

4-14-2022

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Karina Castro-Ayala
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences

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Recommended Citation

Castro-Ayala, K. (2022, April 14). Occupational Therapy's Role in Addressing Childhood Obesity in Hispanic Communities. Poster presented at the Virtual OTD Capstone Symposium, University of St Augustine for Health Sciences. Retrieved from <https://soar.usa.edu/otdcapstones-spring2022/40>

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Occupational Therapy's Role in Addressing Childhood Obesity in Hispanic Communities

Karina Castro-Ayala; Rocio Alvarenga, EdD, OTR; Neha Gaitonde, R.Ph

BACKGROUND

Hispanic populations are typically more inclined to be overweight and have increased risk of health complications (Garcia et al., 2019). Childhood obesity is a growing public health epidemic of the 21st century (Sahoo et al, 2015).

PROBLEM

The literature suggests that OTs role in addressing childhood obesity is still an emerging practice area, and more research is needed in this area. Combating obesity in childhood needs to approach this issue from multiple perspectives; social, physical, emotional and environmental.

PURPOSE

To develop an occupation-based, health and wellness program for Hispanic children and parents to combat obesity and other genetic risk factors.

Outcome objectives:

- Maximize overall function and quality of life
- Deliver comprehensible information and education
- Find innovative and creative occupation-based interventions for lifestyle and environmental redesign
- Deliver a comprehensible manual

METHODS

- Participants were recruited through The Concilio organization's parental health class, Healthy Kids, Healthy Families.
- 9 children and 5 mothers were recruited to participate in Salud y Sanción Health and Wellness Program.
- Participants areas of concerns and perceptions were captured through a needs assessment, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and post-program surveys.

Program Structure:

- Lesson 1: Introduction presentations
- Lesson 2: Physical activity and Exercise
- Lesson 3: Nutrition and Healthy Habits
- Lesson 4: Nutrition and Healthy Habits (Part 2)
- Lesson 5: Roles, routines, habits in Everyday Life
- Lesson 6: Effects of a Sedentary Lifestyle, Proper Body Mechanics
- Lesson 7: Self-Esteem and Body Image
- Lesson 8: Yoga and Mindfulness Techniques

Topics Covered:

1. Goal setting
2. Health Management
3. Self-care, leisure, ADLs, IADLs, social participation
4. Preventative techniques

Theoretical Frameworks:

1. Health Belief Model (HBM)
2. Person-Environment-Occupation Model (PEO)

RESULTS

General Program Goals:

1. Increase client understanding of perceived health risks within the Hispanic community and childhood obesity.
2. Develop the client's self-awareness and self-regulation of health perceived risks, establishment of health promoting behaviors and habits, emotional and social support to enable a healthy and balanced life.
3. Enable the client to effectively manage their personal health autonomy in all contexts of life.
4. Promote healthy life skills in order to transition into adulthood with decreased risk of illness and disease of this vulnerable population.

Temporal Focus of Treatment:

