Like Mother, Like Child: Maternal Attitudes and Behaviors on Weight-Related Health Behaviors in Their Children

Jyu-Lin Chen, PhD, RN, CNS, FAAN Associate Professor, UCSF TT and WF Chao Presidential Chair in Global Health Nursing
Jill Howeiw Esquivel, PhD, RN, NP, Associate Professor, UVA
Kit Chesla, PhD, RN, FAAN, Professor, UCSF
Jia Guo, PhD, RN, Associate Professor, CSU

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• To describe maternal feeding practices, self-efficacy for healthy eating and physical activity level

• To identify maternal factors that are associated with their children’s weight health
In China, 120 million children were overweight or obese:
10% overweight and 12% obese (2-6 yrs old) (Piernas et al. 2015)
Mother’s health is the key to family health

Social and health science research consistently demonstrates the crucial role that the mother plays in the well-being of her children and family.

The transition to motherhood is accompanied by additional family responsibilities that place women at risk for unhealthy lifestyles.
Research Approach

Study design: mixed-methods study
Settings: four preschool settings in Hunan Province
Research team: qualitative and quantitative experts from UCSF and CSU
Inclusion criteria

Women with children between the ages of three and five years old,
Self-identified as Chinese
Able to attend regular activities
Able to read and write Chinese
Data collection

Surveys:

• CVD Risk survey- modified from RISK survey developed by Dr. Jia Guo
• Family Eating and Activity Habits Questionnaire developed by Moria Golan
• Maternal Self-efficacy regarding children’s eating and sedentary behaviors developed by Karen Campbell
• Child feeding questionnaire (CFQ) developed by Birth and Fisher

Physiological assessment:

• Parental weight, height, waist circumference
• Child’s weight and height
Preliminary results

Father
• Mean age = 33.25 (SD = 4.5)
• Education: 24% high school; 58.8% college

Mother
• Mean age = 31.04 (SD = 4.28)
• Education: 29% high school; 54% college

Child
• Mean age = 3.68 (SD = .75)
• 114 boys (51.5%)
Family Type

- **nuclear family**
- **3 generations**
- **single parent**
- **kids with one parent and other relatives**

- Nuclear family: 45.40%
- 3 generations: 40%
- Single parent: 5.90%
- Kids with one parent and other relatives: 8.60%
Weight status

- Normal weight: 77.7% (Child), 92.5% (Mom), 21.5% (Dad)
- Overweight: 15.0% (Child), 5.1% (Mom), 52.0% (Dad)
- Obese: 7.3% (Child), 2.2% (Mom), 26.6% (Dad)
Waist circumference

- Normal:
  - Mom: 63.0%
  - Dad: 33.6%

- Great than recommendation:
  - Mom: 37.0%
  - Dad: 66.4%
Physical activity/inactivity - Child

- PA = 1.2 h or 72 min/per day (SD = 1.19)
- SA = 0.76 hr (SD = 0.93) or 45.6 min/per day.
Maternal feeding practices

Mothers reported

• Being responsible for their child’s meals most of the time.
• Perceived their weight and their child’s weight as normal.
• Mostly neutral on their attitudes towards control and practices in their child’s eating behaviors.
• Majority of mothers did not report their concern about their weight or their child’s weight.
Child physical activity/inactivity

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<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Predictor(s)</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>sr²</th>
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Child eating behavior

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Conclusion

• Many children and mothers do not meet the recommended dietary intake and physical activity.
• Maternal health-related behavior and attitudes regarding feeding practices and self-efficacy are associated with their child’s health-related behaviors including physical activity, sedentary activity, and eating behaviors.
• The influence of maternal behaviors and attitudes are domain specific.
Limitations

- Cross-sectional design
- Self-report on parental weight, height and waist circumference
- One geographical location
- High parental education level
Support from:

- Fulbright
- Central South University
- UCSF School of Nursing
- Chen Thapar Family

Thank you 谢谢!!