

Overweight in Latino Preschoolers: Do Parental Health Beliefs Matter?

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Objective: To characterize the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (KAB) regarding childhood obesity among parents of Latino preschoolers. **Methods:** Three hundred sixty-nine Mexican immigrant parents of children ages 2-5 were interviewed. Children were weighed and measured. **Results:** Parents underestimated their own child's weight status and had high levels of perceived control over their children's eating and activity behaviors. Par-

ents of overweight ($\geq 95\%$ ile-for-age-and-sex BMI) versus nonoverweight ($< 95\%$ ile BMI) children did not differ in their beliefs about ideal child body size. **Conclusion:** Latino parents of overweight children did not differ from parents of nonoverweight children with respect to their KAB about childhood obesity.

Key words: childhood obesity, health beliefs, Mexican Americans

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