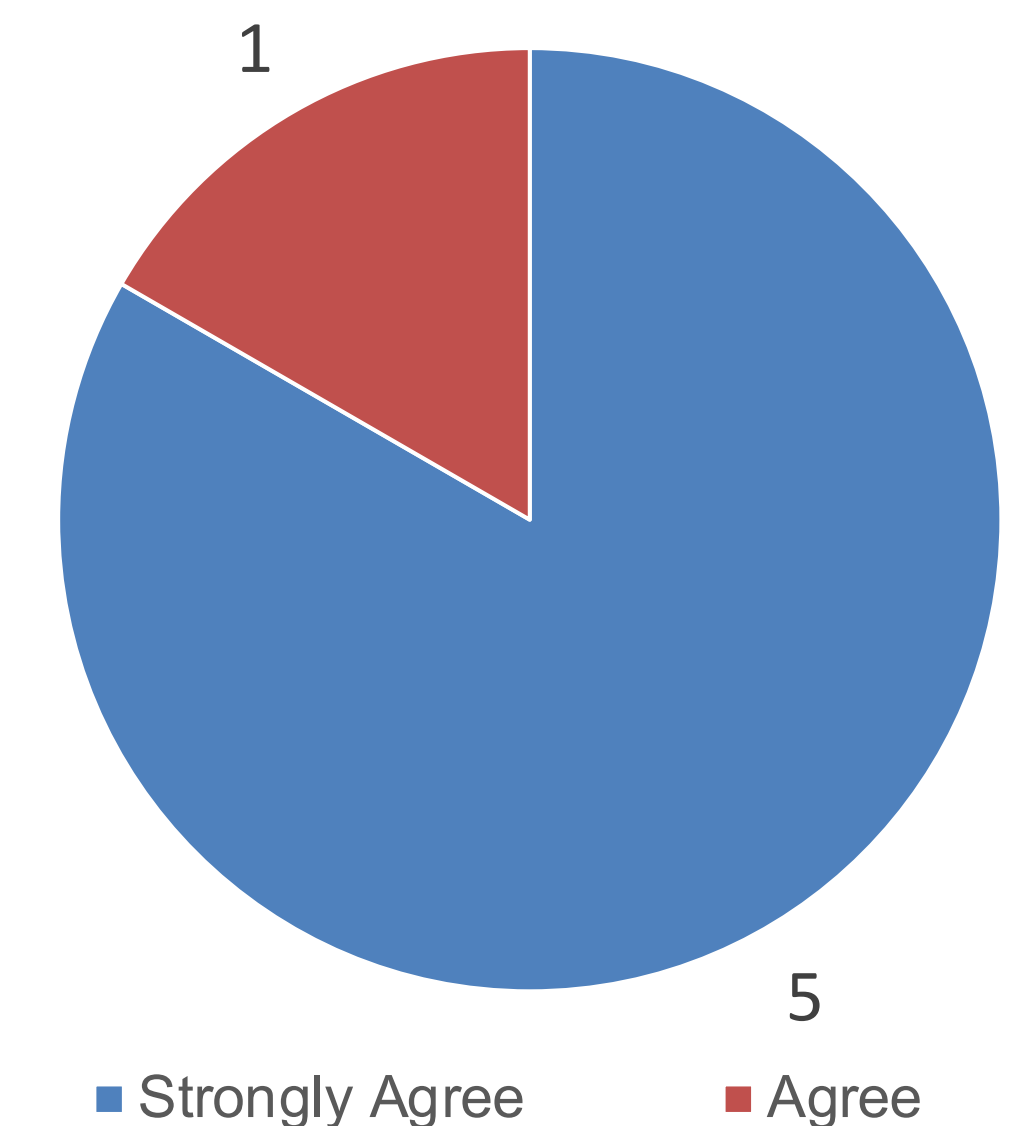
Family-centered intervention:

- Establishing health promoting behaviors and proactive approach in a child's health and wellness
- Facilitated the co-collaboration of parents within the context of their personal environments (Tamayo et al., 2021).

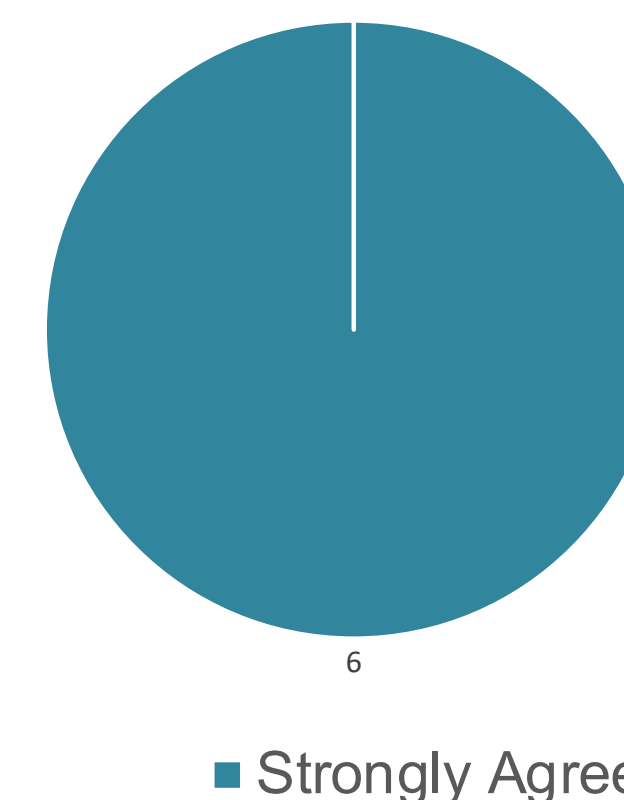
Interventions:

1. Education: Cause of obesity, sedentary lifestyles, physical activity and exercise, nutrition, and affects on occupational performance, functions, and quality of life (Pyatak, 2011).
2. Life skills training
3. Mindfulness techniques
4. Behavior and lifestyle modifications
5. Risk reduction and primary prevention strategies

Promoting Healthy Behaviors



Program Delivery



Garcia, M. L., Gatdula, N., Bonilla, E., Frank, G. C., Bird, M., Rascón, M. S., & Rios-Ellis, B. (2019). Engaging Intergenerational Hispanics/Latinos to Examine Factors Influencing Childhood Obesity Using the PRECEDE-PROCEED Model. *Maternal and child health journal*, 23(6), 802–810. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-018-02696-y>

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