

Children and Parent's Physical Activity

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Abstract: Regular physical activity is one of the factors that act positively on health. Nowadays, with highly developed multimedia technologies, such as computers and computer games attract children and teens, as a result children tend to have less physical activity. According to the WHO report one of the ten leading causes of death and disability in the world, is sedentary lifestyle and lack of physical activity. Given the use of television, computers, computer games and the physical activities of children and their parents were studied. This cross-sectional, descriptive, and analytical study was conducted on 120 elementary school students and their parents, in 2012, in Zahedan city, Iran. Information by using a questionnaire about demographic, and children and their parents' physical activity and children time spent on watching television and using computers, was collected. The results of this study showed that only 43.7 students had regular physical activity, and meanwhile, only 42.7% of fathers and 24.5% mothers had physical activity. In children the average time of watching television per day was 2.5 hours, and mean time of computer use during a day was 1 hour. Consistent with many studies, this study showed that a significant percentage (56.3%) of children aged 7-12 years had no regular exercise program, On average children engaged 2.5 hours in watching television and 1 hour using computers a day. In a similar study it has been reported students spent about 3 hours watching television a day (14). In another study It has been reported that average time engaged by students in watching television and computer games a day and night was 9 hours (15). This is because, based on research it was found about 15% of adolescents in different regions of Iran, due to physical inactivity are affected by overweight and obesity. If such lifestyle continues in future obesity will be a major health problem in teens and high treatment costs will be imposed on individuals and society in this area. In the absence of proper planning problems will be increased in the future. [Javid Dehghan Haghighi, Maryam Hormozy, Narjes Sargolzaee, Solyman Saravani, Mani Javadimehr. **Children and Parent's Physical Activity.** *Life Sci J* 2013;10(3):253-255] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 40

Key words: physical activity, children, parents

Introduction:

Proper and regular physical activity is one of the factors acting positively on health. As defined by the World Health Organization, physical activity is any activity that is associated with musculoskeletal movement, and, it is referred as energy consumption. The organization recommends seriously that individuals of 5 to 17 years must have at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity a week (1). Moderate to vigorous physical activity of 60 minutes a day, during adolescence period increases confidence and prevent obesity and depression (2,3). Today, children usually "do not walk the same path from home to school, but are carried from home to school to home by parents through private vehicles or school

services. On account of facilities of television, films, cartoons, and expanded use of computers and computer games, infants gradually putting aside the dynamic games, So addiction to the Internet and computer games has become one of the youth problems (4). World Health Organization has reported, a sedentary lifestyle is one of the ten leading causes of death and disability in the world (5). Non-communicable disease, are caused by several factors including poor dietary habits and reduced physical activity (6).

Owing to, less sports facilities and inactivity in children and adolescents, even in school sports, we will see in near future a further increase in the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (7,

8). Parents exert a huge impact on the behavior and habits of their children, so the importance of their role on their children's habits and their physical activity. Parents must be given the necessary training (9). Encourage children to exercise and make physical activity fun, while children will not be subject to resistance and it will result in promotion of right culture and lifestyle of healthy living (10). Owing to high effectiveness of parents on offspring in all behaviors including physical activity, this study of children's physical activity and its relationship to parental physical activity was assessed. Based on this study results, necessary actions are to be taken in order to improve lifestyle of people.

Materials and Methods:

This cross-sectional, descriptive, and analytical study on 120 elementary school students and their parents was conducted in 2012 in the city of Zahedan, Iran. By observing economic and social conditions, two elementary school boys and 2 girls were selected. 30 students from each school were selected. A questionnaire including data on demographic and physical activity items for children and parents, and the number of hours children spend on watching television and computer use and having order of regular physical activity, at least 20 minutes of daily physical activity, and at least 3 days per week has been prepared.

In designing this questionnaire three faculty members of Social of Medicine were asked to contribute their views. Questionnaires were completed by parents. Data were analyzed by using Spss v19 statistical software and chi-square test and independent t-test analysis, and P values less than 0.05 was considered significant.

Results:

Data on 120 students aged 7 to 12 years and their parents showed that 43.7% of students had a regular exercise program, and 56.3% had no regular exercise program. Whereas 42.7% of fathers had regular physical activity, 57.3% of them had no regular physical activity, and 24.5% of mothers had regular physical activity and 75.5% were lack of regular physical activity.

The relationship between physical activity of parents with children in physical activity was significantly higher ($p < 0.05$). On a regular exercise program among male and female students, there was no statistically significant difference ($p > 0.05$).

The average time devoted to watching television by children, was 2.5 hours a day and the average time spent on computer use was 1 hour per day.

There was no significant difference ($p > 0.05$) in the mean time of use of TV in boys and girls.

The mean duration of computer use was higher in boys than in girls ($p < 0.05$).

95.8% of parents believed physical activity was necessary for good health and 1.2% of them did not believe it, and 1.2% of them declared that they had no information in this regard. There was a significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) between education level of parents and children's exercise. Students whose parents had higher education, engaged less in regular physical activity.

Discussion:

Like other studies, this study showed that a significant percentage of children (56.3%) aged 7 to 12 years in Zahedan did not have regular exercise program (13-11). In the present study, on average children spent 2.5 hours watching television and 1 hour using computers a day. In a similar study it has been reported students spent about 3 hours watching television a day (14). Ziaee and colleagues found that average time engaged by students in watching television and computer games in a day and night was 9 hours (15). This difference could be due to children's less access to game in the city centers. However, based on Kelishadi and colleagues' research it has been observed that about 15% of adolescents in different areas of Iran due to lack of exercise were affected by obesity and overweight (16). If such lifestyle continues in future obesity will be a major health problem in teens and high treatment costs will be imposed on individuals and society in this area (18 and 17). The present study results showed that children whose parents have higher education levels, engaged in less regular physical activity. Meanwhile Kazemi et al study conducted in Isfahan city, unlike the present study, children of educated parents, had a higher regular physical activity (1). This difference may be due to lack of space and sports facilities and as a result the educated people are less willing to use these spaces for children.

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