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The Association Between Negative Socioeconomic Determinants of Health and Poor Nutritional Status in Children of Low-Income Families Living in New Mexico

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Abstract

When evaluating the prevalence of obesity rates throughout New Mexico (NM), it appears these rates have reached a plateau. A recent study conducted by the NM Department of Health (DOH) found that NM was among 19 other states that have had a first time decrease in child obesity rates among low income families. However, when examined deeper, when looking at geographical areas throughout NM, hidden geography of weight disparities become apparent. Although obesity rates may have decreased in some areas, they have increased in others. The purpose of this study is to effectively evaluate variability in weight trends between geographical areas throughout NM and to determine the relationship between obesity rates and specific socioeconomic determinants. This study utilized two mapped datasets, created at two distinct times, that were conjoined to form a trend map that allows for visual exploration of child weight trends from 2013 to 2015. All WIC management, early childhood groups, obesity prevention groups and researchers can utilize suggested findings of this study to effectively focus healthcare in areas where obesity rates have increased and improve quality of care in these communities.