Weight status: measurement, trends and relationship with health

P252  Parental perception of preschool children’s weight
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PURPOSE: Parental perception of children’s weight is a topic widely studied. Even so, we find some divergent results about the influence of children’s age and sex, probably as a result of cultural differences. To clarify this question we propose to analyse the maternal ability to discriminate the weight status of children through two different methods.

METHOD: Mothers of children aged 2 to 8 years were surveyed concerning their child’s appearance. They selected the gender-specific sketch (visual scale) and the categorical classification (verbal scale), from 7 choices, that most closely matched the body image of their child. Children were grouped by body mass index using the references established by IOTF.

RESULT(S): Both scales revealed that mothers do not recognize overweight and obesity among their children, however, the percentage of weight underestimation was higher through visual scale (59.2% vs. 39.7%). The tendency to underestimate increased from 4 years of age, and with greater emphasis in boys, but only according to verbal scale.

CONCLUSION(S): The use of these different methods suggests that, in Portuguese culture, the visual image of obesity does not correspond with the concept per se. The visual impact of obesity produces a more pronounced denial. In addition, the expressions “overweight” and “obesity” are differently interpreted according to children’s sex and age, revealing a substantial influence of cultural factors. We conclude that the concept of childhood obesity and its visual image, both in different sex and age, should be worked together in order to increase mother’s awareness of children’s weight.

P253  Capability for reporting height and weight: a cross-sectional study of 11-15 year olds
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PURPOSE: This study proposes a new approach for understanding the validity of self-reported weight and height among adolescents. The objectives were 1) to estimate the prevalence of students with high/low response capability for self-reported weight and height in a self-administrated questionnaire survey and 2) to estimate the association between response capability and erroneous estimation of self-reported weight and height when comparing with direct measures of weight and height.

METHOD: Data was collected by a school-based cross-sectional questionnaire survey among students aged 11-15 years in 13 schools in Aarhus, Denmark. The response rate was 89%, n=2100. Response capability was based on students’ reports of perceived ability for recalling weight/height and weighing/height measuring history. Direct measuring of height and