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'Let's Work Together Towards Children's Nutrition': Building Bridge Between Child Care Providers and Parents for Promoting Child Health

Dipti A. Dev

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, ddev2@unl.edu

Courtney Byrd-Williams

University of Texas School of Public Health, courtney.e.byrdwilliams@uth.tmc.edu

Samantha Ramsay

University of Idaho, sramsay@uidaho.edu

Brent A. McBride


University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, brentmcb@illinois.edu

Ashleigh L. Murriel

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, ziy8@cdc.gov

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Dipti A. Dev, Courtney Byrd-Williams, Samantha Ramsay, Brent A. McBride, Ashleigh L. Murriel, Chrisa Arcan, and Anna M. Adachi-Mejia

P162 ‘Let’s Work Together Towards Children’s Nutrition’: Building Bridge Between Child Care Providers and Parents for Promoting Child Health

Dipti Dev, PhD, ddev2@unl.edu, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, 1400 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68588; C. Byrd-Williams, PhD, University of Texas; S. Ramsay, PhD, University of Idaho; B. McBride, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; A. May, PhD, Centers for Disease Control; C. Arcan, PhD, University of Minnesota; A. M. Adachi-Mejia, PhD, Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy & Clinical Practice

Objective: To investigate childcare providers’ perspectives for communicating with parents to promote children’s nutrition and health.

Design, Setting, and Participants: In-person, semi-structured interviews. Licensed center-based child care. Eighteen full-time childcare providers caring for children 2-5 years old, 67% caring for children who pay with federal subsidy.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Participants were selected using maximum variation purposive sampling. Interviews were conducted until saturation was achieved. NVivo, thematic analysis used to code and identify themes and meta-themes regarding providers’ perspectives for parent communication.

Results: Two meta-themes emerged from providers’ responses: barriers to communication, and strategies to communication. Barriers to communication include: parents are too busy to talk, parents prioritize food concerns over nutrition, parents allow unhealthy foods, providers are unsure about communicating, and providers weren’t sure parents were receptive to nutrition education materials. Five strategies were identified for communication and building bridges between providers and parents: recognize the benefits of engaging and educating parents about nutrition to promote health; leverage policy to communicate positively and avoid conflict with parents; implement center-level practices to reinforce policy; build partnerships with parents through education; foster a respectful relationship between providers and parents.

Conclusions and Implications: Policy and center strategies were identified for fostering a respectful relationship and building bridges between providers and parents to promote child health and nutrition.

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