Abstract

Objective. Consumption of water may help promote health and prevent obesity in children by decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. This study used evidence-based strategies to increase water consumption in Mexican-American and Mexican children. Materials and methods. In 2012, two schools in San Diego, USA and two other in Tlaltizapan, Mexico were recruited to Agua para Niños (Water for Kids), a program designed to promote water consumption among elementary grade students. Guided by operant psychology, the intervention focused on school and classroom activities to encourage water consumption. One control and one intervention school in each country were included. Results. Agua para Niños resulted in increases in observed water consumption and bottle possession among US and Mexican students. Teacher receptivity to the program was very positive in both countries. Conclusions. Agua para Niños yielded sufficiently positive behavioral changes to be used in a future fully randomized design, and to contribute to school nutrition policy changes.

Keywords

Latinos, water consumption, school, obesity, prevention.