Self Concept of Adults with Cerebral Palsy

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BACKGROUND
Self-concept is a person’s overall view of one’s self and sense of self worth (Fitt, 1996). The assumption is that people with cerebral palsy (CP) are more likely to have poor self concept than peers. Some report lower self concept than peers (Tam, 1995, 1998, 2003). Others report self concept equal to peers (Super & Block 1992, Gaskin & Morris 2008, Antle 2004). Information on adults is inconclusive, and from small samples.

METHODS
Cross-sectional design with a convenience sample
People over the age of 20 with diagnosis of CP who received care at participating hospitals who could independently consent and answer questions
Surveys via telephone interviews:
Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS:2)
Diener’s Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)
Functional Independence Measure™ (FIM™)
Gross Motor Functional Classification System (GMFCS) levels
Beck Depression Inventory II (BDI-II)
Craig Hospital Inventory of Environmental Barriers (CHIEF)
Descriptive Statistics used to identify relationships

RESULTS
102 Participants (143/277 located, 102/143 met criteria)
52 females, Mean age= 26, range 21-58 years

51 had average or high self concept
13 had low self concept
38/102 had out of range scores on TSCS:2

No significant relationship between GMFCS levels and self concept scores
No difference across GMFCS levels and Physical Self Concept

DISCUSSION
More than half of adults had average or above average self concept as compared to normative values; despite physical disability, activity restrictions, environmental barriers, and limited participation in society.