

Children with a TV in their bedroom at higher risk for being overweight. Adachi-Mejia AM, Longacre MR, Gibson JJ, Beach ML, Titus-Ernstoff LT, Dalton MA. International Journal of Obesity. 2007

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE: We examined having a TV in the bedroom as a risk factor for child overweight.

DESIGN: Cross-sectional study.

SETTING: School- and telephone-based surveys in New Hampshire and Vermont between 2002 and 2004.

PARTICIPANTS: Two thousand three hundred and forty-three children enrolled in public schools, aged 9-12 years, and one of their parents.

MAIN EXPOSURES:

The child having a TV in the bedroom.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURES:

Age- and gender-standardized child body mass index (zBMI). Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. Overweight was defined as equal to or above the 95th percentile for zBMI.

RESULTS:

Overall, 22.3% (N=523) of the children were overweight, and almost half of all children (48.2%, N=1130) had a TV in their bedroom. Children with a TV in their bedroom had a higher zBMI and were significantly more likely to be overweight compared to those without a TV in their bedroom (27.3 versus 17.7%, respectively; $P < 0.05$). After controlling for sociodemographics, physical activity, frequency of TV or movie watching and internet use, children with a TV in their bedroom who watched at least one session of TV or movies per day were more likely to be overweight compared to those without a TV in their bedroom (odds ratio=1.32, 95% confidence interval: 1.03, 1.70).

CONCLUSIONS:

Having a TV in the bedroom is a risk factor for child overweight, independent of reported physical activity, participation in team sports, TV or movie watching time and internet use at

home. Further study is needed to fully understand the mechanism by which having a TV in the bedroom increases children's risk for overweight.