Family-based Behavioral Treatment Leads to Parental Report of Healthier Food Choices and Exercise of School-aged Children

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October 28, 2019

Abstract

The purpose of this evidence-based quantitative quasi-experimental project was to compare presenting information of the evidence-based Stoplight Diet and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) exercise recommendations, to parents’ reports of initial changes of healthier foods and drink choices and changes in exercise level of their child. Participants included families of children ages 6-9 at a pediatric primary care office in southeast United States (U.S.). The theory of planned behavior is the theoretical framework often used to assess health awareness and promote healthy food and drink choices in addition to increased levels of exercise. The clinical questions are: does implementation of a family-based behavior treatment of presenting information on the evidence-based Stoplight Diet lead to parental reporting of initial changes in healthier food and drink choices of their child? Does implementation of a family-based behavioral treatment of presenting information on CDC exercise recommendations lead to parents reporting initial change in their child’s exercise level? A quantitative pre-intervention and post-intervention design was used and data was analyzed through SPSS using paired t-tests. The intervention had a significant effect of increasing the servings of fruits and vegetables \((p=0.001)\), decreasing the number of times a week a child eats take out \((p=0.016)\), and increasing the time of active play \((p=0.049)\). This project influenced awareness of healthy foods and drinks and exercise of families. Future considerations may include a longer duration of the intervention for evaluations of sustainability.

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