

Preventing obesity in the child care setting^[1]

Evaluating state regulations

Author: Duke University School of Medicine

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AVAILABILITY

- Report in pdf^[2]
- State reports^[3]

Description:

Over the past few decades, the prevalence of childhood obesity has risen dramatically in the US. Today, 24.4% of children ages two through five years are classified as either overweight or obese. The preschool period is a critical time for growth and development. Establishing healthy eating habits and encouraging daily active play early in childhood can help prevent obesity and cultivate lifelong healthy behaviors.

In the US, nearly 74% of children ages three to six are in some form of non-parental care and just over half are in center-based child care. With such large numbers of children in child care, child care providers are in a unique position to support and facilitate healthful eating and promote physical activity among young children.

State regulations help promote the health of children in child care and have the potential to help prevent obesity, yet regulations for child care facilities vary considerably by state. The authors of this study examined state child care regulations from the fifty US States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Department of Defense and found:

-Most states had few regulations related to obesity for child care centers and family child care homes, leaving much room for improvement.

-Compared to model regulations for healthy eating and physical activity that were developed to help prevent obesity in young children, states had an average of only about three of 20 regulations.

-Georgia and Nevada ranked highest for the total number of healthy eating and physical activity regulations; South Dakota, Puerto Rico, and Idaho ranked lowest.

Tags: health^[4]

legislation and regulation^[5]

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