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## INTRODUCTION

- Body mass index (BMI) greater than or equal to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile for age and sex is considered overweight in the pediatric population. Pediatric obesity is defined as a BMI at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Obesity prevalence has tripled over the past fifty years; one in five school-aged children has a diagnosis of obesity.
- Studies have found that many parents fail to recognize their child as overweight or obese.
- There is a growing need for parental involvement in effectively identifying and treating children with elevated BMIs.
- The purpose of this study is to survey caregivers' perceptions and concerns about their child's weight as well as patient and caregiver interest in a comprehensive healthy lifestyle program.

**Table 1. Survey participant demographics**

Survey Participant Demographics	
Average Age	8
Total Male	73/156 (47%)
Total Female	83/156 (53%)

## MATERIALS & METHODS

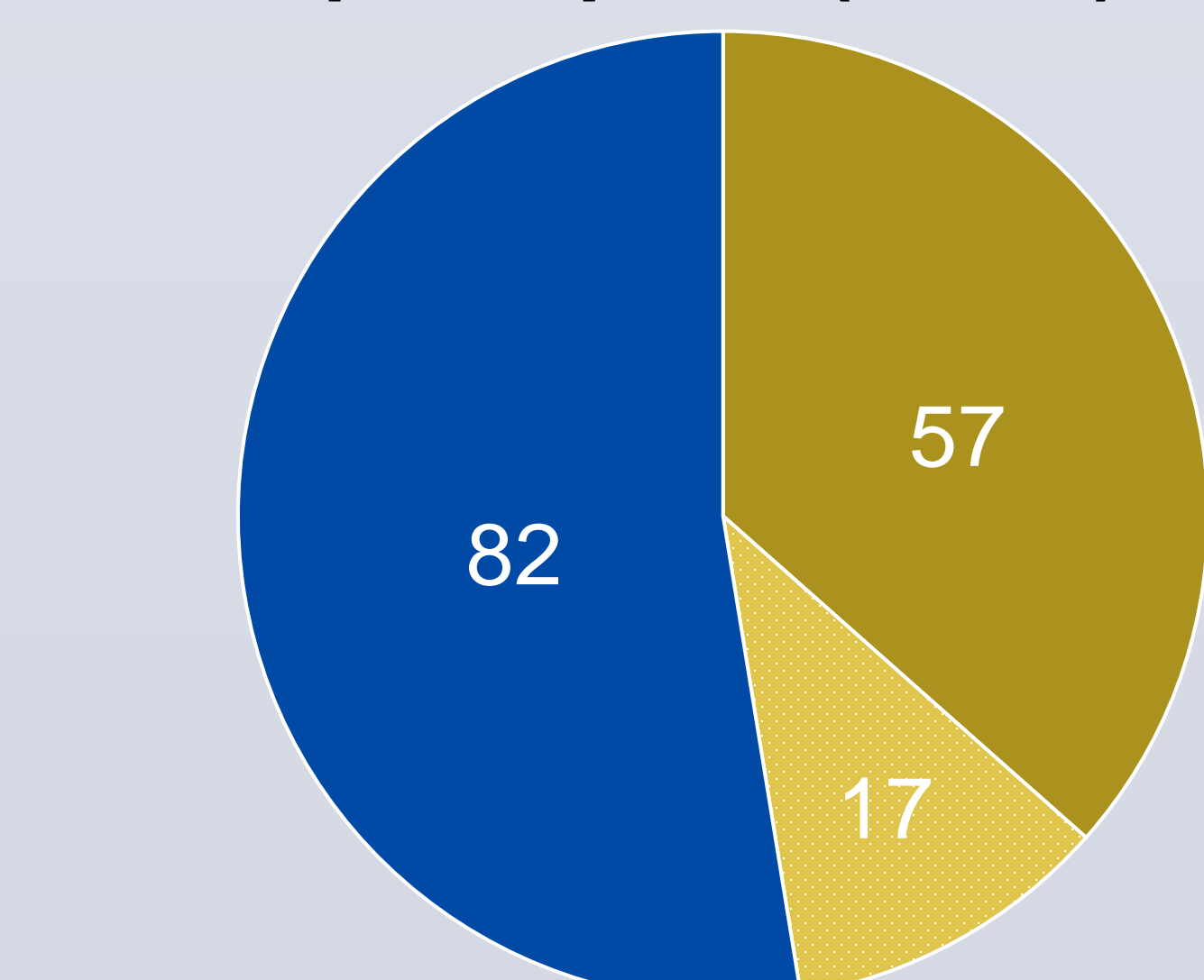
This IRB approved study conducted a ten-question survey of patients aged two to seventeen who presented to the Beaumont Children's Hospital Pediatric Outpatient Clinic between November 2020 and June 2021. Inclusion criteria were patients aged two to seventeen whose parents voluntarily completed the survey. Exclusion criteria were children under two years of age, over 17 years of age, and parents unable to complete the survey due to language barrier or incomplete surveys. Surveys were provided to the families by office staff upon clinic arrival. Responses were recorded in Microsoft Excel. As a final step the medical history was verified by a physician.

