

Q11

Title: The Prevalence of Obesity among Food Insecure School-aged Children in a Family Medicine Residency Practice

Author(s): Anna Cherian

Affiliation: Northeast Ohio Medical University

"Background: Food insecurity, a social determinant of health, can be particularly harmful to children. Almost 13 million children, 17.5% of all children in the United States (US) lived in food-insecure households in 2016. American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released a policy statement in 2015 recommending screening all children for food insecurity.

Hypothesis: Among children aged 6-18 years old, those from food insecure households will have a higher BMI and likelihood of being overweight or obese compared to those from food secure households.

Methods:

Design: Mixed methods project: retrospective chart review and food security survey.

Participants: Convenience sample of all patients who have children, aged 6-18 years who present for a visit at the family practice residency office during the project period of four weeks.

Results: 72 patients between the ages of 6-18 were screened. 19 patients (26%) were identified as food insecure. Out of the 19 patients who were food insecure, 8 (42%) were overweight or obese and 11 were a healthy weight. 53 patients (74%) were identified as food secure. Out of the 53 patients who were food secure, 19 (35%) were overweight or obese and 34 were a healthy weight.

Conclusion: A two-item food security survey is a quick and easy tool for health professionals to be successful in identifying patients who are food insecure. Food insecurity and obesity co-exist within children and increased referrals to food assistance programs such as SNAP and WIC can ameliorate food insecurity and the negative health consequences associated with it.

"