



Medina County Body Mass Index (BMI) of 7th Graders Study Results

Why Study BMI of 7th graders in Medina County?

In 2005, Healthy Ohioans released "A Report on Body Mass Index of Ohio's Third Graders: 2004 - 2005." Significant findings were that 18.9 percent of Ohio's third grade public school students were overweight, and an additional 16.7 percent were found at risk of overweight. For Medina County third graders, 13.3 percent were overweight and an additional 17.5 percent were found at risk of overweight, for a total of **30.8 percent of third graders at risk or overweight.**

The Medina County Health Forum, a partnership of 20 agencies monitoring current critical health indicators, wanted to determine if all children were at similar risk. The Medina County Health Department, Public Health Nursing Division, conducted body mass index (BMI) screenings on *905 seventh graders in Medina County*. BMI is a measurement to determine if an individual is at a healthy or unhealthy weight. This study determined that 16.7 percent of the sampling of Medina County seventh graders were overweight and an additional 17.2 percent were at risk of overweight, for a total of **33.9 percent of the seventh graders screened at risk or overweight.**

Methods of study.

Each school was provided a letter from the Medina County Health Department, explaining the goal of the project. Each school utilized its standard protocol for obtaining parental/guardian permission. The screenings were conducted during Physical Education class. The Physical Education teachers provided the Public Health Nurse screeners with a confidential screening area. Each student was screened individually and was provided with the results of his/her height and weight. No BMI information was calculated at the school, and no student had access to another student's results.

The nurse screeners used a standardized scale to obtain weight measurements and a portable stadiometer to measure height. Data collected from each student included his/her gender, date of birth (month and year only), age, weight, and height. No data collected could be traced to any individual student. The data that was gathered was entered into a database and analyzed.

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Overall Medina County BMI Results

Overall results for Medina County*

Total Number = 905

	Number	%
Under recommended BMI	18	2
Normal-range BMI	580	64.1
At risk of overweight	151	16.7
Over recommended BMI	156	17.2
At risk <i>or</i> over	307	33.9

*There are no statistically significant differences between any schools within Medina County.

What does it mean?

Healthy People 2010, the Nation's health goals, established that the objective is for no more than 5 percent of children and adolescents, 6-19 years of age, to be overweight or obese. Obesity is a result of a complex variety of social, behavioral, cultural, environmental, physiological, and genetic factors. Efforts to maintain a healthy weight should start early in childhood and continue throughout adulthood, as this is likely to be more successful than efforts to lose substantial amounts of weight and maintain weight loss once obesity is established.

A healthy diet and regular physical activity are both important for maintaining a healthy weight. Over time, even a small decrease in calories eaten and a small increase in physical activity can help prevent weight gain or facilitate weight loss. It is recommended that obese individuals who are trying to lose substantial amounts of weight seek the guidance of a health care provider.

The Medina County Health Department is here to assist your school in numerous ways by offering School Health Nursing Services, BMI screenings, technical assistance with developing physical activity programs, and offering resources to you, your staff, your students, and your community.



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