

Obesity down for low-income preschoolers in many states

August 8 2013



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(HealthDay)—From 2008 to 2011, the prevalence of obesity decreased significantly among low-income young children in 18 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands, according to a study published in the Aug. 6 early-release issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Ashleigh L. May, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues estimated state obesity prevalence using measured weight and height data from approximately 11.6 million low-income children (aged 2 to 4 years), from 40 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories,

who participated in the Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System during 2008 to 2011.

According to the report, there was a significant downward trend in obesity during 2008 to 2011 in 18 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The largest absolute decreases in prevalence (≥1 percent) were seen in Florida, Georgia, Missouri, New Jersey, South Dakota, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. No significant change was observed in 20 states and Puerto Rico, and there was a significant increase in prevalence in three states. Currently, among children 2 to 5 years of age, approximately one in eight is obese.

"Small decreases in the prevalence of obesity among low-income preschool children have been observed in certain states/territories. Continued prevention efforts remain necessary to ensure that this downward trend continues," the authors write. "State and local officials have an opportunity to lead these efforts through the continued development, implementation, and evaluation of [obesity prevention](#) initiatives and by leading partnerships with public and private sectors."

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Citation: Obesity down for low-income preschoolers in many states (2013, August 8) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-08-obesity-low-income-preschoolers-states.html>

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