

Texas Obesity Research Center

Hispanic and Black Children's Ability to Regulate Energy Intake across Parent Feeding Styles

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Satiety Responsiveness (SR) is an individual's sensitivity to feelings of fullness and hunger (Carnell and Wardle, 2007). Enjoyment of Food (EF) is how responsive a person is to food cues (Carnell and Wardle, 2008). Higher levels of SR and EF are related to BMI (Carnell and Wardle, 2008) and less eating in the absence of hunger (Wardle, Llewellyn, Sanderson and Plomin, 2009) in children. However, little is known about the relationship between these two appetitive traits and parent feeding style, especially amongst low income minority samples. **Methods:** 160 Hispanic and 141 Black parents (62.58% underweight/healthy weight, 18.71% overweight, 18.71% obese) with children between the ages of 3 and 5 were recruited from Head Start Centers in the Houston area. Parents filled out surveys on their feeding behaviors and their children's eating behaviors. Trained observers weighed and measured children. ANCOVAs for EF by Child BMI category and SR by Child BMI category and EF by parent feeding style and SR by parent feeding style were run using appropriate controls. **Results:** All ANCOVAs were significant or highly significant. LSD post hoc analyses indicate that parents of underweight/healthy weight children rated their children as lower in EF than parents of obese children ($p \leq .001$). LSD post hoc analyses indicate that parents of obese children rated their children as significantly lower in SR compared to underweight/healthy weight children ($p \leq .001$). LSD post hoc analyses indicate that parents with an authoritarian feeding style rated their children as higher in SR than parents with indulgent ($p \leq .001$) and uninvolved feeding styles ($p \leq .05$). Parents with authoritative feeding styles also rated their children higher in SR than indulgent parents ($p \leq .001$). LSD post hoc analysis indicates that children of parents with an indulgent feeding style were rated as higher in EF than authoritarian ($p \leq .001$) and uninvolved feeding styles ($p \leq .05$). Parents with authoritative feeding styles rated children as higher in EF than parents with authoritarian feeding styles ($p \leq .001$). **Conclusions:** Results indicate that parent feeding styles influence children's ability to regulate energy intake and differences in regulation of energy intake across child weight categories.

KEY WORDS: Parent Feeding, Self-Regulation, Feeding Styles