

Who Is Overweight? Age, Sex and Body Weight among Mexican Origin Young People

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Among elementary school children, male immigrant children have a higher likelihood of being overweight than their female peers. To date, no study has examined whether this finding holds for children of Mexican immigrants or for older children. Our analysis of children age 5-19 in the 1999-2006 NHANES offers evidence of a gender difference in the odds that young Mexican children of immigrants are overweight, with boys more likely to be overweight than girls. Our findings also suggest that this gender difference is absent among older children and immigrants. With age, the odds of overweight among male and female children of Mexican immigrants begin to level off. Among older children, this is because female's likelihood of being overweight begins to catch up to those observed among boys. Among 15-19 year olds, this is due to the fact that boys' odds of overweight begin to decline while girls' odds remain steady.

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