



Idaho Schools Body Mass Index (BMI) Assessment 2008-2009

Nationwide, 17.0% of 6-11 year olds and 17.6% of 12-19 year olds are considered obese by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) standards of a body mass index (BMI) at or above the 95th percentile. Idaho schools are not required to collect or report BMI at any grade level, therefore little is known about the weight status of Idaho children and adolescents.

Through the leadership of Coordinated School Health Program (CSH) in the Idaho State Department of Education and Department of Health and Welfare and the University of Idaho, in 2008-2009 a BMI assessment of students across Idaho in grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 was completed in collaboration with the Idaho Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Boise State University, Lewis-Clark State College, and Idaho State University.



BMI Facts:

- By CDC standards, obesity is defined as a BMI at or above the 95th percentile for age and gender
- Overweight is defined as a BMI at or above the 85th to less than the 95th percentile
- Underweight is defined as a BMI below the 5th percentile
- The 2007-2008 Idaho Bureau of Community & Environmental Health 3rd grade assessment found that 28% of students were overweight or obese

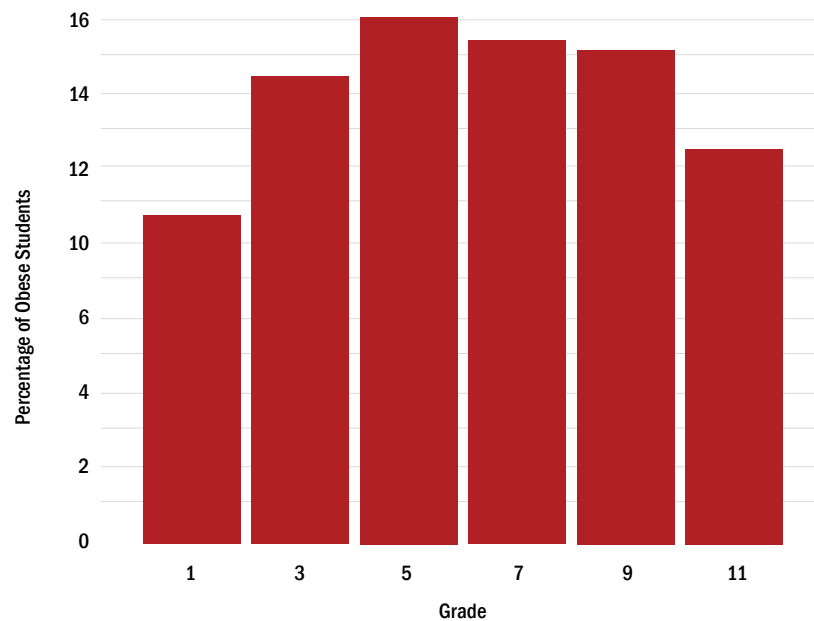
2008-2009 BMI Survey of Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, & 11

The sample included 5,242 students (2,427 girls & 2,815 boys) from 40 different schools in 32 different communities. Schools provided the date of birth, gender, and ethnicity of the students.

Findings:

- Overall, 30.5% of the students in the sample were classified as overweight or obese as compared to 33.5% nationally.
- Results for overweight or obese varied by grade, ranging from 24.3% of 1st graders to 33.0% of 7th graders

Weight Status by Grade



Positive Findings:

- Only 1.4% of students sampled were underweight (an estimate of acute malnutrition) compared to 3.8% nationally.

Findings of Concern:

- Boys (16.3%) were more likely to be obese than girls (11.1%), particularly in adolescents (grade 7, 9, 11; 17.2% vs. 10.5%)
- Schools that had the highest rates of obesity also had the highest percentage of students with low socioeconomic status.

Funding for this project was provided to Idaho Coordinated School Health through a cooperative agreement for CDC Division of Adolescent School Health and Idaho Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.