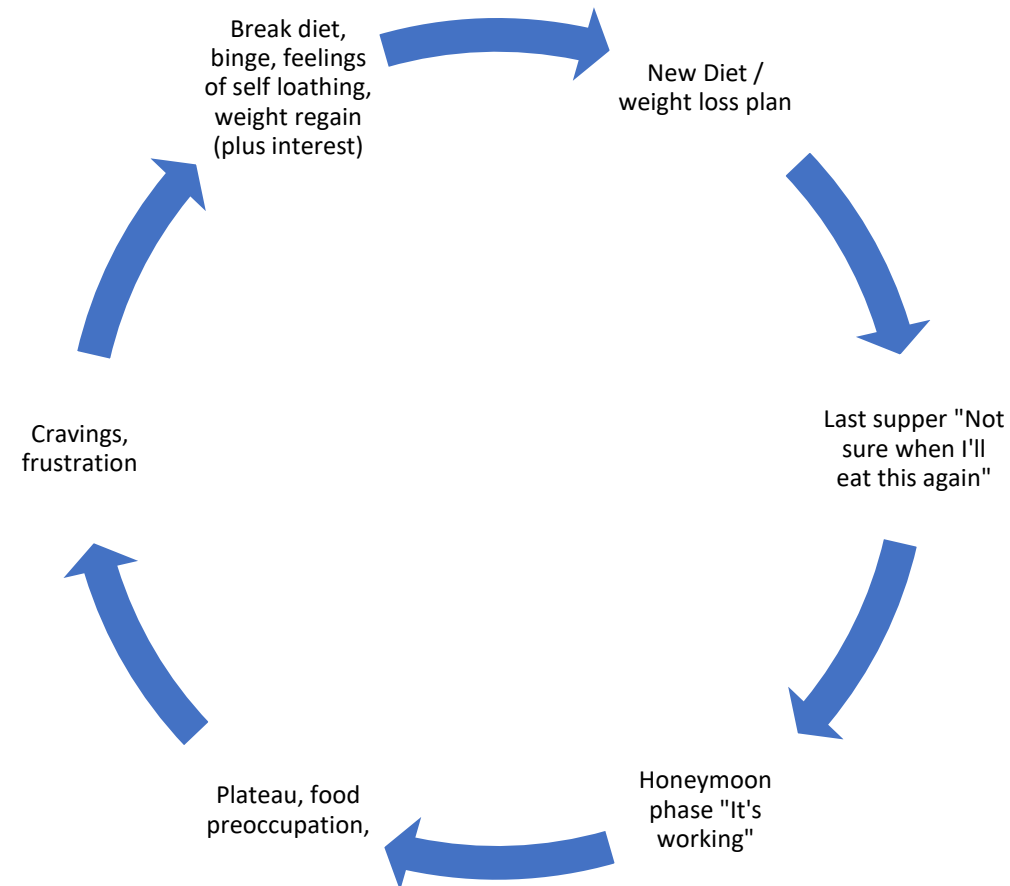
# Dietitian's perspective

## Diet cycle – increases weight from baseline

Intentional weight loss is the perfect storm for weight gain/increased BMI and eating disorders or maladaptive eating behaviour.



Megan McClintock



# Dietitian's perspective



Megan McClintock

## What's the alternative? What can we do for Tom?

Focus on where you want to go, not on what you're trying to avoid

- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Increase fibre
- Improve dietary quality
- Improve dietary variety
- Regulate appetite
- Increase and continue to engage in movement
- Protect and manage sleep
- Reduce/limit screen time
- Keep non-core / discretionary foods in their place
- Teach safe/ healthy distress tolerance strategies

Our traditional weight loss advice and cultural attitudes to larger bodies actually increase barriers to accessing these behaviours for larger kids.



# Dietitian's perspective



Megan McClintock

- Team effort – avoid weight talk (and diet talk)
- Safe and non-stigmatising nutrition education – remove the fear-based diet talk
- Medical professionals - Talk to parents without children in earshot if you have to discuss weight
- Coaches – focus on behaviour and habits, not weight/body characteristics
- Take care with health and wellbeing initiatives that they don't reinforce stigma

Creating environments where weight-based teasing is not tolerated - to the same degree we do not accept race/gender/cultural discrimination/bullying. It is not the job of the victim to change their characteristics to avoid teasing, it is the job of the bully to expand their acceptance of difference.

# Q&A Session



**Amanda**  
Lived Experience



**Dr. Michaela  
Baulderstone**  
General Practitioner, SA



**Megan McClintock**  
Dietitian, NSW



**Facilitator:  
Dr. Daniel Moss**  
Workforce  
Development  
Manager, SA



 Ask a Question

**Ask a question:** To ask the speakers a question, click on the three dots and then 'Ask a Question' in the lower right corner of your screen.





# Thank you for participating

- Please ensure you complete the feedback survey before you log out.
- Your Statement of Attendance will be emailed within four weeks.
- You will receive an email with a link to the recording and resources associated with this webinar in the next few weeks.

Please share your valuable feedback by  
[clicking the banner above](#)

**OR**

[type: bit.ly/3GdhBAh](https://bit.ly/3GdhBAh) into your browser

**OR**

[Scan the QR Code](#)



# Future Webinars

## PHN: Non-medical support and programs for older Australians

Tues 6 December 2022, 7.15pm AEDT

Please share your valuable feedback by  
[clicking the banner above](#)

OR

[type: bit.ly/3GdhBAh](https://bit.ly/3GdhBAh) into your browser

OR

Scan the QR Code



# MHPN Network

MHPN supports over 350 networks across the country where mental health practitioners meet either in person or online to discuss issues of local importance.

Visit [www.mhpn.org.au](http://www.mhpn.org.au) to join your local network, a number bring together practitioners with a shared interest in young people's mental health.

***Interested in starting a new network?*** Email: [networks@mhpn.org.au](mailto:networks@mhpn.org.au) and we will step you through the process, including explaining how we can provide advice, administration and other support.

Please share your valuable feedback by  
[clicking the banner above](#)

OR

[type: bit.ly/3GdhBAh](http://bit.ly/3GdhBAh) into your browser

OR

[Scan the QR Code](#)



This webinar was co-produced by MHPN and Emerging Minds for the Emerging Minds: National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health (NWCCMH) project.

The NWCCMH is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health under the National Support for Child and Youth Mental Health Program.

**Please share your valuable feedback about the  
webinar by:**

**Clicking the banner above**

**OR**

**Scanning the QR Code**

