AN ITALIAN OBESITY PREVENTION INTERVENTION STUDY IN TEENAGERS: THE EAT PROJECT (EFFECTIVENESS OF A SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM ON MEASURES OF FATNESS AND BEHAVIOUR OVER 2 SCHOOL YEARS).

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A controlled study including classroom nutrition lessons, incentives to increase physical activity and environmental school changes was performed in 870 adolescents (aged 11-14 years) over 2 school years. Body height and weight, waist circumference and dietary and physical activity habits data were measured at the beginning and at the end of each school year. At the end of the second school year of our program, we observed a significant increase in the prevalence of normal-weight adolescents (+10.3%, p<0.01), and a reduction in the prevalence of overweight and obese adolescents (-7.9%, p<0.05 and -2.4%, p=ns, respectively), as well as a significant reduction in mean waist circumference (-2 cm, p<0.05), in the intervention group.

Moreover, we observed an increase in the frequencies of consumption of vegetables and fruits and a reduction in the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, as well as a significant enhancement in daily walking. No significant changes in measures of fatness and in dietary or physical activity-related habits were observed in the control group. We conclude that the EAT project resulted in beneficial effects on measures of fatness and behavior in an adolescents population.