Vermont Restaurant Owner & Manager Perspectives on Creating Heart-Healthy Kids Meals

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Vermont Restaurant Owner & Manager Perspectives on Creating Heart-Healthy Kids Meals

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Introduction

The prevalence of sugar sweetened beverages and fried foods combined with a lack of healthy children’s menu options has contributed to the obesity epidemic among young Americans.1 Recent legislation in New York City and San Francisco instituted strict nutritional requirements on children’s menu items.2 We performed a cross-sectional study that focused on independently owned restaurants with printed children’s menus in Vermont. We investigated the nutritional content of children’s menu items, restaurant owner and manager perspectives on customer ordering habits, and barriers that restaurants would face if they made children’s menu items healthier.

Methods

Project was reviewed and accepted by the UVM Office of Research Protections as an Instructor’s Assurance.

145 Vermont Restaurants with printed children’s menus were identified by online search engine. The restaurants were stratified by county and then contacted randomly by phone to participate in the study. 46 restaurant owner/managers completed the survey.

The structured questionnaire that was modeled after the Children’s Menu Assessment tool³ included a combination of yes/no and Likert scale response questions. The survey data were collected by second year medical students via LimeSurvey™.

Data were compiled and analyzed in Microsoft Excel.

Results

The prevalence of sugar sweetened beverages and fried foods combined with a lack of healthy children’s menu options has contributed to the obesity epidemic among young Americans.1 Recent legislation in New York City and San Francisco instituted strict nutritional requirements on children’s menu items.2 We performed a cross-sectional study that focused on independently owned restaurants with printed children’s menus in Vermont. We investigated the nutritional content of children’s menu items, restaurant owner and manager perspectives on customer ordering habits, and barriers that restaurants would face if they made children’s menu items healthier.

Discussion & Conclusion


References


Limitations

The number of restaurants available on the restaurant review engine was not inclusive; Only restaurant owners who use a printed children’s menu for lunch or dinner were interviewed; Data collection was limited by the time of day when managers and/or owners were available; The highest concentration of respondents represented the most densely populated areas of the state.