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Child Focus Group Summary Report

CCHAPS

Community-wide Children's Health
Assessment & Planning Survey

six-county profile ◦ access ◦ physical ◦ mental ◦ dental ◦ safety ◦ act on the data

Community-wide Children’s Health and Planning Survey
Child Focus Group Report
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Community-wide Children's Health Assessment and Planning Survey Child Focus Group Summary Report

OVERVIEW

As part of the Community-wide Children's Health Assessment and Planning Survey [CCHAPS], trained Child Life specialists from Cook Children's Medical Center, administered focus groups with children of parents who participated in the random household survey. The purpose of the focus groups was to provide additional insight and/or understanding to help interpret the findings from the household survey of parents administered during the fall of 2008.

METHODOLOGY

The children's focus groups were conducted the week of March 30-April 3, 2009. Participants were the children of parents who were selected at random from a sample of residents living in Tarrant County who fit the following criteria: 1) they had completed the Community-wide Children's Health Assessment and Planning Survey; and 2) they had at least one child living in their household between the ages of 3 and 14-years-old.

A total of 121 children, ages 3-17, participated in the children's focus group sessions. The children were divided into different focus group sessions based upon their age or grade level. A detailed table including the date of each session, age/grade level of children in each session and the number of children in each session is provided on the following page.

Group Session	Grades	Number of Children
March 30, 5 p.m.	Grades K-1	10
	Grades 2-3	1
	Grades 4-6	1
March 30, 7 p.m.	Pre-K	1
	Grades K-1	2
	Grades 2-3	8
	Grades 4-6	5
March 31, 11:30 a.m.	Ages 3-5	10

Group Session	Grades	Number of Children
March 31, 7 p.m.	Grades 4-6	4
	Grades 7-9	8
April 1, 11:30 a.m.	Ages 3-5	13
April 1, 5 p.m.	Pre-K	1
	Grades 2-3	2
	Grades 4-6	10
	Grades 7-9	1
April 1, 7 p.m.	Grades 2-3	4
	Grades 4-6	5
April 2, 5 p.m.	Grades K-1	2
	Grades 2-3	2
	Grades 4-6	8
April 2, 7 p.m.	Grades 4-6	3
	Grades 7-9	6
Total:		121

The sessions were 60-90 minutes long and were moderated by Cook Children's Child Life specialists. As part of the CCHAPS research team, Cook Children's Child Life specialists used their expertise to develop age-appropriate questions, create an environment conducive to gathering data from children, facilitate the focus groups and interpret the responses. Because children process differently than adults, they have distinct needs that vary widely among different age groups. While a 12-year old can discuss healthy and unhealthy food choices verbally, a younger child may need to identify the foods they eat with pictures or toys. Child Life specialists expertly guided these focus groups with children to collect the most accurate information.

Each focus group session was divided into five time segments according to topics, and a team of two Child Life specialists facilitated discussion about the questions related to each specific topic:

- Healthy lifestyles (nutrition, sleep, etc.)
- Safety and community surroundings
- Dental care and access to medical care
- Family activities/interactions
- Mental/emotional health and school issues

Depending on the topic and the age of the children, questions were asked using one or more of the following methods:

- Discussion format
- Discussion format using photographs (i.e., illustrating children of different ages in car seats or different community locations)

- Discussion format using props (i.e., toothbrushes)
- Game format using props (i.e., “Wheel of Fortune”, a soccer ball, etc.)
- Activity format (i.e., asking children to draw pictures of healthy foods, circle pictures of places they went with their families, etc.)

Some of the major findings discovered when comparing the report given by children and those given by parents in the household survey are provided on the following pages. The findings are organized based upon the major topics identified from the survey.

Interpretation of the “don’t knows.” The “don’t know” responses from the survey data of parents have been excluded to allow for valid comparisons with the results from the focus groups with children. The focus groups data excludes any participants who did not provide a response or were unable to comprehend the question.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

TOPIC #1: Healthy Lifestyle

1.1 Fitness. Twenty-one percent (21%) more children reported getting more exercise on a weekly basis compared to the report given by parents. However 14% more parents reported that their children got more exercise on a daily basis compared to children. The comparison data is provided below:

- 17% of children reported that they got at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. When compared to the household survey results, 31% of parents reported their children got at least 30 minutes of exercise everyday.
- 68% of children reported that they got 30 minutes of exercise 4-6 days per week. When compared to the survey of parents, only 47% reported that their child got 30 minutes of exercise 4-6 days per week.
- 15% of children indicated that they got 30 minutes of exercise 1-3 days per week versus the 19% reported by parents on the household survey.
- None (0%) of the children in the focus groups indicated that they did not get any exercise the previous week. When compared to the household survey results, 3% of parents reported that their child did not get any exercise the previous week.

