

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR THE GOOD HEALTH OF NEVADA

SOM program looks at overweight mothers with overweight children

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Can the cycle of excess weight in families be interrupted? University of Nevada School of Medicine Nutrition, Education and Research Program (NERP) researchers would like to find out with their 18-month HOPSCOTCH program – **H**ealth **O**pportunities for **P**reSchool Children to **O**ptimize **T**heir **C**ardiovascular **H**ealth.

The HOPSCOTCH program, which has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, will study 50 pairs of overweight pre-school children with their overweight mothers or primary female caregivers, randomized into two groups: (class-based) with the parent as the mediator or change, or the (home-based) group. The two behavioral models will be combined to help parents enhance their parenting skills and develop strategies to better manage their own weight.

Intervention for the children will provide age-specific, healthy eating patterns with increases in daily physical activity to help them stabilize or minimize weight gain that allows for a gradual decline in their body mass index as they grow. Intervention for the adults will follow the nutrition program's traditional model, which focuses on weight loss of approximately one pound per week (approximately 20 pounds in 18 months) and prevention of weight regain.

Both groups will have five individual assessments: two to establish the baseline, and then one at six, 12, and 18 months. Researchers hope the study will help families

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develop healthier eating and physical activity patterns during those 18 months and to prevent obesity. If the pilot study is successful, a multi-center clinical trial can be set up using the materials and methods developed by the nutrition researchers.

Those interested in participating in this study can contact the Nutrition Education and Research Department at 784-1595.