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### CAREGIVER'S PERCEPTION OF OBESITY RISK FACTORS IN CHILDREN ENROLLED IN AN AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

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Childhood obesity is a complex problem as it is a culture-bound syndrome with biological (genetic), psychosocial, and environmental factors that contribute to the disease. Obesity is a modifiable disease that can be prevented and treated even though there is no single or simple solution treatment. **PURPOSE:** To address parent/guardian's perception of the risk factors that contribute to childhood obesity and the effects of structured daily physical activity (SDPA), a pre/post mixed method quasi-experimental research design was performed. **METHODS:** An 8-week SDPA program was tested on male (n=5) and female (n=5) school-aged children and adolescents (SACA) enrolled in an after-school program. A 13-item Likert scale questionnaire was completed by the parents/guardians (n=14) before SACA participated in the five times/week SDPA program. The 13-item questionnaire was based on the constructs of outcome expectations, situation, and behavioral capability. The SACA's age-adjusted body mass index (BMI) (kg/m<sup>2</sup>) and body fat (%) was measured pre-and-post intervention. After-school personnel led the SDPA sessions, which lasted 30-60 minutes and included cardiovascular, muscle-and-bone-strengthening, and flexibility activities. Following the 8-week SDPA, a semi-structured interview was performed with one of the after-school personnel. **RESULTS:** The quantitative core component of this study revealed that caregivers were more likely to agree with statements regarding the construct of outcome expectations (i.e., "Eating foods that have too much fat and sugar increase the risk of childhood obesity") (96%) rather than statements about the constructs of behavioral capability or situation (i.e., "The close ties of a community are a factor in the risk of childhood obesity") (54%). Four themes emerged from the thematic analysis that professional staff needs to consider when developing and implementing an after-school SDPA program for SACA. The four themes included (1) communication, (2) level of success, (3) structure-management, and (4) motivation-interest. **CONCLUSION:** Upon completing the data analysis, the primary researcher deemed that most parents/guardians are aware of the risk factors contributing to the problem of childhood obesity. However, how prevalent the risk factors are for obesity determines the caregiver's level of awareness. **SIGNIFICANCE/NOVELTY:** Limiting the prevalence of childhood obesity can help negate many other comorbidities that stem from the disease and help increase life expectancy. Exposing school-aged children and adolescents to structured daily physical activity while educating parents/guardians about the risk factors is one of the few ways to help prevent and assist the problem of childhood obesity.