

2014 Child Behaviors and Health in Melkeok 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. In March-April 2014, parents, teachers, community members, and project partners gathered data in your community. A total of 14 children from the Melkeok community 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

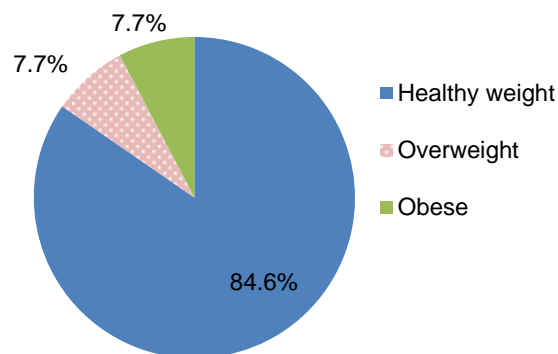
Among the 14 children, all had information on sex, of which 9 (64%) were girls and 5 (36%) were boys. Furthermore, 9 (64%) were of age group 2-5 years and 5 (36%) were of age group 6-8 years. All had information on race, of which 11 (79%) were Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (NHPI) and 29 (22%) were more than one race. From NHPI children, all were Palauan.

Potential outliers with extreme values (defined as those with a value of 3 standard deviations (sd) above or below the mean) were excluded from this report.

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

A total of 13 children were included for this analysis. Among them, 84.6% were healthy weight, 7.7% were obese, and 7.7% were overweight (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Prevalence of overweight and obesity of children from Melkeok (n=13)



Strategies that CHL is promoting in raising healthy children 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. Below we show how the children are doing on achieving some of those strategies.

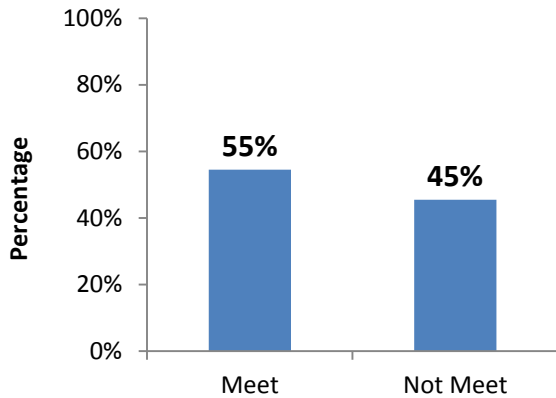
Children's moderate and vigorous level of physical activity (MVPA) as measured by accelerometer

In each study community, children were asked to wear an accelerometer for 6 days, which records the child's activity by each second. Average minutes per day of children's MVPA were obtained from the accelerometer data.

In Melkeok total of 11 children had valid accelerometer data. Among those 11 children, daily average minutes of moderate and vigorous physical activity (MVPA) were 72.6 (sd=41.4).

Fifty five percent of those 11 children met the national recommendation of 60 minutes a day of MVPA (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of children in Melkeok meeting national recommendations of 60 minutes a day of moderate and vigorous types of physical activity



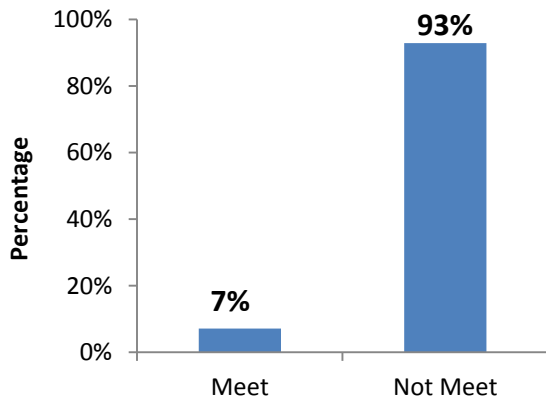
Almost half of children (45%) did not meet the national recommendation of 60 minutes a day of MVPA. This is an opportunity for both parents and educators to engage more children in physical activity.

Children’s screen time

A total of 14 children were included in the analysis of screen time. Among them, average screen time, such as watching TV, video games, or DVD, or playing active or inactive video games was 5.6 hours (sd=3.0).

While the national recommendation is for each child to spend 2 or less hours on screens every day, only 7% of our study children met this recommendation (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of children in Melkeok meeting the national recommendation of each child to spend 2 or fewer hours of screen time every day



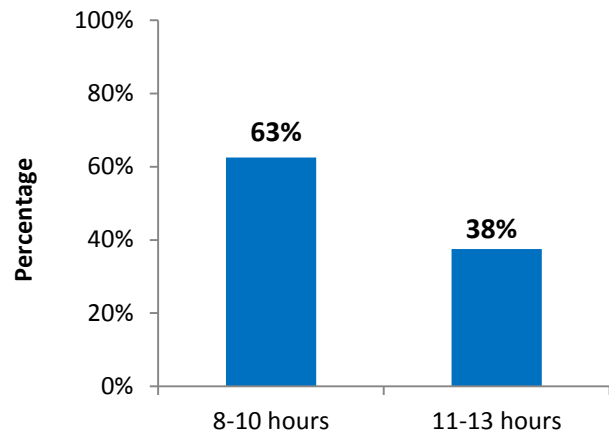
More than nine in ten (93%) of children appear to be spending too much time watching screens! This is an opportunity for both parents and educators to intervene to help children spend less screen time.

Children’s Sleep Duration

A total of 14 children were included in the analysis of sleep duration. The average number of hours of sleep per day was 9.2 (sd=2.0).

Among the eight 2-5 year olds, 38% met the national recommendation of sleep of between 11-13 hours daily (11-13 hours in the graph). Another 63% of children slept more than 8 hours but less than 11 hours daily (8-10 hours in the graph). No children slept less than 8 hours daily (Figure 4).

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



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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