

## 3rd Annual congress on Midwifery and Nurse Practitioners

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### **Mothers' perceptions of protective factors related to child obesity, the case of low socioeconomic Arab and Jewish mothers**

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**Statement of the Problem:** Child obesity even in young ages poses a serious public health challenge. Childhood obesity is associated with a higher chance of obesity, premature death and disability in adulthood. Child obesity has also several health and psycho complications, the most common issues are psychosocial, social and physical problems. Mothers have an important role related to the family eating behaviors and lifestyle changes for preventing obesity. Researchers have reported that mother's perceptions of the child weight is important because it can be related to her child weight, overweight or obesity women. More factors contribute to mothers' perceptions including parent's weight family history and child gender and socioeconomic factors. The purpose of this study is to explore the perceived factors related to children's healthy weight or obesity, exploring risk and protective factors. The research was held among Jewish and Arab mothers of children of low SES communities in Israel.

**Methodology & Theoretical Orientation:** qualitative research sample was conducted in towns of low socioeconomic ranking in the Northern District of the Ministry of Health and included mothers of children aged five years registered in Mother and Child Health clinics (MCH) were invited to participate in a special project involving growth and developmental testing in preparation for 1st grade. Findings: During the focus group meetings, mothers of healthy weight children (MHWC) and mothers of overweight children (MOWC) have shared common factors that were found to be related to child obesity. They discussed topics of personal, family, and environmental factors. MHWC predominantly perceived healthy behavior as they mentioned protective factors, while MOWC talked about unhealthy behaviors involving risk factors.

**Conclusion & Significance:** Analyzing the data shows relationships between factors and that have been validated. Early intervention will lead to healthier weight thereby protecting children from obesity physical difficulties and by evading inappropriate emotional teasing.

#### **Biography**

Obeid is a head of the Health Promotion Department, North District, Ministry of Health and a lecturer on at the The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Nursing department. Her research interests are mainly in: evaluation of health promotion projects, ethics competence and social epidemiology. Dr. Obeid is involved in some research projects such as: evaluation of radio campaign in the topic of raising awareness on preventing Brucella disease, factors protecting healthy weight of children in low socio-economic situation, Arab Muslim clerics as social agents, health behaviors among Ethiopian new immigrants and violence and tolerance attitudes of Arab and Jewish students and more.

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