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Evidenced-Based Research Project
Abstract

Title: Nutrition Standards and the Theory of Planned Behavior in the Child-Care Setting

Abstract Text:

Childhood obesity rates continue to be an urgent health concern. At the same time, the number of children being cared for outside of the home is increasing. Because eating habits and behaviors are developed early in life, child-care centers are prime environments for obesity-prevention interventions. As child-care providers are the gatekeepers to nutrition provided within these centers, their intentions towards behavior change are worth exploring. To date little research has focused on nutrition standards and wellness policies related to provider's intentions within the child-care setting. The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between certain constructs of theory of planned behavior (TPB) among child-care providers and adherence to nutrition standards within 27 child-care centers. The TPB constructs that were selected to help predict intention to change behaviors included: provider's attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control. Participating child-care centers completed self-reported pre- and post- intervention surveys regarding adherence to nutrition standards, and a questionnaire based on the three selected TPB constructs listed above. The interventions, which were grant funded, involved the creation and implementation of an action plan related to nutrition and wellness policy practices to enhance overall wellness and nutrition at the centers. Each participating center was assigned a mentor, participated in three training sessions, and received a curriculum. The post intervention survey and TPB questionnaire were compared using Spearman's correlations. Results suggest no significant relationship between the three TPB constructs and adherence to nutrition standards. Additional research may help to determine the best way to predict behavior change related to adherence to nutrition policies among child-care providers.