

OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY

Body mass index (BMI) is the ratio of weight to height, which is used to define overweight and obesity as well as normal weight status and underweight. In children, BMI is used in conjunction with age and sex, since both of these factors affect body composition. Children who fall between the 85th and 94th percentile of BMI-for-age are considered overweight, while children who are in the 95th percentile or above are considered obese; those who fall below the 5th percentile are considered underweight and those between the 5th and 84th percentile are considered to be normal weight. In 2009–10,

14.7 percent of children aged 2–19 years were overweight, 16.9 percent were obese, 64.1 percent were normal weight, and 4.3 percent were underweight based on measured height and weight (data not shown).

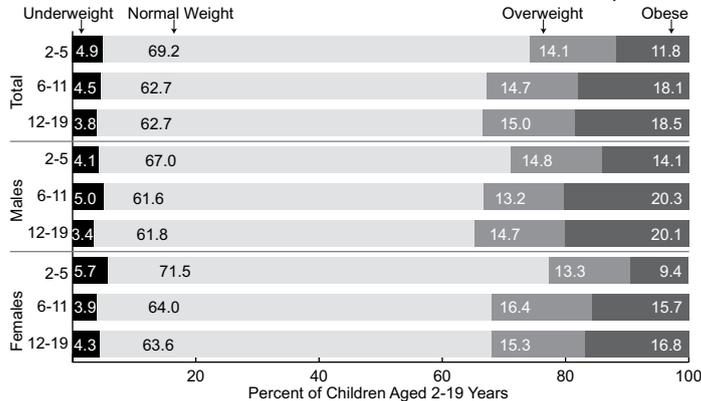
Weight status among children varies by a number of factors, including age and sex, race/ethnicity, and household income. School-aged children were more likely to be obese than preschool-aged children: approximately 18 percent of children aged 6–11 years and 12–19 years were considered to be obese, compared to 11.8 percent of children aged 2–5 years.

The prevalence of overweight and obesity

also varied by race/ethnicity. Nearly one-quarter of non-Hispanic Black children were considered to be obese in 2009–10 and another 15 percent considered to be overweight. Similarly, nearly 40 percent of Mexican-American and other Hispanic children were either overweight or obese. In comparison, approximately 28 percent of non-Hispanic White children were overweight or obese. Racial/ethnic differences were particularly pronounced among females: between 18–24 percent of non-Hispanic Black, Mexican-American, and other Hispanic girls were obese, compared to 11.5 percent of their non-Hispanic White counterparts.

Weight Status* Among Children Aged 2-19 Years, by Age and Sex, 2009-10

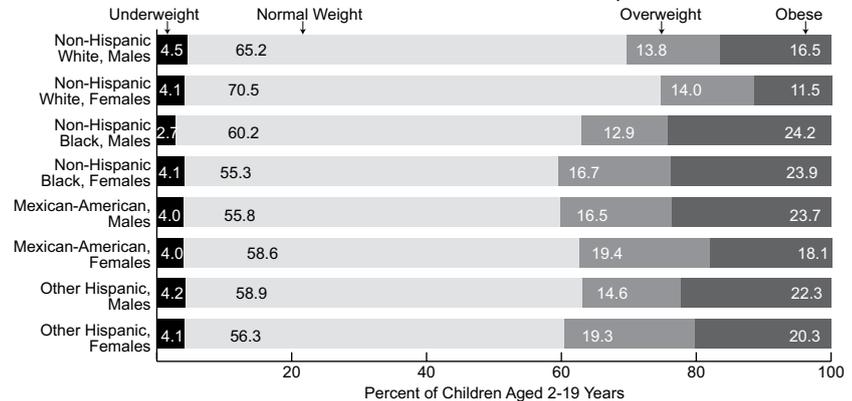
Source (II.15): CDC, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



*Underweight is a BMI-for-age under the 5th percentile, normal weight is a BMI-for-weight between the 5th and 84th percentile, overweight is a BMI-for-age between the 85th and 94th percentile, and obesity is a BMI-for-age in the 95th percentile or above; based on parent-reported height and weight.

Weight Status* Among Children Aged 2-19 Years, by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, 2009-10

Source (II.15): CDC, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey



*Underweight is a BMI-for-age under the 5th percentile, normal weight is a BMI-for-weight between the 5th and 84th percentile, overweight is a BMI-for-age between the 85th and 94th percentile, and obesity is a BMI-for-age in the 95th percentile or above; based on parent-reported height and weight.