

## Child vs Parent Perception of HRQOL in Healthy Weight and Obese Children

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**Background:** An individual's perceived psychological and social health may be measured by obtaining their health-related quality of life (HRQOL). Obtaining a measure of HRQOL provides insight regarding the effects of disorders, disabilities, and diseases in an individual's day-to-day life. Previous studies reported that obese children displayed lower and impaired HRQOL compared to healthy weight children. Furthermore, parents of obese children reported significantly impaired HRQOL compared to their children.

**Objective:** To examine HRQOL in healthy weight and obese children as well as their parent's perception of their HRQOL

**Design:** A cross-sectional analysis of 18 participants [5 obese (>95<sup>th</sup> body mass index (BMI) percentile, 13 healthy weight (25<sup>th</sup> -  $\leq$ 85<sup>th</sup> BMI percentile), 18 Caucasian, age range 7-10 years; 8 males, 10 females] prior to participation in a before-school physical activity program.

**Methods:** The Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (PedsQL) Measurement Model for children ages 8-12 years along with a parent proxy-report of child HRQOL was administered. Height and weight were also measured and BMI [ $\text{wt(kg)}/\text{ht(m)}^2$ ] was calculated.

**Results:** Although not significant, the obese children displayed higher HRQOL total scores (85.7) compared to the healthy weight children (82.3). Parents of obese children reported a lower HRQOL (80.2) compared to their children (85.7). Healthy weight children reported similar HRQOL to their parents (82.3 vs. 83.3, respectively). The parents of healthy weight children reported higher HRQOL scores on all scales [physical (89.4), emotional (76.2), social (86.5), and school (77.3) functioning] than the parents of obese children (85.6, 74, 82, and 76, respectively).

**Conclusions:** Although limited by a small sample size, in the current study, the obese children reported a higher HRQOL compared to their healthy weight peers. This is inconsistent with what has been reported in the literature, however, the majority of previous studies investigated HRQOL in older children and adolescents. Perhaps obesity does not impact HRQOL until a child reaches adolescence however, this proposition warrants further investigation. The perceptions of HRQOL observed between the obese children and their parents, however, are similar to previous studies. Future research plans include investigation regarding HRQOL in young children of various weights as well as further insight into their parents' perception of HRQOL.