1.2 Nutrition. Both children and parents reported very similar results when asked about the frequency of eating healthy meals. The data is provided below:

- 87% of children reported that they typically eat healthy meals. When compared to the household survey results, 85% of parents reported their child typically ate healthy meals.

1.3 Television and Video Game Use. Children reported a slightly higher amount of television and video game use compared to parents. The results are provided on the following page:

- 14% of children indicated they did not watch television or play video games the previous day. When compared to the survey of parents, 16% reported their child did not watch television or play video games the previous day.
- 14% of children indicated they had watched television or played video games for 30 minutes or less the previous day compared to the 20% reported by parents.
- 72% of children reported that they had watched television or played video games for more than 30 minutes the previous day. When compared to the household survey results, 64% of parents reported their child had spent 31 minutes or more playing video games or watching television.

1.4 Sleep. When asked to report how many hours of sleep children had received the previous night, the reports from parents and children were very similar. The comparison data is provided below:

- 22% of children reported getting 8 hours or less of sleep the night before. When compared to the survey results, 22% of parents reported their child slept 8 hours or less the previous night.
- 48% of children reported getting between 9-10 hours of sleep the previous night. When compared to the survey results from parents, 57% reported their child had between 9-10 hours of sleep.
- 30% of children indicated that they slept 11 hours or more the previous night. When compared to the survey results, 21% of parents reported their child had slept 11 hours or more the previous night.

1.5 Smoking in the Household. More than double the number of children reported there was at least one smoker in the household compared to parents. The results are provided below:

- 27% of children reported that there is one or more smokers living in the household. When compared to survey results from parents, only 11% reported there was someone in the household who smokes.

TOPIC #2: Dental/Oral Health

2.1 Dental Care in the Home. Children and parents generally reported similar results when asked if they owned a toothbrush. However 14% fewer children reported brushing their teeth the previous day when compared to the report given by parents. The comparison data is provided on the following page:

- 97% of children reported that they owned a toothbrush. When compared to the survey of parents, 99% reported their child owned a toothbrush.
- 82% of children indicated that they had brushed their teeth yesterday. When compared to the household survey results, 96% of parents reported their child had brushed their teeth the previous day.

2.2 Frequency of Dental Visits. Children and parents reported very similar results when asked if children had visited a health care professional for a general dental exam within the last 12 months. The comparison data is provided below:

- 79% of children indicated they had visited a healthcare professional during the last 12 months for a general dentist exam compared to the 80% reported by parents.

2.3 Dental Problems. When asked questions related to dental problems, more children generally reported higher incidences of having a dental problem that currently needs to be treated, of going to the ER because of dental pain and of missing school because of dental pain. The specific results are provided below:

- 33% of children reported having a dental problem that needs to be treated. When compared to the survey of parents, only 8% reported that their child has a dental problem that needs to be treated.
- 8% of children reported that they had gone to an Emergency Room because of dental pain during the past year. When compared to the household survey results, only 1% of parents reported their child had been to the ER for a dental related problem.
- 14% of children reported that they had missed school because of dental pain. When comparing the survey of parents, only 2% reported their child had missed school because of dental pain.

TOPIC #3: Mental/Emotional Health

3.1 Emotional/Behavioral Problems. When asked questions related to children's mental health, the reports given by children and by parents were very similar. The specific results are provided below:

- 5% of children reported that they were sad "a lot;" To determine how these results compare with the data from the survey of parents, it is necessary to look at the number of reported cases of depression among children, which was 4%.

TOPIC #4: School Issues

4.1 Academic Problems. Children and parents reported similar results when asked about academic problems at school. The comparison data is provided below:

- 12% of children reported that they have academic problems at school. When compared to the household survey results, 8% of parents reported their child had academic problems.

4.2. Bullying or Teasing. A much higher percentage of children reported being bullied or teased at school compared to the report given by parents. The specific results are provided below:

- 51% of children reported being bullied or teased at school. When compared to the household survey results, only 10% of parents reported their child had been bullied or teased at school.

