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### **Television Watching and Risk of Obesity in American Adolescents**

Martin J. Atherson and James Metcalf

A large national database (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2001) was analyzed for age, sex, race/ethnicity and television viewing among American adolescents aged 12-18 years. Body Mass Indices (BMI) were calculated from self-reported height and weight. Ninety-fifth percentile and above was classified as obese; <95<sup>th</sup> percentile was classified as non-obese. After controlling for age, sex and race, odds ratios were calculated for obesity and hours/day of television viewing on an average school day. Five or more hours of television viewing on an average school day roughly doubles the risk of obesity. This holds for both males and females. Moreover, these data show a linear trend toward obesity as daily television view increases. These data confirm - at the national level - the earlier regional studies linking television viewing to obesity. Health educators may now consider television viewing as a significant risk factor for adolescent obesity.

### **Take Pride in America's Health: Volunteering as a Gateway to Physical Activity**

John Librett, Michelle M. Yore, David M. Buchner and Thomas L. Schmid The authors discuss the role that volunteer programs may play in increasing levels of physical activity. In some cases volunteer programs may simultaneously improve individual health, benefit the environment and increase the public's opportunities for physical activity. From a survey of 2,032 respondents, results suggest that volunteers are more likely to meet physical activity recommendations than non-volunteers. Moreover, those who volunteer on environmental issues are 2.6 times as likely to meet physical activity recommendations as those who do not volunteer for these issues. Policies that support volunteer opportunities involving environmental projects such as maintaining trails, planting trees and cleaning parks, may be important for individual fitness because of their potential for high levels of physical activity. Volunteer activities that produce personal health benefits fit well within the actions of a comprehensive health promotion effort and health educators are well positioned to partner with volunteer programs. Moreover, this promising practice serves as an opportunity for health educators to be effective consumers of health promotion's research. Health educators are encouraged to seek partnership opportunities on future studies to clarify the role that volunteer programs requiring physical activity may play in promoting or maintaining health.

### **Understanding Reduced-fat Milk Consumption Among Male Adolescents Using the Theory of Planned Behavior**

Nada O. Kassem and Jerry W. Lee

This study identifies factors that influences reduced-fat milk consumption among 560 male students, ages 13-18 years, attending North Los Angeles County public high schools. Participants completed a group-administered Theory of Planned Behavior-based questionnaire. The majority of the participants, 94.8%, reported that they currently drank some kind of milk. Of those who reported that they drank milk, 68.2% reported that they currently drank reduced-fat milk or skim milk. Attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control were each significant predictors of intention to drink reduced-fat milk

and together explained 62% of its variance. The strongest predictor was attitude; followed by perceived behavioral control and subjective norm. Taste and possible health benefits were the primary predictors of attitude; parents, siblings and doctors' opinions predicted subjective norm; and availability of reduced-fat milk at home and school predicted perceived control. These findings may guide health professionals in planning programs intended to increase reduced-fat milk consumption among male adolescents.

### **Indiana Residents' Perceptions of Driving and Lower Blood Alcohol Concentration** Dong-Chul Seo and Mohammad R. Torabi

Since Congress passed .08 blood alcohol concentration (BAC) as the national standard for impaired driving in October 2000, 28 U.S. States including Indiana have enacted .08 BAC law. This study investigated perceived impact of the .08 law among Indiana residents and their attitudinal and perceptual changes since the enforcement of the law. The focus of this study was to examine demographic differences in these changes. Using random-digit dialing that included unpublished numbers and new listings, a representative sample of 525 adult Indiana residents ages 18 or older was interviewed. Of the total respondents, 61% (n=320) reported having 12 or more drinks a year, 15% (n=81) reported a decrease in the number of alcohol drinking occasions compared to their drinking behavior before the passage of the .08 law and 30% advocated further reduction of the legal limit of impaired driving below .08 g/dl, which reflects the perception of increased safety. Even though 38% of the total respondents expressed that the BAC law should be enforced only when drinking and driving was a factor in an accident, 75% acknowledged that their driving skills became worse after consuming a couple of drinks. Chi-square and logistic regression analyses indicated that gender, education and income were significant predictors for the majority of attitudinal and perceptual outcome variables regarding drinking and driving or .08 BAC law whereas race/ethnicity, age, employment status, religion, and political views contributed little to the prediction.

### **Using Participatory Action Research to Develop a School-based Environmental Intervention to Support Healthy Eating and Physical Activity**

Stephanie Vecchiarelli, Michael Prelip, Wendelin Slusser, Heather Weightman and Charlotte Neumann

Rates of overweight children and adolescents have nearly tripled over the past 30 years. Many barriers exist to health eating and physical activity for children and adolescents, including factors in the school and community environment. It is these modifiable school environmental factors that led to the development of the Nutrition Friendly Schools and Communities (NFSC) model to prevent the development of overweight in children and adolescents. Development of the NFSC model built upon the Coordinated School Health Program, the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, Participatory Research, and Empowerment Evaluation. The purpose of the NFSC environmental intervention is to actively engage the school community to prevent overweight in students through a multi-level participative intervention that facilitates coordinated changes in the school environment in the following areas: health education, physical education, health services, food services, school policy, staff wellness, psychosocial services, and family/community involvement. The NFSC model is the basis by which school communities develop a plan and evaluation that lead to a healthy school environment and prevent the development of

overweight in children. A pilot study of the NFSC model is currently being conducted in eight low-income, minority, urban schools. This paper describes the development of the NFSC model and criteria.

**Educating and Treating School Children Impacts Much More Than the Child**

James A. Lalumandier, Kristin A. Williams and Francis M. Curd The Healthy Smiles Sealant Program dramatically impacts the dental school, university, schoolchildren and community. Expanding the program district-wide necessitated modifying the dental school curriculum to emphasize the importance of improving the oral health of society. At the university, the president points to the dental school as the symbol of engagement with the community in educating nearly 11,000 children, treating 4,500 children and referring 2,300 children during the 2003-2004 school year.