

11th International Conference on

Childhood Obesity and Nutrition

March 15-16, 2018 | Barcelona, Spain



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Analysis and evaluation of meals served in state registered private childcare settings

The prevalence of obesity nationally among 2-5 year-old children declined from 14% in 2003–2004 to 8% in 2011-2012. However, low-income families and certain racial and ethnic groups continue to have higher rates of obesity above the national average. The dietary guideline 2015-2020 reported an under consumption in key nutrients needed to maintain health and prevent disease. The goal of this study was to determine compliance of meals offered in private childcare centers in Waller county and to analyze and evaluate the nutritional quality and content of meals served in state registered child care facilities against the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines. Nutritional adequacy of breakfast and lunch menus and the types of foods offered was assessed against national standards. A cross-sectional descriptive study design was utilized. A convenience sample of 10 childcare centers was selected. Menus were collected from selected centers and three were visited for on-site meal observation. Menus were analyzed for nutrient content using Nutritionist Pro software (Axxya Systems, Stafford, Texas) and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Results found a statistically significant difference between the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for children between the ages of 1-5 year old and the intake of protein, fat, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, fiber and sugar. The researchers concluded that children dietary intakes did not meet national standards on some key nutrients necessary to support proper growth and development and prevention of disease.

Biography

Beverly M Copeland has her expertise in Childhood Obesity working in the low-income and underserved populations. She seeks to find solutions to the prevention and treatment of childhood obesity. She is a registered and licensed Dietitian with the skill set needed to understand and developed tailored nutrition intervention programs to combat childhood obesity. She continues to work with caregivers, teachers and other stakeholders who are interested in seeing childhood obesity on a downward trajectory. She is currently an Assistant Professor and Director at College of Agriculture and Human Sciences-Prairie View A&M University.

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