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**Il-Body-Mass Index (BMI), il-Basktijiet u Dahar it-Tfal:
Studju nazzjonali fl-iskejjel Maltin - Ottubru/Diċembru 2015**

Informazzjoni dwar l-istudju

Gheżież ġenituri / kuraturi,

Nixtiequ nirringrazzjawkom li sibtu hin biex taqraw din l-ittra ta' informazzjoni. F'din in-nota ha nippruvaw inwiegħbu l-aktar mistoqsiet importanti li jista' jkollkom dwar studju li ha jkun qiegħed isir dalwaqt fl-iskola ta' wliedkom.

Fiex jikkonsisti dan l-istudju?

Permezz ta' dan l-istudju t-fal Maltin ha jintiżnu u jitkejjel it-tul tagħhom biex b'hekk tkun determinata ir-rata ta' piż żejjed u obesità fit-tfal. Barra minn hekk ha jintiżnu wkoll il-basktijiet tal-iskola tat-tfal. Uħud mit-tfal imbagħad ha jkunu mitluba jghidu jekk ihossux xi uġiegh f'daharhom. Dan l-istudju ha jsir fl-iskejjel kollha Maltin bejn Ottubru u Diċembru 2015.

Min ser imexxi l-istudju?

Din hi inizzjattiva bi shab bejn id-Dipartiment għar-Riċerka u l-Iżvilupp tal-Politika fi hdan il-Ministeru għall-Edukazzjoni u x-Xogħol, il-Ministeru għall-Energija u s-Saħħa, id-Dipartiment tal-Pedjartrija u l-Assoċjazzjoni Maltija tal-Fisjoterapisti. Din ir-riċerka hi awtorizzata mis-Supretendent għas-Saħħa Pubblika u hi meqjusa li hi ta' importanza nazzjonali fejn tidhol is-saħħa pubblika.

X'ser ikun jinvolvi dan l-istudju?

F'kull skola ser ikun hemm miżien standard għal perjodu qasir ta' żmien. Matul dan il-perjodu, l-għalliema tal-PE ha jutilizzaw il-hin ta' lezzjoni sabiex jiżnu u jkejlu t-tul ta' kull student f'dik il-klassi. Hu importanti li jkun enfasizzat li t-tagħrif li ha tingabar ha jkun merfugħ b'mod anonimu biex tkun żgurata l-kunfidenzjalità ta' kull student. It-tagħrif ta' kull skola mbagħad jintbagħat f'sit ċentrali fejn kull kejl jibqa' merfugħ b'mod anonimu.

X'inhuma l-benefiċċji ta' dan l-istudju?

L-obesità fit-tfulija hi problema kbira madwar id-dinja kollha bit-tfal Maltin irrappurtati li għandhom rati għolja ta' obesità meta mqabbla ma' tfal minn pajjiżi oħra. Barra minn hekk, l-obesità fit-tfulija jista' jkollha konsegwenzi kemm immedjati kif ukoll futuri fuq is-saħħa u l-benesseri. Dan ha jkun ukoll l-ewwel studju tat-tip tiegħu li ha jkejjel it-tfal kollha tal-età tal-iskola ta' pajjiż shih. L-informazzjoni miġbura ha tgħin lid-dipartiment tas-saħħa biex jagħraf aħjar il-veru stat nutrittiv tat-tfal u b'hekk inizzjattivi marbuta mas-saħħa jistgħu jkunu aktar iffukati. Ir-rizultati ha jgħinu lill-iskejjel biex itejbu t-tagħlim dwar ikel sustanzjuż u fil-promozzjoni ta' mġiba sana u zieda fl-attività fizika.

Il-partecipazzjoni tat-tifel jew tifla tiegħek.

Jekk tippreferi li t-tifel jew tifla tiegħek ma jehdux sehem f'dan l-istudju inti ġentilment mitlub/a tinforma b'dan lill-Kap tal-Iskola.

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24th September, 2015

**Body-Mass Index (BMI), Bags and Backs:
A nationwide study in Maltese schools – October/December 2015**

Information about the study

Dear parents/guardians,

Thank you for finding time to read this information letter. In this letter, we will try to answer the most important questions you may have regarding a study that will soon be piloted in your child's school.

What is this study?

This study will measure the weight and height of all Maltese school children to determine the rate of childhood overweight and obesity. Moreover, as part of the study, the weight of the child's school bag will also be checked. A number of children will then be asked some questions about back pain. This study will be administered in all Maltese schools between October and December 2015.

Who are we?

This is a joint project between researchers from the Research and Policy Development Department within the Ministry for Education and Employment, the Ministry for Energy and Health, the Department of Paediatrics, and the Malta Association of Physiotherapists. This research has been endorsed by the Superintendent of Public Health and is deemed to be of national importance to public health.

What will the study involve?

Each school will be provided with a standard weighing scale for a short period of time. During this time, the school's PE teachers will dedicate a class lesson to measure the weight and height of every child in a particular class. It is important to stress that the data collected will be stored anonymously to ensure full confidentiality for each child. Data from each school will then be sent to a central database where each entry will still remain anonymous.

What are the benefits of the study?

Childhood obesity is a major worldwide problem and Maltese children have high obesity rates when compared children in other countries. Also, childhood obesity can have both immediate and future effects on health and well-being. This study will be the first worldwide to measure all schoolchildren in a specific country. The results will help the health department assess better the true nutritional status of Maltese children to help focus public health initiatives. The results will also help improve schools' abilities to teach students about healthy eating and promote healthy behaviours and physical activity.

What about my son's/daughter's participation in the study?

Should you prefer that your son/daughter does not participate in this study you are kindly asked to contact the Head of School and inform her about this.

Raymond Camilleri
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Research and Policy Development Department