

ABSTRACT

Discipline, toilet training, development, and behavioral modification have been shown as issues that parents feel are not adequately addressed by the pediatrician (Combs-Orme, T., Holden, N. B., & Herrod, H. G., 2011). Research has also demonstrated that skill building (Mortensen, J. A., & Mastergeorge, A. M., 2014), nutrition, sleep (Combs-Orme, T., Holden, N. B., & Herrod, H. G., 2011, Scholer, S. J., Hudnut-Beumler, J., Mukherjee, A., & Dietrich, M. S., 2015), social emotional learning (Combs-Orme, T., Holden, N. B., & Herrod, H. G., 2011), and connection with medical providers (Mortensen, J. A., & Mastergeorge, A. M., 2014), are essential to appropriate brain growth and development in children. Examining the relationship between different demographic variables and a parent's perception of managing these issues is a topic that has not yet been well-addressed in psychological and medical literature. The current literature focuses on perceptions of parents who have children with chronic conditions such as asthma and disabilities (Peterson-Sweeney, K., McMullen, A., Yoos, H. L., Kitzman, H., 2003, Heaman, D., 1995). This research has allowed for recommendations to be made to pediatricians to provide opportunities for parent-child education to address the concerns associated with managing their child's condition (Peterson-Sweeney, K., McMullen, A., Yoos, H. L., Kitzman, H., 2003). In this study the relationship between different demographic variables and a parent's perception of managing their child's health and wellness was examined. Across 6 clinic days, upon signing in at the Pediatrician, every patient with a pediatrician visit was given the opportunity to complete a survey to evaluate the need for a possible parent-training program. We analyzed parent perceptions of topics including: how the parent is managing health and wellness, behavioral and mental health, their access to resources, nutritional health, communication with their pediatrician, and day to day issues with raising young children. This study will add to the literature by examining parental perspectives of parents who have healthy children. A better understanding of these perceptions will enable pediatricians to more effectively address these concerns during pediatric visits.

OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

- To describe the relationship between demographic variables of caregivers and their perceptions of managing their child's health and wellness.
- To examine these relationships so that pediatricians can more effectively address parental concerns regarding management of their child's health and wellness.
- To provide a knowledge base for future research into specific topics regarding parental perspectives of managing their child's health and wellness. Such topics could include mental health, nutrition, discipline, and communication with the pediatrician.



MATERIALS & METHODS

- Patients at a Pediatric Facility in Philadelphia, PA were asked to complete an anonymous survey during their regularly scheduled visit on 6 separate occasions.
- Every patient was given the opportunity to complete the survey to evaluate the need for a possible parent training program. The data was de-identified and entered into an excel sheet for evaluation of the program.
- The existing shelf data was analyzed using SPSS.
- Ran t-tests to compare various demographic data categories with 2 distinct groups: those concerned with managing their child's health and wellness and those not concerned.
- Parental perceptions of topics including: how the parent is managing health and wellness, behavioral and mental health, their access to resources, nutritional health, communication with their pediatrician, and day to day issues with raising young children were analyzed.

RESULTS

After viewing the demographic data, it was clear that there were 2 distinct groups: those that were concerned about managing their child's health and wellness and those who weren't concerned.

2 distinct groups: caregivers that were concerned about managing their child's health and wellness (n=26) and those who weren't concerned (n=29).

Age of Child	n=70
0-2 yrs. old	22
3-5 yrs. old	12
6-10 yrs. old	18
11-12 yrs. old	4
13+ yrs. old	14

Age of Caregiver	n=61
14 yrs. old or below	1
15-18 yrs. old	0
19-23 yrs. old	6
24-34 yrs. old	26
35+ yrs. old	28

Gender of Child	n=67
Male	34
Female	33

Gender of Caregiver	n=61
Male	16
Female	45

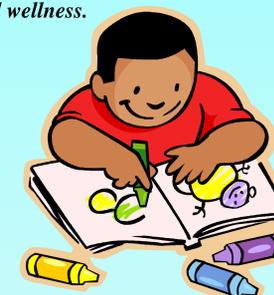
- Most caregivers did not feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable when communicating with their pediatrician (n=29).
- Most caregivers felt that they had access to resources to teach about how to communicate with their pediatrician (n=29).
- Most caregivers felt that they had access to resources to help manage their child's behavioral/mental health (n=28).
- Most caregivers felt that they had resources to teach about what foods are important to their child's growth and development (n=29).
- Most caregivers felt that they had access to resources to teach them how to handle day to day behavioral issues (i.e. tantrum) (n=29).

The group of caregivers that were concerned about managing their child's health and wellness

- Was older and had older children
- Felt more overwhelmed about managing their child's behavioral/mental health.
***In general, most caregivers did not feel overwhelmed about managing their child's mental/behavioral health.*
- Felt overwhelmed about managing their child's nutritional requirements.
***n needs to be further explored.*

CONCLUSIONS

- In general, caregivers felt that they had access to resources to help manage their child's behavioral/mental health, nutritional requirements, communication with their pediatrician, and how to handle day-to-day issues.
- Older parents have more concerns regarding their child's health and wellness compared to younger parents. This is concerning because younger parents may require more guidance for managing their child's health and wellness.
- There may be a relationship between mental health and nutrition management and concern about managing overall health and wellness. Primary care doctors may want to further explore mental health and nutrition in relation to overall health and wellness.
- In creating a parent-child program that aims to help young parents foster their child's growth and development, advertising the program to young parents as those who are "concerned" or "worried" about managing their child's health and wellness may not be effective
- How do we better target young parents to get them to participate in these types of programs?
- A better understanding of these perceptions will enable pediatricians to more effectively address the concerns of parents during pediatric visits in regards to their child's health and wellness.



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Dana Neumann, OMS-II, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, dananeu@pcom.edu

Nicole Ferrigno, OMS-II, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, nicolefe@pcom.edu

Rosemary Vickers, DO, Associate Professor, Chair and Course Director of Pediatrics, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, rosemaryv@pcom.edu

Sarah Levin Allen, PhD, CBIS, Assistant Professor - Neuropsychologist, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, sarahall@pcom.edu (Advisor)