

Workshop Title

Fat is a Social Work Issue

Detailed Workshop Description

We are bombarded with messages about weight, body shape, and health; the majority of these reinforce the notion that fat=bad/unhealthy. As members of a profession with a commitment to social justice, social workers have an ethical responsibility to explore their own biases and consider practice approaches that promote body diversity.

Through discussion and interactive group activities, workshop participants will explore intersections between weight stigma and other forms of oppression. We will present information about Health at Every Size, a weight neutral approach to health and wellness. Participants will have an opportunity to explore and identify their own internalized beliefs about body size and how practice can be impacted by biases. We will discuss a range of ways social workers can contribute positively to ending weight stigma, from simple everyday actions to larger, social justice initiatives.

Learning Objectives

Workshop participants will...

- explore intersections between weight stigma and other forms of oppression
- learn about Health at Every Size, a weight neutral approach to health and wellness
- identify their own internalized beliefs about body size and how that impacts practice
- discuss a range of ways social workers can contribute positively to ending weight stigma, from simple everyday actions to larger, social justice initiatives

Target Audience

Social workers of all education levels (including students) and at all points in their career will benefit from this workshop. This session will be of particular interest to those who work within the health sector.

Presenter Information

Sydney Bell, RSW

www.sydneybell.ca: [facebook.com/bodyrespectsaskatoon](https://www.facebook.com/bodyrespectsaskatoon)

Sydney is (among other things) a social worker, community developer and body acceptance activist. As a community developer in the health field, her work has focused on poverty elimination, early childhood development and more recently on youth engagement. She also has a private counselling practice, in which she works with clients to cultivate body positivity through which we all can live a healthy and vibrant life, at any size.

Erin Beckwell, RSW

Erin is a social worker who has been volunteering and working in health, education, and community development for over twenty years in the areas of trauma recovery, sexual health, substance use, and social justice. She is currently a Counsellor with the Kids First Program at the Saskatoon Health Region and a Sessional Instructor with the University of Regina Faculty of Social Work. She has also worked at the Saskatoon Sexual Assault & Information Centre, Tamara's House, and AIDS Saskatoon – work that has ignited her passion for creative, justice-oriented, and person-centred practice approaches. Originally from rural Southwest Saskatchewan, she lives in Saskatoon with her wife, Lisa, and their three furry kids (two cats and a dog).