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

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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 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

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