

Minority children at higher risk for weight problems in both US and England

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With ties to diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol, childhood obesity in wealthy countries is certainly of growing concern to researchers. A new study explores the ties between childhood weight problems, socioeconomic status, and nationality and finds that race, ethnicity, and immigrant status are risk factors for weight problems among children in the US and England. This new study was published in the September issue of *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (a SAGE journal) titled "Migrant Youths and Children of Migrants in a Globalized World."

"In the United States, both Hispanic and black children of native-born mothers have a higher risk of overweight than children of native-born whites," wrote study authors Melissa L. Martinson, Sara McLanahan and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn. "In England, children of native-born black mothers have a higher risk of overweight, and in some models, children of native-born Asian mothers have a higher risk."

The researchers studied data of 6,816 children from the US and the UK to analyze childhood weight problems among certain demographics. In addition to finding ties between ethnicity, [immigrant status](#), and weight problems for children, the study also found that socioeconomic status is only a risk factor for weight problems among white children and is not a determining factor for children of other races.

This new study is one of several published in the September issue of *The ANNALS*, which was devoted exclusively to research on the

consequences of migration for children, an area of study that is often overlooked by immigration researchers.

"Unless migrant youths are engaged in the labor market, they often are ignored by international reports about migration and development," wrote editors Alícia Adserá and Marta Tienda. The aim of this issue was to better understand the psychological, social, physical, and [economic consequences](#) of immigration on children throughout the world

"Migration requires youths to make sense of a new country by learning to navigate the social institutions of their host society and, more often than not, a new language," the editors wrote. "Many migrant children must cope with unwelcoming communities, particularly if they settle in places where residents are unaccustomed to foreigners."

More information: The article, "Race/Ethnicity and Nativity Disparities in Child Overweight in the United States and England" by Melissa L. Martinson, Sara McLanahan, and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn, is free for a limited time at ann.sagepub.com/content/643/1/219.full.pdf+html

Provided by SAGE Publications

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