

Background: Childhood obesity increases the risk of chronic diseases, emphasizing the importance of developing healthy lifestyle habits at an early age. This study aimed to evaluate the impact of a three-month educational intervention on nutrition and physical activity behaviors among students in a selected primary school in Türkiye.

Methods: In this quasi-experimental study, data were collected from 42 voluntary students. Before the intervention, students' anthropometric measurements, food consumption frequencies, 3-day dietary records, physical activity levels, sleep durations, and screen time were assessed. The Physical Activity Attitude Scale was also administered. Parents completed the Family Nutrition and Physical Activity Screening Tool. A single educational session was provided to parents, and the students received five structured nutrition education sessions and one session on physical activity. Post-intervention, follow-up assessments were conducted using the same tools.

Results: A total of 42 students and their parents participated. Of the students, 53.5% were male, and the mean age was 9.5 years. The frequency of obesity among students was 9.76%. Parental obesity was reported in 34.9% (n = 15) of mothers and 67.4% (n = 29) of fathers. A moderate correlation was found between students' and mothers' body weight ($p = 0.41$, $p = 0.007$). After the intervention, daily carbohydrate consumption significantly decreased (94.7% to 73.7%, $p = 0.02$). Students' physical activity attitude scores were also significantly improved ($Z = 2.6$, $p = 0.008$).

Conclusions: Our study highlights the potential effectiveness of school-based and family-involved educational interventions in promoting healthier lifestyle behaviors in primary school students. Early, structured, and family-integrated approaches are essential in addressing childhood obesity.

Key messages:

- School-based educational interventions that actively involve families have demonstrated effectiveness in fostering healthier lifestyle behaviors among primary school children.
- Addressing childhood obesity necessitates early implementation of structured, family-integrated approaches.

Abstract citation ID: ckaf161.1380

Promoting Healthy Eating and Activity in School Children: A Quasi-Experimental Study

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