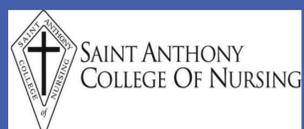


# Improving Health Knowledge Among Hispanic Mothers in Winnebago County

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## BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Childhood obesity has both immediate and long-term effects on health by increasing risk for: <sup>1</sup>

- Sleep apnea
- Pre-diabetes
- Type II diabetes
- Hypertension
- Asthma
- Adult obesity
- Weight related bullying
- Low self-esteem
- Depression
- Increase school absenteeism

Hispanic's dietary habits are influence by: <sup>2,3</sup>

- Culture and personal values
- Family members
- Economics and access to healthy foods

The Illinois General Assembly's Obesity Prevention initiative reports: <sup>4,5</sup>

- 20% of all Illinois children are obese
- 33% of Hispanic children living in Illinois are obese

## METHOD

- 11 Hispanic mothers were recruited from a local Winnebago church using stratified purposeful sampling
- Data was collected using a structured interview guide
- Interview notes were analyzed using the grounded theory method

## RESULTS

Analysis of the interviews identified three themes that influenced dietary habits as follows:

1. Structural barriers
2. Family dynamics
3. Changing cultural patterns



## CONCLUSIONS

### Research:

- Although this was a small sample size, this study reveals that dietary practices and gender roles play a very important part in eating habits. Interventions should take into account how long the individual has been in the United States in order to incorporate healthier nutrients when migrating into a new culture.

### Education:

- It is essential to also include the fathers in nutritional education as well as find tips for finding time for healthy cooking.
- The study identified the need to educate providers on Hispanic's dietary practices.
- Educate the family on quick and easy healthy meals.

### Practice:

- Primary care providers can expand their role in managing children's weight by providing educational tools designed for the Hispanic family.
- Children and fathers as primary dietary decision makers should be included in interventions aimed to improve healthy eating habits.

### Policy:

- Funding guidelines for obesity prevention interventions should be flexible to meet the needs of local communities.
- The cost of access to healthy foods needs to be addressed.



## PURPOSE

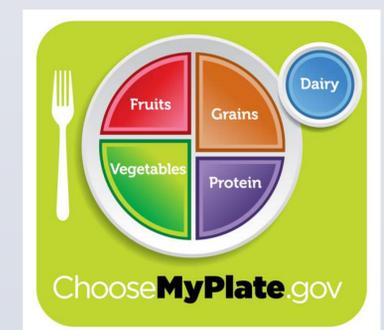
The purpose of this pilot study was to identify how environment, behaviors and beliefs impact dietary habits of Hispanic mothers in Winnebago County. Data will be used to develop an obesity prevention intervention.

The aim of this study was to explore:

- What do Hispanic mothers in Winnebago County know about the USDA dietary guidelines?
- What factors influences Hispanic mothers' dietary habits?
- What effect does living in Midwest have on the eating patterns of Hispanic families?



Theme	Quotes	Implications
Structural barriers	<p><i>"One of the challenges to cooking at home is time and energy consuming."</i></p> <p><i>"I usually cook three times a week but the biggest challenge about cooking at home is my work schedule so either my husband or I cook."</i></p> <p><i>"The biggest barrier in eating healthy is money. Eating healthy is expensive".</i></p>	<p>Time management was identified as a key factor in the nutritional decision-making process with mothers balancing working full time with meal preparation.</p> <p>Cost of the food is a continuous problem and the cost issues has to be addressed in order for individuals to eat healthy.</p>
Family dynamics	<p><i>"My husband is the one who has provided information on healthy eating habits".</i></p> <p><i>"Usually my husband cooks 5 days a week".</i></p> <p><i>"My grandparents cooked Mexican spicy foods like fried food, red meat, tortillas, pork, green chile. Corn oil was mainly used."</i></p> <p><i>"My children favorite food is spaghetti, chicken nuggets, chicken patties, and frozen food. The kids eat their favorite food 2-3 times a week".</i></p> <p><i>"My child likes to eat pasta mostly spaghetti and eats it once a week".</i></p>	<p>Fathers are becoming involved in decision making and cooking as much as five days a week which is different in Latin America.</p> <p>Nutrition training has to focus on the father since they are cooking more than the mother.</p> <p>Length of time in the United States and age of the individual should be considered when working ways to improve healthy eating habits. For instance, with Hispanic grandparents the focus may be on how to cook healthier Hispanic dishes. However, when working with a younger Hispanic population the focus should be on preparing healthy "American" food.</p>
Changing cultural patterns	<p><i>"We enjoy pizza and eat out at a pizzeria every 2-3 weeks."</i></p> <p><i>"Our favorite restaurant is Portillos and we usually eat there Friday, Saturdays or Sundays".</i></p>	<p>Acculturation, in particular to the adoption of a Midwestern diets has led to cultural dietary changes within the Hispanic population.</p>



## REFERENCES

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- <sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control (2014). Data and statistics: Obesity rates among all children in the United States (Data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey). Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/childhood.html>
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