

2012 Child Behaviors and Health in Garapan Preliminary Results

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA)-supported Children's Healthy Living Program, or CHL, has been working with your community to understand the behaviors and health of children 2-8 years of age. During November and December, 2012, parents, teachers, community members, and project partners gathered data in your community. A total of 136 children from Garapan participated in this study. Here we have some preliminary results from our joint work. With this information, parents and community leaders can see where things are going well and where additional energy, leadership, and resources will need to be placed to raise the next generation of healthy, happy children.

Child sex, age, race distribution

Among the 136 children, 64 (47%) were girls and 72 (53%) were boys. Furthermore, 107 (79%) were of age group 2-5 years and 29 (21%) of age group 6-8 years. All 136 children had information on race, of which 86 (63%) were Asian, 32 (24%) were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (NHPI), 17 (13%) were of more than one racial group, and 1 (1%) was some other race.

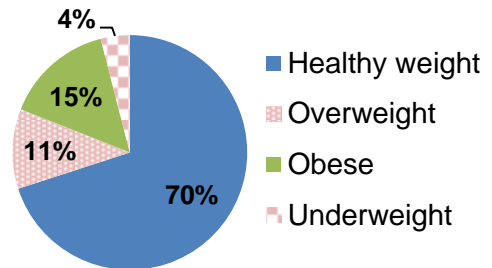
Potential outliers with extreme values (defined as those with a value of 3 standard deviations (sd) above or below the mean) were also excluded from this report. Data was looked at by child's sex and age group.

Children's Body Mass Index by Category as defined by the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC)

All 136 children were included for this analysis. Among them, 70% were healthy weight, 11% were overweight, 15% were obese, and 4% were underweight (Figure 1).

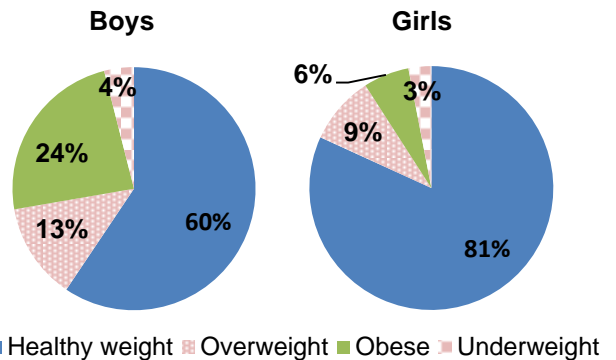
A difference of BMI distribution was observed between boys and girls. Boys are more likely than girls to be obese (24% versus 6%, Figure 2). No difference was found between children aged 2-5 and those aged 6-8 years old (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Prevalence of overweight and obesity of all study children from Garapan (n=136)



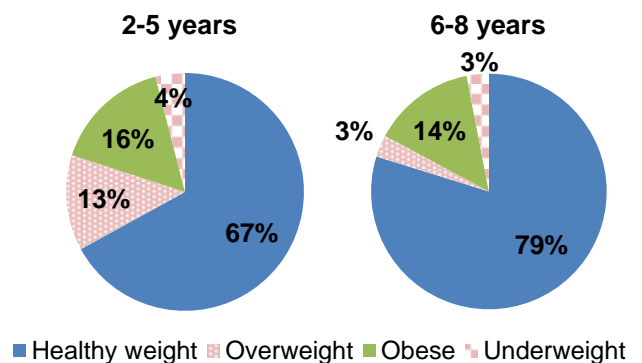
Boys are more likely than girls to be obese (24% versus 6%) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Prevalence of overweight and obesity comparing boys (n=72) to girls (n=64)



No difference was found between children aged 2-5 and those aged 6-8 years old (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Prevalence of overweight and obesity comparing 2-5 years (n=107) to 6-8 years (n=29)



Strategies that have found to be effective in the prevention of childhood obesity include: (1) A healthy lifestyle, which encourages children to move more, sleep more and spend less screen time (2) A healthy diet, which encourages children to drink more water, eat more fruit and vegetables and consume fewer sugar sweetened beverages.

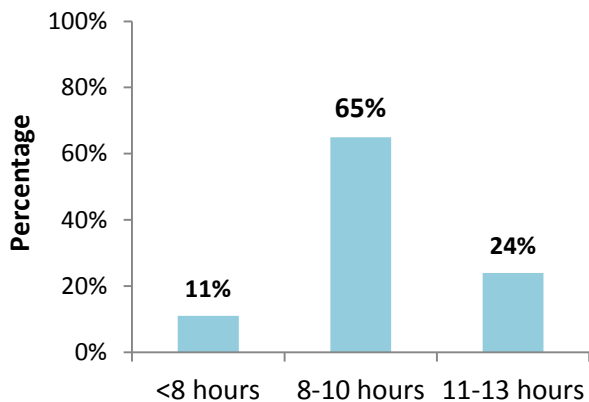
Parents were asked about their children's' sleeping duration on a typical day. Let's see how the kids are doing on sleeping and on achieving national sleep recommendations in Garapan.

Children Sleep Duration

A total of 132 children were included in the analysis of sleep duration. The average number of hours of sleep per day among those 132 children was 9.6 (sd=1.8). No difference was found between boys and girls, or between those aged 2-5 years old and those aged 6-8 years old.

Among the 104 two to five year olds, 24% met the national recommendation of sleep of between 11-13 hours daily (11-13 hours in the graph). Another 65% of children slept more than 8 hours but less than 11 hours daily (8-10 hours in the graph) and 11% slept less than 8 hours (<8 hours in the graph) (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of children 2-5 years old among 3 groups of sleep duration



Over three-fourths (76%) of our younger children (2-5 years old) did not meet the national recommendation of 11-13 hours daily of sleep. This is an opportunity for both parents and educators to intervene to help children get more sleep.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the families of participants who completed our assessments so that we could make this important information available, as well as all our community partners for working with us to improve the health of children across the Pacific.

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