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Healthy Kids & Families: Overcoming Social, Environmental and Family Barriers to Childhood Obesity Prevention

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Presenter Information
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Keywords
Worcester Public Schools, childhood obesity prevention, community health workers

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**Background**

The UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center (UMass PRC) was funded (2014-2019) to implement interventions to promote health and well-being among families. Its core project, The Healthy Kids & Families study is implemented in collaboration with 9 Worcester Public School system schools, located in economically distressed areas.

**Target Population**

N= 244 parent-child dyads  
**Inclusion criteria:**  
• Dyads of parent and K-6th grade child at participating schools  
• Access to a telephone  
• English or Spanish speaking  
• Plans to live in the area for 2 years.

**Exclusion criteria:**  
• Medical condition or advice from a doctor that precludes the child from walking or eating fruits and vegetables.

**Program Goals**

To test the impact of a community health worker (CHW)-delivered intervention aimed at helping families overcome barriers to childhood obesity prevention. The intervention addresses social, environmental, and family barriers to healthy choices. The intervention is compared to a comparison condition consisting of a CHW-delivered intervention aimed at helping families improve positive parenting skills.

**Program Outcomes**

Families are involved in the intervention for 2 years, and assessed at baseline, 6-, 12-, 18- and 24-months. The study outcomes are:  
• Body Mass Index (BMI)  
• Dietary behaviors  
• Physical activity  
• Sedentariness

**Collaborators**

This project is led by the UMass Worcester Prevention Research Center at UMass Medical School. Collaborating partners include:  
• Worcester Public Schools, and  
• Oak Hill Community Development Corporation

**Contact Information**

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