

Associations between Latino Fathers' Self-Efficacy, Parenting Practices and Youth Diet and Physical Activity

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Summary

Obesity disproportionately affects Hispanic youth and adults compared to Asian and non-Hispanic white youth and adults. Studies have shown that parenting practices (modeling, availability, setting expectations/limits) can positively influence children's food and physical activity (PA) behaviors, however most of these studies were conducted based on mothers' roles, with less attention paid to the role of fathers. Father self-efficacy may be associated with frequency of parenting practices and youth behaviors. Using baseline data from a Latino obesity prevention intervention, father self-efficacy (PSE) for promoting youth healthy food intake and PA was shown to be associated with more frequent modeling of fruit and vegetable intake and PA and less modeling of sugary drink intake, and with more frequently making fruit and vegetables and PA opportunities available and making sugary drinks less available. Programs to increase Latino PSE may address youth behaviors.

Objectives

The aim of this study was to examine relationships between Latino father reported self-efficacy, parenting practices, and youth dietary intake.

Methods

How did we collect the data?

- Research sites included churches and Latino-serving community centers in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area between 2017 and 2020
- Data used in this study were collected at baseline via validated surveys from 190 father/youth (10-14 years) dyads

How did we analyze the data?

- Descriptive statistics including means and frequencies were used to report demographic characteristics, parenting practices, self-efficacy, and youth behaviors.
- Chi-square tests were used to determine differences in level of self-efficacy by demographic characteristics
- Linear regression analysis was used to examine associations between PSE, parenting practices and adolescent behaviors, adjusting for demographic characteristics and corresponding father behaviors.



Study Sample

Youth – mean age 11.6 yrs, 49% boys
 Fathers – mean age 41.8 yrs, mean 19 yrs in US, 80% HS education or less, 75% employed full time, 60% income <\$35,000/yr

Results

Adjusted associations between father reported frequency of parenting practices and paternal self-efficacy

	Modeling food intake				
	β (SE) p value				
Paternal Self-Efficacy	Fruit (n = 158)	Vegetable (n = 156)	Sugary drinks (n = 173)	Sweets/salty snacks (n= 180)	Fast food (n = 180)
Promoting healthy eating	0.392 (0.198) 0.0497	0.482 (0.191) 0.013	-0.466 (0.162) 0.005	-0.213 (0.142) 0.136	-0.079 (0.128) 0.538
Promoting healthy eating in difficult situations	0.042 (0.179) 0.814	0.348 (0.176) 0.0495	-0.170 (0.151) 0.260	-0.062 (0.129) 0.630	-0.054 (0.115) 0.639
	Modeling physical activity				
	β (SE) p value				
Paternal Self-Efficacy	PA (n = 157)		Screen time (n = 159)		
Promoting physical activity	0.561 (0.178) 0.002		0.006 (0.186) 0.976		
Promoting physical activity in difficult situations	0.203 (0.202) 0.317		0.018 (0.207) 0.933		

	Making food groups available				
	β (SE) p value				
Paternal Self-Efficacy	Fruit (n = 159)	Vegetable (n = 156)	Sugary drinks (n = 173)	Sweets/salty snacks (n= 181)	Fast food (n = 180)
Promoting healthy eating	1.079 (0.239) <0.0001	1.150 (0.260) <0.0001	-0.447 (0.167) 0.008	-0.083 (0.173) 0.630	0.028 (0.182) 0.879
Promoting healthy eating in difficult situations	0.419 (0.225) 0.064	0.682 (0.246) 0.006	-0.124 (0.155) 0.425	0.183 (0.155) 0.241	-0.008 (0.163) 0.963
	Making physical activity available				
	β (SE) p value				
Paternal Self-Efficacy	PA (n = 159)		Screen time (n = 159)		
Promoting physical activity	-0.981 (0.221) <0.0001		-0.052 (0.088) 0.557		
Promoting physical activity in difficult situations	0.333 (0.256) 0.197		0.116 (0.100) 0.229		

Conclusions

- No associations were observed with PSE and setting expectations, whereas positive associations were observed with PSE and modeling and making healthy foods and PA available
- No associations were observed between PSE and youth dietary intake, but increased PSE for promoting PA was negatively associated with youth screen time

Implications

What are the implications of the findings?

- Implementation of intervention programs that provide opportunities for fathers to practice promoting healthy eating and PA to increase PSE
- Additional studies to compare the relationship among Latino fathers vs. mothers and parents with youth of different ages
 - Mothers are thought to be the usual caregivers, so this dynamic should be examined
 - Youth of different ages could have more or less influence due to autonomy being associated with aging



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