D2.5: Children's Perceptions of Obesity Prevention

Author List:
Presenting Author: Elaine Marshall
Additional Author: Bridget Melton, Starla McCollum, Amy Jo Riggs, Marlo Rouse, Barry Joyner, Daniel Czech, Donna Whitt, Cinci Hart

Presenting Author: Elaine Marshall
Address: School of Nursing
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Bridget Melton
Address: College of Health & Human Sciences
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Starla McCollum
Address: College of Health & Human Sciences, Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Amy Jo Riggs
Address: College of Health & Human Sciences, Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University
Additional Author: Marlo Rouse

Address: College of Health & Human Sciences, Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Barry Joyner

Address: College of Health & Human Sciences, Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Daniel Czech

Address: College of Health & Human Sciences, Georgia Southern University
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Georgia Southern University

Additional Author: Donna Whitt

Address: East Georgia Regional Medical Center
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: East Georgia Regional Medical Center

Additional Author: Cinci Hart

Address: Bulloch County Health Department
Statesboro, Georgia 30460
United States
Ph: 912 478-0390
Fax:
Email: elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu
Institution: Bulloch County Health Department

**Presentation Preference:** Research Abstract

**Abstract Categories:**
Research Interest Groups (RIGs): Community/Public Health
Research Interest Groups (RIGs): Qualitative

**Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Childhood obesity is a significant public health epidemic. It is especially severe among communities of the southeastern United States. Though research has increased on obesity prevention, there is little known of children’s own perceptions of the problem or meaning of obesity prevention. The purpose of this study was to explore the perspective of school-age children regarding health and body weight. It is part of a larger community-based action research and intervention project.

**Method(s):** The study followed a descriptive qualitative design. Participants were 39 8 to 11 year-old children from a community in the rural southeastern United States. Children were recruited from community centers and faith-based summer study camps. They completed open-ended semi-structured questionnaires responding to items such as: 1) When I think of being healthy, I think of -, 2) For me to be healthy I need to - 3) To be healthy, other kids need to - 4) To me the word “obesity” means - . Children were also given the opportunity to provide colored drawings to depict what it meant for them and their family to be healthy. Written responses and drawings were independently analyzed by at least two investigators according to themes. Trustworthiness was confirmed by discussion by the entire team of analytic methods and results.

**Results:** Children identified health behaviors of diet, exercise, sleep, and avoiding over-weight. Most children were able to offer a general accurate definition of obesity, and perceived others as over-weight. Themes from the data included categories of healthy foods, unhealthy foods, exercise, and avoidance of weight gain. The children’s drawings enriched the data by depicting personal portrayals of family members, foods and family eating environments, and connections between happiness and health.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** The study is a beginning effort to engage children in community-based efforts to address issues of obesity prevention. It affirmed the value of the subjective perspective of the child in issues related to family and community health. Results provide a foundation for further study to develop effective and lasting family and community interventions to prevent and manage childhood obesity.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
Financial Disclosure:
No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

FDA Disclosure:
I will not be describing any pharmaceutical and/or medical device.

Non-Exclusive License:

Submitted by:
elainemarshall@georgiasouthern.edu