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### **FREQUENCY OF PARENT NUTRITION COMMUNICATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH ADOLESCENT SUBSTANCE USE AMONG LATINX FAMILIES**

Background: The role of parents in adolescent substance use prevention is crucial due to their ability to create a home environment that promotes healthful behaviors. This study assessed the association between parent health behaviors communication (including healthy nutrition) and substance use among Latinx adolescents.

Methods: Via surveys, 237 dyads of Latinx parents (40±6 years old, 89% female) and their 6th - 8th grade youth (12±0.9 years old, 39% female) self-reported the frequency of having conversations about weight/size, healthy eating, and physical activity using questions from Project EAT. Possible responses included 0=never/rarely, 1=a few times/year, 2=a few times/month, 3=a few times/week, and 4=almost daily. Adolescents self-reported substance use (alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or inhalants) over the past 30 days, answers ranged from 0 to 40 or more times. Pearson correlations examined associations between nutrition communication and adolescent use of substances; paired samples t-tests compared parent versus adolescent answers about conversation frequency.

Results: Frequency of parents talking with adolescents about healthy eating was negatively correlated with adolescents' use of e-cigarettes ( $r=-0.18$ ), alcohol ( $r=-0.16$ ), and regular cigarettes ( $r=-0.15$ , all  $p<0.05$ ). Frequency of conversations about being physically active was negatively correlated with use of inhalants ( $r=-0.14$ ) and marijuana ( $r=-0.14$ , both  $p<0.05$ ). A greater frequency of a parent mentioning to the child that he/she weighs too much was positively correlated with adolescent's use of alcohol ( $r=0.15$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Compared to parents, adolescents reported significantly less frequency of weight-related conversations (1.6±1.1 vs 3.4±0.9), healthy eating conversations (2.1±1.3 vs. 4.2±0.9), conversations about being physically active (2.1±1.3 vs. 4.1±0.9), conversations about weight/size (1.7±1.3 vs. 3.9±1.2), mentioning the child weighs too much (0.85±1.2 vs. 2.4±1.4), and conversations about changing the way the adolescent eats (1.2±1.3 vs. 2.9±1.5) and exercising in order to lose/maintain weight (1.4±1.4 vs. 3.1±1.5; all  $p<0.05$ ).

Conclusion: Parents reported higher frequency of having healthy eating habits and physical activity conversations than youth. Overall, parent healthy behavior communication helped prevent substance use among youth. Further research exploring the type/tone of parent conversations and its effect on adolescent substance use is needed.