

Cost-effectiveness of a Nutrition Education Curriculum Intervention in Elementary Schools

Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions within the United States. Over a third of American children are living with overweight and 17.4% are living with obesity. Excess weight puts children at high risk for other non-communicable diseases, so it is important to prevent and treat childhood obesity. Recent research has suggested school-based interventions can be effective. This paper aims “to estimate the long-term cost-effectiveness of an obesity prevention nutrition education curriculum ... as delivered to all New York City fifth-grade public school students over 1 year.” The authors extrapolated the results of the previously conducted Food, Health and Choices Intervention to a large population over a longer period.

According to the model, if New York chooses to implement this programme for all fifth graders, it would be cost-effective. It would also reduce childhood obesity rates by 0.8%, saving almost “1,600 years of life and avert[ing] over \$8 million in medical costs.” According to the authors, “future research should assess the feasibility and sustainability of scale-up.”

Reference: Graziose MM, Koch PA, Wang YC, Lee Gray H, Contento IR. Cost-effectiveness of a Nutrition Education Curriculum Intervention in Elementary Schools. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2017 Sep;49(8):684-691.e1. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2016.10.006.