TOPIC #5: Family Interaction

5.1 Family Outings. When asked how many times children had gone on an outing with a family member during the past month, parents reported much higher incidences of family outings taking place when compared to the report given by children. The results are provided below:

- 16% of children reported going on 7 or more outings during the past month. When analyzing the household survey results, 75% of parents reported their child had been on 7 or more family outings.

5.2. Time Spent with Children Reading. Parents reported a significantly higher frequency of time spent reading with their child when compared to the reports by children. The comparison data is provided below:

- 62% of children reported that no one in the household had read to them during the last 7 days. When compared to the household survey results, 29% of parents reported that no one in the household had read to their child during the past week.
- 10% of children reported that a family member had read to them for 15 minutes or more the previous day. When compared to the household survey results, 33% of parents reported that someone in the household had read to their child for more than 15 minutes the previous day.

5.3. Meal Time. Children reported higher incidences of eating a meal with their family when compared to the survey data from parents. The results are provided below:

- 71% of children reported that they had eaten a meal with their family 7 or more times during the past week. When compared to the survey results, 47% of parents reported that their family had eaten a meal together 7 or more times during the past week.

5.4. Nutritional Education. When asked if children were educated about healthy eating habits in the home, 19% more parents indicated they talked with their child about healthy eating habits compared to the report given by children. The data is provided below:

- 66% of children indicated that their parents had talked with them about healthy eating habits. When compared to the survey results, 91% of parents reported that they had talked with their child about healthy eating habits sometime during the past year.

TOPIC #6: Safety/Community Surroundings

6.1 Car Safety. When asked if their children were buckled in properly the last time they rode in the car, 21% more parents reported that their child was properly buckled compared to the report given by parents. The results are provided below:

- 76% of children reported being properly buckled into their car the last time they rode in the car. When compared to the survey results, 97% of parents reported that their child was buckled in properly the last time he/she rode in the car.

6.2. Safety and Sports. When asked questions related to safety during various sporting activities, the reports from children and parents were very similar. However a much higher percentage of children reported riding on ATVs compared to the report given by parents. The comparison data is provided below.

- 36% of children reported that their parents let them play around water when supervised by a preteen or teenager; when compared to the household survey results, 45% of parents said they are comfortable with a preteen or teenager supervising their child around water.
- 49% of children reported that they did not always wear a helmet when biking, rollerblading or riding a scooter more than 1 block from their home; when compared to the household survey results 42% of parents reported that their child did not always wear a helmet when biking, rollerblading or riding a scooter more than 1 block from their home.
- 41% of children reported riding on ATVs. When compared to survey results of parents, only 12% reported that their children rode on ATVs.

- 49% of children indicated that they do not always wear a helmet when biking, rollerblading or riding a scooter within one block of their home. When compared to the survey of parents, 55% of parents reported that their child did not always wear a helmet when biking or rollerblading within one block of their home.

6.3. Neighborhood Safety. When asked questions related to safety in the neighborhood, both parents and children reported similar results.

- 79% of children reported feeling safe in their neighborhood. When compared to the survey of parents, 88% of parents felt their child was safe in their neighborhood.
- 79% of children reported feeling safe at school. When compared to the survey results, 90% of parents felt their child was safe at school.
- 90% of children reported feeling safe at home. When compared to the survey of parents, all (100%) of the parents felt their child was safe at home.

6.4. Parks and Outdoor Play Areas. When asked if there were safe parks or areas outdoors for children to play in their neighborhood, a larger percentage of parents reported that there were safe parks or other areas in their neighborhood for children to play compared to the results provided by children.

- 70% of children reported that there was a safe park or outdoor play area for children in their neighborhood. When compared to the survey of parents, 90% of parents indicated that there were safe parks or outdoor play areas in their neighborhood for their child to play.

TOPIC #7: Access

7.1 Primary Care Physicians. 25% fewer children reported having a primary care physician when compared to the results from the household survey of parents.

- 71% of children indicated that they have a primary care physician. When compared to the survey results, 96% of parents reported that their child has a primary care physician.

7.2 Understanding of Medical Instruction. When asked if their parents understood their doctor's instruction, there were a large number of children who were unable to answer this question because many did not know. In addition, many of these children interpreted this as a question of their own understanding and not their parents, because of these reasons the data from the focus groups cannot be directly compared to the survey data of parents.