

2008-R-05

CIO Name: National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity

Project Title: Validation of a policy and environmental assessment tool for child care programs

Project Description and Objectives:

Over 60% of young children in the United States spend time in child care each day. Risk of overweight has tripled in preschool aged children. Assuring child care environments promote physical activity and discourage excessive sedentary behaviors is a promising approach to addressing this rapid rise in risk of overweight.

Currently there are few data to describe child care environments, but pilot projects have found that many children spend time in settings that encourage sedentary behaviors and do not support physical activity. Interventions in child care settings can influence policies and practices that affect these behaviors in children. The effectiveness of these interventions and the ability of child care providers to adopt and maintain environmental changes need further assessment. In order to assess these programs, there is a need for a validated tool to measure television viewing and physical activity opportunities in child care centers.

The uses of validated tools and methodology within the child care setting have not been developed. Tools based solely on self-report have a high risk of suffering from social desirability bias. Direct observations have the challenge of attaining providers' consent to visit facilities and the concern that the results are tied to accreditation. Other possible methodologies need more study.

The objective of this research is to develop and validate a tool for use in child care centers to assess the effectiveness of education, policy and environmental change interventions which focus on physical activity and television viewing. Outcomes from the proposed research should be a validated assessment tool that measures television viewing and physical activity opportunities in child care centers and a report that outlines the

methodology for administering the tool in child care environments.

Awardee Activities:

1. Conduct an expert review of existing tools that measure television viewing and physical activity opportunities in child care centers;
2. Develop revised version of existing tools;
3. Field test revised tool in child care environments;
4. Based on field test results and analysis, revise and modify tool;
5. Provide a description of how the revised tool will be validated using external experts in instrument development, testing, and validation. The validation assessment should include, at a minimum, providers' use of revised tool, provider's reactions, and correlation of observed and reported observations.
6. Develop methodology for administering the assessment tool within the child care setting.

The awardee will provide findings and final tool in a format that can be shared with state health departments. Final tool will be validated and tested for feasibility of use with child care centers.

CDC Activities:

1. CDC, in coordination with funded state health departments, will assist with gaining access to childcare centers to pilot and evaluate the assessment tool.
2. CDC will provide existing information about funded state health departments' interventions and evaluations in the childcare setting.

Special Requirements: None

Additional Review Criteria: In addition to the standard review criteria used to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of research applications (Significance, Approach, Innovation, Investigators, and Environment) the following additional review criteria specific to this PEP will be considered in the review process:

1. Experience working with child care centers in implementation and evaluation of programs, policies, and environmental changes particularly in the areas of television viewing and/or physical activity.
2. Experience in development and/or validation of assessment tools used by child care centers

particularly in areas of television viewing and/or physical activity.

3. Knowledge of the operation and unique challenges of child care centers and the standards that govern child care centers.

Funding Preferences: None

Other Information: None

Project Period Length: 1 year

Approximate Total Project Period Funding: \$200,000 (This amount is an estimate, and is subject to availability of funds and **includes direct and indirect costs, excluding the additional academic partner administrative costs.**)

Approximate Average Award: \$200,000 (This amount is for the first 12-month budget period, and **includes both direct and indirect costs, excluding the additional academic partner administrative costs.**)

Approximate Number of Awards: 1

NOTE: *Applications must not exceed either the stated Project Period Length or the Approximate Total Budget Period funding per year. Applications in excess of these limits will be considered non-responsive and therefore will not be reviewed.*