

## Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in Youth (Ages 6-10) with Intellectual Disabilities in Kansas

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Overweight (OW) and obesity (OB) in youth have immediate harmful effects which include high blood pressure and cholesterol, insulin resistance, asthma and sleep apnea. Future health risks include becoming OW/OB as adults. In addition, OW/OB represents significant health problems in the youth with intellectual disability (ID). The purpose of this study was to compare the prevalence of OW/OB in youth (6-19 yrs) with ID, without down syndrome, in the State of Kansas to the national standards established by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Height (m) and weight (kg) were measured and Body Mass Index (BMI) was determined ( $BMI = \text{kg} \cdot \text{m}^{-2}$ ) for 598 participants (389 males, 209 females). BMI classifications for normal weight (NW), OW, and OB were determined using CDC growth charts in that: OW = 85<sup>th</sup> < 95<sup>th</sup> %tile sex-specific BMI-for-age; and OB =  $\geq 95$ <sup>th</sup> %tile sex-specific BMI-for-age. Participants were further divided into children (6-11 yrs) and youth (12-19 yrs) to compare to national standards established by CDC. For females: 32.4% and 43.2% for children and youth in the general population were OW/OB, respectively; and for ID participants, 39% and 60% of children and youth were OW/OB, respectively. For males: 37.2% and 35.1% for children and youth in the general population were OW/OB, respectively; and for ID participants, 28% and 56% of children and youth were OW/OB, respectively. Children with ID exhibited similar percentages of OW/OB as in the general population, but youth with ID demonstrated higher levels of OW/OB by 16 (females) and 20 (males) percentage points. These findings suggest the need for community health promotion including physical activity and healthy eating behaviors for youth with ID.