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Abstract #159827

Evaluation of a pediatric weight management program shows promising outcomes

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Obesity is an epidemic among children and adolescents. Minority children are at a higher risk for obesity related health consequences. Starting Right is an obesity screening, treatment and prevention program of The Children's Health Fund and The Children's Hospital at Montefiore. The Starting Right Health & Fitness Program is a 14-week weight management program for youth (10 – 14) seen in a community health center in the South Bronx. Analysis of participant anthropometric data shows that even though only 24% of participants (n = 28) lost weight, 82% had the same or lower BMI score at the end of the 14 week program. 82% of participants had a lower BMI z-score, a more sensitive measure of change compared to BMI or BMI percentile, which showed a 36% and 7% decrease, respectively. Furthermore, a pre/post questionnaire, keyed to the program's curriculum, assessed participants and parents' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Preliminary outcome data for participants (n =15) showed significant behavior change in increased fruit and skim milk consumption ($p < .05$) and a trend toward decreased sweet beverage consumption and increased exercise. Parents showed significant behavior change around snacking when not hungry, using food labels and increased exercise ($p <.05$). Preliminary results indicate that this 14 week program, set in an urban community, can favorably impact behavior change and BMI Z score among high-risk overweight youth. Moreover, this data show that providing targeted interventions to high risk communities with minimal resources can play an important role in fighting this epidemic.

Learning Objectives:

- List outcome measures that will effectively assess weight management programs.
- Understand the value of using BMI-z score as a means for evaluating weight management program
- Describe strategies that help youth make positive diet and physical activity behavior changes.

Poster Session III: Select Nutrition Policy Issues

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