

# Do as I say not as I do: The Relationship between Parents' Diet and their Attitudes towards their Adolescents' Diet

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## BACKGROUND

- Parenting practices around diet determine the quantity and quality of foods children consume.
- Most studies have focused on young children and little is known about how parent attitudes toward their adolescents' diet are related to parents' diet.

## AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

- Aim 1:** To determine whether parents' diet practices align with their attitudes for their adolescents' diet.  
**Hypothesis:** Parents with positive attitudes to fruits and vegetables (FV), and sugary foods and drinks will report higher intake.
- Aim 2:** To determine if parents' obesity status moderate the relationship between their diet and attitudes toward their adolescents' diet.  
**Hypothesis:** The relationship between attitudes and diet behaviors will be stronger for overweight/obese parents.

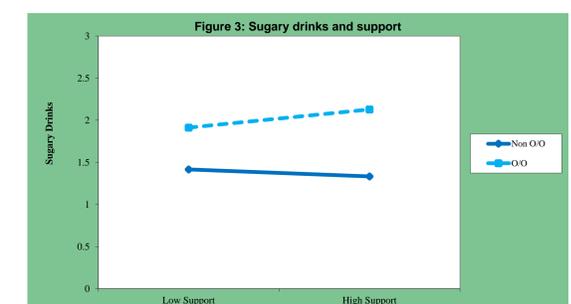
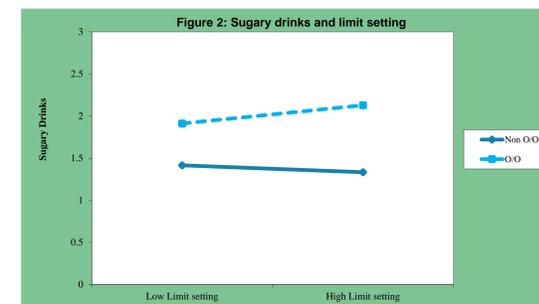
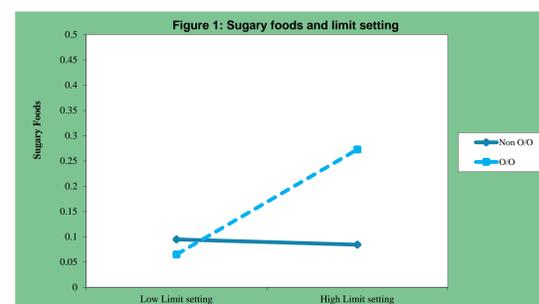
## METHODS

- Parent data were obtained from the National Cancer Institute's Family Life, Activity, Sun, Health, and Eating Study.
- Parents (n=1859, 72% female, 69% White, 62% overweight/obese) completed measures of
  - Parent FV and sugary foods and drinks intake
  - Supportive attitudes and behaviors (e.g., not buying junk food/drinks for adolescents, avoiding eating junk foods in the presence of adolescents)
  - Limit setting attitudes and behaviors (e.g., setting rules for adolescents diet)
  - Availability of foods at home
- Hierarchical regressions were computed to address study aims.

## RESULTS

	Fruits $\beta$	Vegetables $\beta$	Sugary Foods $\beta$	Sugary Drinks $\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>				
R <sup>2</sup> (F)	.04 (9.90***)	.01 (3.46**)	.01 (2.08*)	.09 (23.99***)
Age	.04**	.04	.01	-.30***
Female	.05	.08	-.01	-.42***
Black vs. White	-.07	-.11	.07	.27**
Hispanic vs. White	-.07	-.08	.10	.30*
Other vs. White	-.11	-.24*	-.04	-.05
Education	.17***	.13***	.05	-.09*
Food stamps status	-.13*	.004	.20**	.49***
<b>Step 2</b>				
$\Delta$ R <sup>2</sup> (F)	.18 (43.23***)	.13 (24.80***)	.14 (26.88***)	.11 (36.41***)
Availability	.32***	.30***	.33***	.35***
Support	.17***	.22***	-.07**	-.05
Limit setting	.04†	.15***	.04	.02
Overweight/Obese	-.09*	-.03	.01	.12†
<b>Step 3</b>				
$\Delta$ R <sup>2</sup> (F)	.01 (34.59***)	.01 (19.70***)	.01 (21.53***)	.01 (29.24***)
Availability*O/O	.05	.004	.001	-.08
Support*O/O	.13†	.15	-.03	-.15*
Limit setting*O/O	-.01	-.09	.12*	.17*

- FRUITS:** Availability of and supportive attitudes for FV were related to higher fruit intake.
- VEGETABLES:** Availability of and supportive and limit setting attitudes for FV were related to higher vegetable intake.
- SUGARY FOODS:** Availability of sugary foods were related to higher intake. Supportive attitudes for a non-junk foods diet were related to lower intake. For overweight/obese parents, high limit setting attitudes were related to higher sugary food intake.
- SUGARY DRINKS:** Availability of sugary drinks was related to higher intake. For overweight/obese parents, as supporting attitudes for a non-junk food diet increased, sugary drinks intake decreased. However, as limit setting attitudes increased, sugary drinks intake increased.



## CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

- The results suggest that parents adopt a “do as I say and as I do” for fruits and vegetables intake behaviors. However, their behaviors are inconsistent with their attitudes for their adolescents' sugary food and drink intake.
- The results also confirm that obesity status likely impacts the extent to which parents' behaviors are consistent with their attitudes for their adolescents' diet behaviors.
- High limit setting attitudes were related to higher sugary food and drinks intake for overweight/obese parents. Factors such as sugar addiction, not wanting adolescents' to follow a similar pathway to obesity, and concern for adolescents' health may account for this relationship.
- Implications for future research include exploring the cognitive processes behind “do as I say not as I do” reasoning/ behaviors regarding sugary foods and drinks and investigating how these inconsistencies are related to adolescents' behaviors.