

# SOCIETY *of* BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE

*Better Health Through Behavior Change*



UNC CHARLOTTE

College of Health and Human Services

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE**

**6:30 p.m. Central**

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## **Children, Physical Activity, School Lunch, and Body Mass Index**

**New Orleans, LA** – The physical inactivity epidemic among children has contributed to child obesity. Schools can be an effective source of physical activity opportunity. Determining the relationship between physical activity, school lunch, and body mass index (BMI) among middle and high school children is a high priority for the Department of Health and Human Services, according to the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee.

In a poster presentation on Friday April 11 (6:30-8:00 p.m. CST), at the Society of Behavioral Medicine's 33rd Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions, the poster presenters will highlight the results of this national study. A cross-sectional sample of 1,306 children was drawn from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics Child Development Supplement, 2007. A secondary data analysis was performed on 1,306 children.

Upon examining total daily physical activity, children who engaged in low levels had 1.8 times the odds of being obese vs. normal weight than those who engaged in moderate levels. Results for in-school physical activity showed that children who had no physical activity during PE were much more likely to be obese than normal weight in comparison to those who met the national requirements. The findings from this study also illustrate the importance of school-based nutrition when evaluating BMI for adolescents. Children who ate lunch offered by the school, regardless of funding source, were more likely to be obese than normal weight.

The poster authors are Dr. Caroline Hohensee, December 2011 graduate of the Health Services Research PhD program at the University of North Carolina Charlotte and Dr. Mary A. Nies, Carol Grotnes Belk Endowed Chair in Nursing, Professor of Nursing and Adjunct Professor Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

*The Society of Behavioral Medicine is a multidisciplinary organization of clinicians, educators, and scientists dedicated to promoting the study of the interactions of behavior with biology and the environment and the application of that knowledge to improve the health and well being of individuals, families, communities, and populations. [www.sbm.org](http://www.sbm.org)*

*This study was presented during the 2012 Annual Meeting and Scientific Session of the Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) from April 11-14 in New Orleans, LA. However, it does not reflect the policies or the opinion of the SBM.*

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