Texas has the 10th highest obesity rate for youth ages 10-17 and is tied for the 13th highest adult obesity rate in the U.S.1

20.7% of Texas youth ages 10-17 have obesity.

In Texas, Hispanic and African American children have higher rates of obesity compared to non-Hispanic white children2.

Childhood obesity in Texas is getting worse.

Childhood Obesity is Risky

Obesity is associated with increased lifetime risks for adverse health outcomes4,5, including:

- diabetes
- heart disease
- asthma
- high blood pressure
- depression
- sleeping difficulties
- higher risk of having obesity as an adult

Childhood Obesity is Costly

Childhood obesity results in extra health care costs. A child with obesity has $12,900 more in medical costs than a child with normal weight6.

Educational attainment is associated with lifetime earnings7. Obesity in childhood is associated with poorer educational outcomes8,9,10, including:

- lower GPA
- lower reading scores
- lower math scores
- more school absences

We must do more to combat obesity in Texas.
References


3. School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project 2019-2020. Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN project details available online at go.uth.edu/SPAN.

   The School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project is a surveillance system monitoring the prevalence of overweight/obesity in school-aged children in Texas conducted by researchers at the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN has been funded by the Texas Department of State Health Services since 2000 to conduct height and weight measurements across different grade levels.


About

The Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living’s Texas Child Health Status Report project utilizes state-level data from the School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project and national-level comparisons to provide an accurate representation of Texas child health. This project is funded by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

Learn more at go.uth.edu/TexasChildHealth

Last Updated January 17, 2023