Cost-effectiveness of Family-Based Obesity Treatment

Family-based behavioural treatment - “evidence-based treatment of children with obesity and their parents” - has been effective in several studies. This study was conducted to determine if behavioural obesity treatment was more cost-effective when conducted individually or with a parent. Enrolled participants “had a BMI over the 85th percentile for their age and sex” as well as “a parent who had a BMI ≥25.”

All parents participated in 16 sessions where they heard a professional “delivered dietary, physical, and sedentary activity guidelines.” Each family was assigned a “practice enhancement assistants” to counsel them during sessions. They also visited a paediatrician every six months. Only the intervention group were given individual sessions with the Practice Enhancement Assistants regarding “behaviour modification and education on parenting techniques.” At the conclusion of the study, scientists found that the family-based intervention was both more effective and more cost-effective than the other. They recommend that these programs be implemented on a larger scale but also that more work be done on maintaining weight-loss long term.