## RESULTS

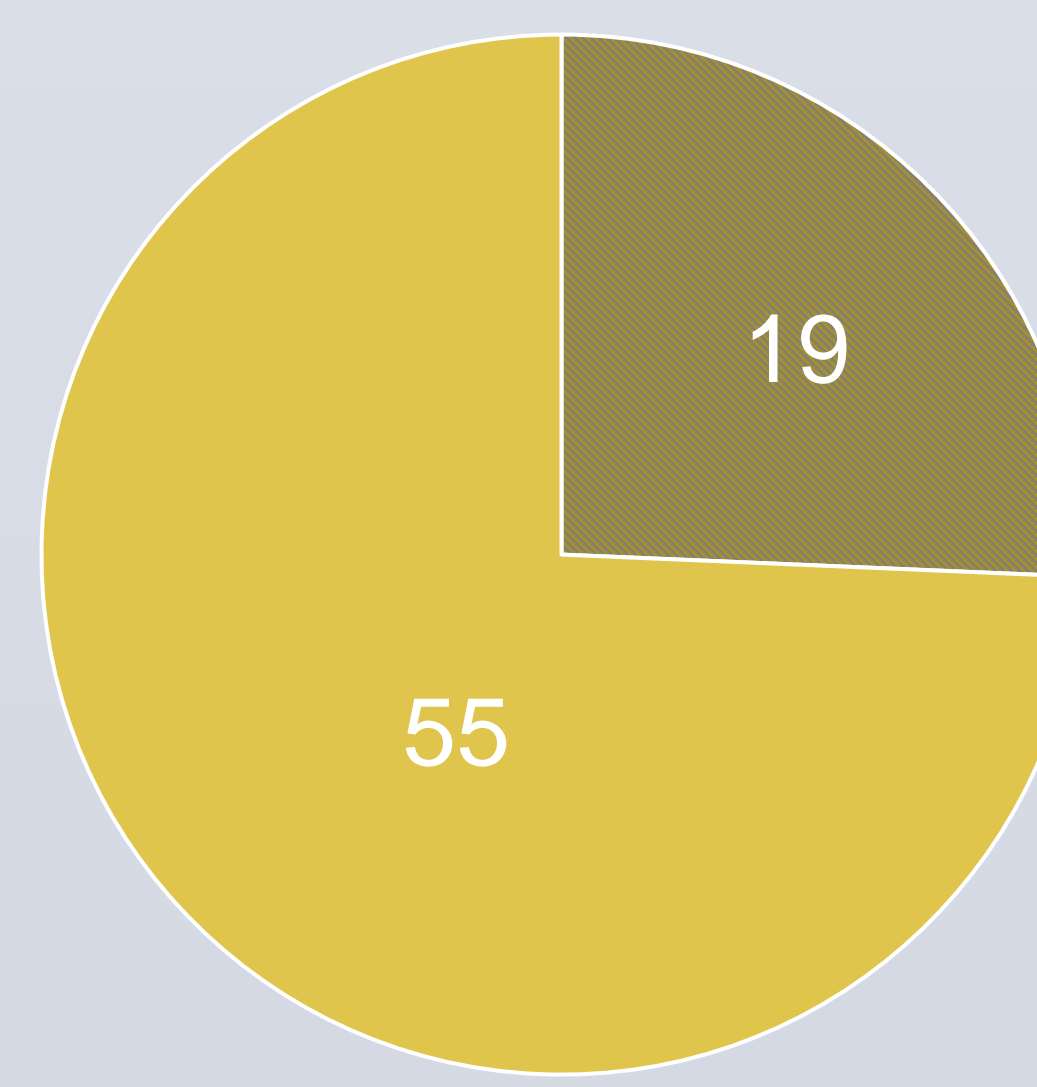
Of 204 surveys administered, 156 met the inclusion criteria and were included for analysis. The average reported age was 8 years old and 83 of 156 (53%) total participants were female.

Seventy-four of 156 (47%) had a BMI greater than or equal to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile; 57 out of 74 (77%) met the criteria for obesity (Fig. 1). Nineteen of the 74 (26%) parents endorsed concern regarding their child's weight (Fig. 2). All 19 parents that expressed concern over their child's weight had children that met the criteria for obesity. Three of 17 (18%) parents of overweight, but not obese, children expressed interest in having their child participate in a healthy lifestyle program, while 25/57 (44%) parents with obese children expressed interest in having their child participate in a healthy lifestyle program (Table 2).

**Figure 1. BMI percentiles of survey participants (n=156)**



**Figure 2. Parental concern for child's weight when BMI >= 85<sup>th</sup> %ile (n=74)**



■ BMI >= 95<sup>th</sup>ile ■ BMI >= 85<sup>th</sup>ile ■ BMI <85<sup>th</sup>ile ■ Parent Concern for Child's Weight ■ No Parent Concern for Child's Weight

**Table 2. Parental interest in having their child participate in a healthy lifestyle program**

Parental Interest in a Healthy Lifestyle Program	
Overweight, but not obese	3/17 (18%)
Obese	25/57 (44%)

## CONCLUSIONS

- Twenty-six percent of surveyed parents with overweight children reported concern regarding their child's weight.
- Forty-four percent of parents with obese children reported an interest in participating in a healthy lifestyle program suggesting that availability of such interventions could lead to improved health outcomes.
- This study highlights the lack of parental recognition of the detrimental implications of childhood obesity and demonstrates an opportunity to investigate health literacy barriers in pediatric obesity.

## REFERENCES

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## Acknowledgements

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