

20.19: Bedroom TV and Hispanic Children

Learning Objectives

- Study of overweight and obesity in Hispanic children

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Overview

The prevalence of overweight and obesity in children in the U.S. is a growing public health concern that disproportionately affects Hispanic youth. As noted by the authors, in 2005 to 2006, 15.5% of all U.S. children aged 2 to 19 years were overweight or obese, compared with 23.2% for boys and 18.5% for girls among Mexican-Americans in this age group. Past research has revealed diverse environmental and behavioral factors that may contribute to this disparity. For example, studies have shown that Hispanic children watch more television than white children.

This study examined TV viewing among 314 Hispanic children aged 5 to 9 years in West Texas and the possible effects of having a TV in the child's bedroom. Children's weights and heights were measured, body mass indexes (BMI) calculated, and sex- and age-adjusted BMI percentiles obtained. The 2000 CDC Growth Charts were used to assess whether or not a child was overweight or at risk for becoming overweight. Their parents completed a family survey assessing demographics, acculturation, parental support of physical activity, dietary practices, the presence of a TV in the participating child's bedroom, and the child's TV/DVD viewing time.

Questions to Answer

Do children with a TV in their bedroom spend more time watching TV/DVDs on a daily basis than children without a TV in their bedroom? Do children with a TV in their bedroom have less support from their parents for physical activity than children without a TV in their bedroom? What might account for missing responses to survey questions?

Design Issues

Except for BMI, the data for all of the study variables were "self-reported" by the parents. The study used a cross-sectional design, which cannot be relied upon to provide conclusive evidence of causal relationships.

Descriptions of Variables

Table 20.19.1: Description of Variables

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION
TVIB, No TVIB	Presence or absence of a TV in the participating child's bedroom
Daily TV/DVD time	Average number of hours the child spent watching TV and DVDs per day

Parental support of physical activity	Scale score calculated as the average of parent's responses to 8 survey items assessing the parent's support of physical activity for the child. Items rated on 4-point Likert scale (0 = never, 3 = always). Research has shown a significant positive relationship between parental support of physical activity and children's physical activity level
Daily fruit and vegetable intake	Average number of cups of fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen, dried, canned, and 100% juice) consumed by the child per day
Daily sweetened beverages	Average number of ounces of soda, fruit drink, sports drink, tea, and lemonade consumed by the child per day

Links

New York Times article

Television and Children information guide

References

- Feng, D., Reed, D. B., Esperat, M. C., Uchida, M. (2011). Effects of TV in the bedroom on young Hispanic children. American Journal of Health Promotion, 25, 310-318.

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