

School program in U.K. shows no significant impact on child BMI

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(HealthDay)—A focused school-based healthy lifestyle program

intervention does not have a significant impact on body mass index (BMI) z score after 15 or 30 months, according to a study published online Feb. 7 in *The BMJ*.

Peymane Adab, M.D., M.P.H., from the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom, and colleagues conducted a cluster randomized trial in U.K. primary schools. After baseline measurements, 1,467 year-1 pupils aged 5 to 6 years were randomized using a blocked balancing algorithm; 778 pupils were included as controls. At first and second follow-up (15 and 30 months), data were available for 1,287 and 1,169 pupils, respectively. Healthy eating and physical activity were encouraged in the 12-month intervention, including a daily additional 30-minute school time physical activity opportunity and termly school-led family healthy cooking skills workshops.

The researchers found that at 15 months, the mean BMI z score was nonsignificantly lower in the intervention arm (mean difference, -0.075 ; 95 percent confidence interval, -0.183 to 0.033 ; $P = 0.18$) in baseline adjusted models. The mean difference was -0.027 at 30 months (95 percent confidence interval, -0.137 to 0.083 ; $P = 0.63$). There were no statistically significant between-group differences in other anthropometric, dietary, [physical activity](#), or psychological measurements.

"The primary analyses suggest that this experiential focused [intervention](#) had no statistically significant effect on BMI z score or on preventing childhood obesity," the authors write. "Schools are unlikely to impact on the [childhood obesity](#) epidemic by incorporating such interventions without wider support across multiple sectors and environments."

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