

Maintaining a Healthy Weight for Latino Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: Do Parenting Practices Make a Difference?

Why is this topic important?

Unhealthy weight can have lasting effects on children and youth.



Maintaining healthy weight can be a challenge for all children, and particularly for children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)



Parenting practices related to food and exercise can play a role in maintaining a healthy weight for children.



In a PODER study we examined whether parenting practices related to diet and exercise can influence the weight of children with IDD.



How did we study this topic?

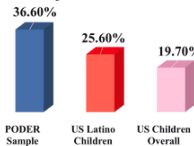
We interviewed 94 Latino families from Illinois and Texas.

We asked how parents manage their children's diet and physical activity.

We gathered data on the height and weight of children to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) - a measure of weight status.

What did we find?

Obesity Prevalence in PODER Sample vs National Rates



We found that 60.3% of the Latino children with IDD were overweight or obese.

This is higher than the national average for Latino children without disabilities and non-Latino White children with autism.

We discovered that Latino children with IDD had lower BMI when their parents used more control over their diets. This is different from findings in non-disabled children.

What does this mean?

There is a significant prevalence of overweight and obesity among Latino children with IDD.

Children with IDD may have unique dietary needs.

More research is needed to understand how to promote health within Latino families with children who have IDD.

Parents can help promote healthy eating and exercise for children with IDD



What can parents of children with IDD do to help their child maintain a healthy weight?



CREATE HEALTHY ROUTINES

Make healthy eating and exercise a part of your child's daily routine.



SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Model healthy eating choices and regular physical activity for your child. Children learn best by observing adults!



GET MOVING AS A FAMILY

Engage in physical activities that the whole family enjoys such as walking, dancing, swimming, gardening, playing active games.

Exercise is more fun when done together!



GO SLOW AND DON'T GIVE UP

Introduce new foods in small quantities and without pressure. If your child rejects the food, try again.



MAKE HEALTHY EATING FUN

Challenge your child to build a 'colorful' plate by choosing from a variety of fruits and vegetables.



HELP YOUR CHILD RECOGNIZE FOOD AS NOURISHMENT AND NOT A REWARD

Use activities or privileges as rewards instead of food treats.



PRAISE HEALTHY CHOICES

When children make a healthy choice, acknowledge it with positive reinforcement.



These steps can help children develop a positive relationship with food and exercise, leading to a healthier lifestyle.

Remember, the goal is to focus on health, not just weight, and to foster a supportive environment for making better lifestyle choices.