



Progress Report:

Cross-Cultural Perceptions of Weight, Body Image and Health

Culture and Community Working Group
CLOCC Quarterly Meeting Presentation
June 2, 2004



Background

- Sinai Urban Health Institute revealed startling data at the September 2003 CLOCC Quarterly Meeting on child obesity in minority communities in Chicago
- Misperceptions of child weight status among parents of overweight children was a key finding

Clinically Obese Children

(BMI for age \geq 95th percentile, 2-12 yrs, n=542)

Community Area	Obese, %	Obesity Comparison, %
Humboldt Park	47	US = 13
West Town	48	NHB = 15 H = 19**
South Lawndale	43	NHW = 11
North Lawndale	48	
Roseland	53	
Norwood Park	19	

* Clinically obese children 2-11 years, calculated from NHANES 1999-2000 data; ** Hispanic data is mainly for Mexicans.

Slide courtesy of Sinai Urban Health Institute

Perceived Obesity Among Clinically Obese or Overweight

(BMI \geq 85th%, 2-12yrs, n=321)

Community Area	About the right weight or underweight
Humboldt Park	79
West Town	67
South Lawndale	64
North Lawndale	88
Roseland	88
Norwood Park	85

Slide courtesy of Sinai Urban Health Institute



Background (cont.)

- The Culture and Community WG wanted to review the available literature to inform future project development.
- Topics of interest include cross-cultural perceptions of body image, perceived health status of overweight children, clinicians' perspectives, and cultural perceptions as a barrier to health system utilization.
- Elena Navas-Nacher took on the task of reviewing these topics in early April.



Progress Report

Cross-cultural perceptions of:

- Body image and perceived health status of overweight children is the basis of this presentation
- Clinicians' perspectives will be reported on today by Dr. Ariza (a CLOCC seed grant)
- Cultural perceptions as a barrier to health system utilization has been a difficult topic to get literature on. Work is continuing, but not the focus of this presentation.



Body Image and Health Status

Literature Review:

- Self Perception
- Socio-Cultural Perception

of overweight (O.W.) and obesity among African American (AA) and Latin American (LA) communities in the U.S.



Parental Perceptions of Childhood Overweight Among African American and Latin American Populations

- O.W. children, especially those under the age of 5, are perceived as physically, emotionally, and mentally healthy
- Approximately 30% of mothers of O.W. children are unaware of the child's nutritional status
- Girls are more likely to perceive themselves as overweight than boys of similar age



Childhood Perceptions of Overweight Among African American and Latin American Populations

- Approximately 30% of mothers of O.W. children are unaware of the child's nutritional status
- Younger children (< 5 years) are less likely to be considered O.W.
- Boys are less likely to be perceived as O.W. than girls of similar age



Summary of Early Findings

- Compared to Non Hispanic Whites, AA and LA parents are less likely to be aware of O.W. risk or status of their children
- Overall, there is a greater acceptance of larger body size and shape among these two minority groups than NHW
- Both girls and boys experiences issues of self esteem and feelings of inadequacy when aware of their O.W. risk or status



Link Between this Literature Search and Topics Addressed by Panels

- Even though AA and LA parents and children are more accepting of a larger body size and shape, they experience similar psycho-social issues to those of NHW
- Physicians, researchers and other public health officials need to take the socio-cultural differences into consideration when evaluating, counseling and treating members from these populations

Research Needs

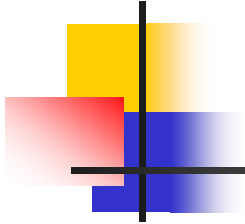


- Chicago data on perceptions (Sinai) need to be validated
- Larger scale studies which include a representative sample of AA, LA and other ethnic groups are necessary to further evaluate the inter-racial and cultural differences
- More pediatric studies (including children <5 years) should be developed since these data are sparse
- Continuing review will include perceptions across age differences as well as ethnicity



Opportunities to Develop Targeted Community-Based Interventions

- Targeted community-based interventions in these two minority communities need to take into consideration these socio-cultural differences and tailor methodology accordingly
- AA and LA populations are more likely to participate in nutritional and physical activity programs that address and incorporate their respective cultural values and preferences (e.g. Hip hop and Latin music, respectively)



Consortium to Lower Obesity
in Chicago Children

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