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Assessing community readiness for childhood overweight prevention in elementary school children: A case study in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya

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Childhood overweight and obesity is a global public health concern. Thailand is using community-based interventions, but few people know about how to tailor these approaches to local needs and assets. This qualitative study applied the Community Readiness Model (CRM), for the first time in Thailand, to understand community contexts that could facilitate or hinder the development of an overweight prevention model and to demonstrate its applicability in designing tailored interventions. A semi-structured interview was used to assess community readiness in Sena municipality, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya. Twelve key informants from different segments of the community (e.g. community leaders, parents, healthcare, school and municipality), were identified and included. The CRM assesses 9 stages of readiness for 5 dimensions: Community knowledge, community knowledge of the efforts, leadership, community climate and resources. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and were firstly analyzed thematically and then scored using the CRM assessment guidelines. The overall community readiness score was 1.62 which was equal to the first stage of readiness: No awareness. It means that the community has not yet recognized that there is a problem that needs to be changed. The CRM is an assessment tool that provides insight into the context which the community is working on overweight prevention. This understanding should facilitate the use of strategies matched to the community level of readiness. Further, community readiness scores can be used to measure progress toward achievement of the desired outcomes.

Biography

Achara Pakdeepinid is currently pursuing Doctor of Philosophy with major in Education and Social Development from Burapha University. She has received her Bachelor's degree in Nursing Science and Master's degree in Science, major subject is Counseling Psychology. She has over 10 years of counseling experience in psychology problems and behavioral modification. She is also interested in motivational interviewing and developed behavioral modification curriculum, a short course training for nurse case managers. Currently, she is working at the Bureau of Non-Communicable Disease, Ministry of Public Health, and Thailand.

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