

## Introduction

- Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children is becoming more and more apparent as school closures have resulted in children having minimal physical activity
- There are various immediate and future health risks that stem from a lack of physical activity, including obesity, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, and cancer (CDC, 2020)
- Children and adolescents should meet at least one hour of physical activity per day (Babey, 2018)

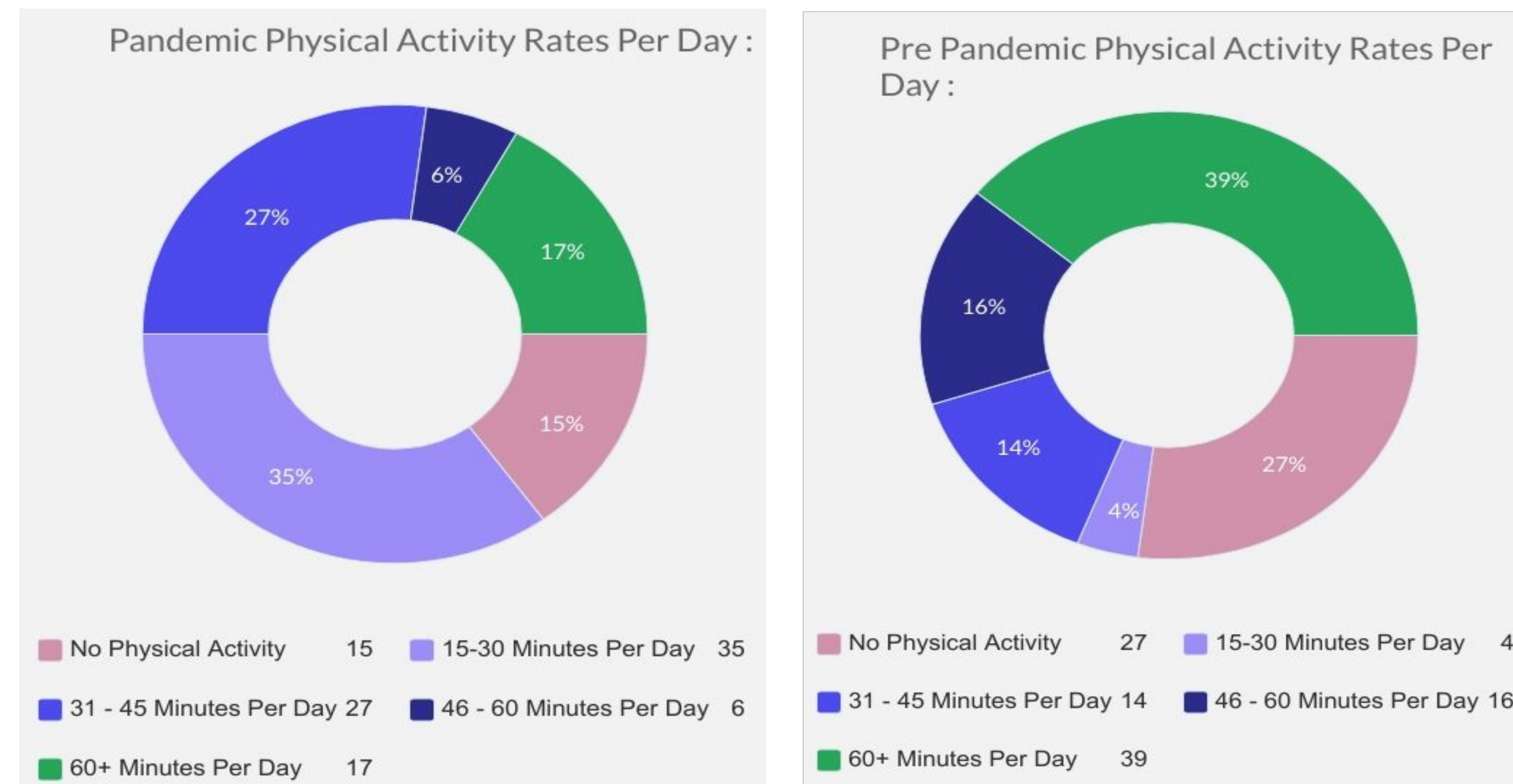
## Study Objective

To determine whether the COVID-19 pandemic and related school/facilities closures have impacted the physical activity levels of K-12 children in California.

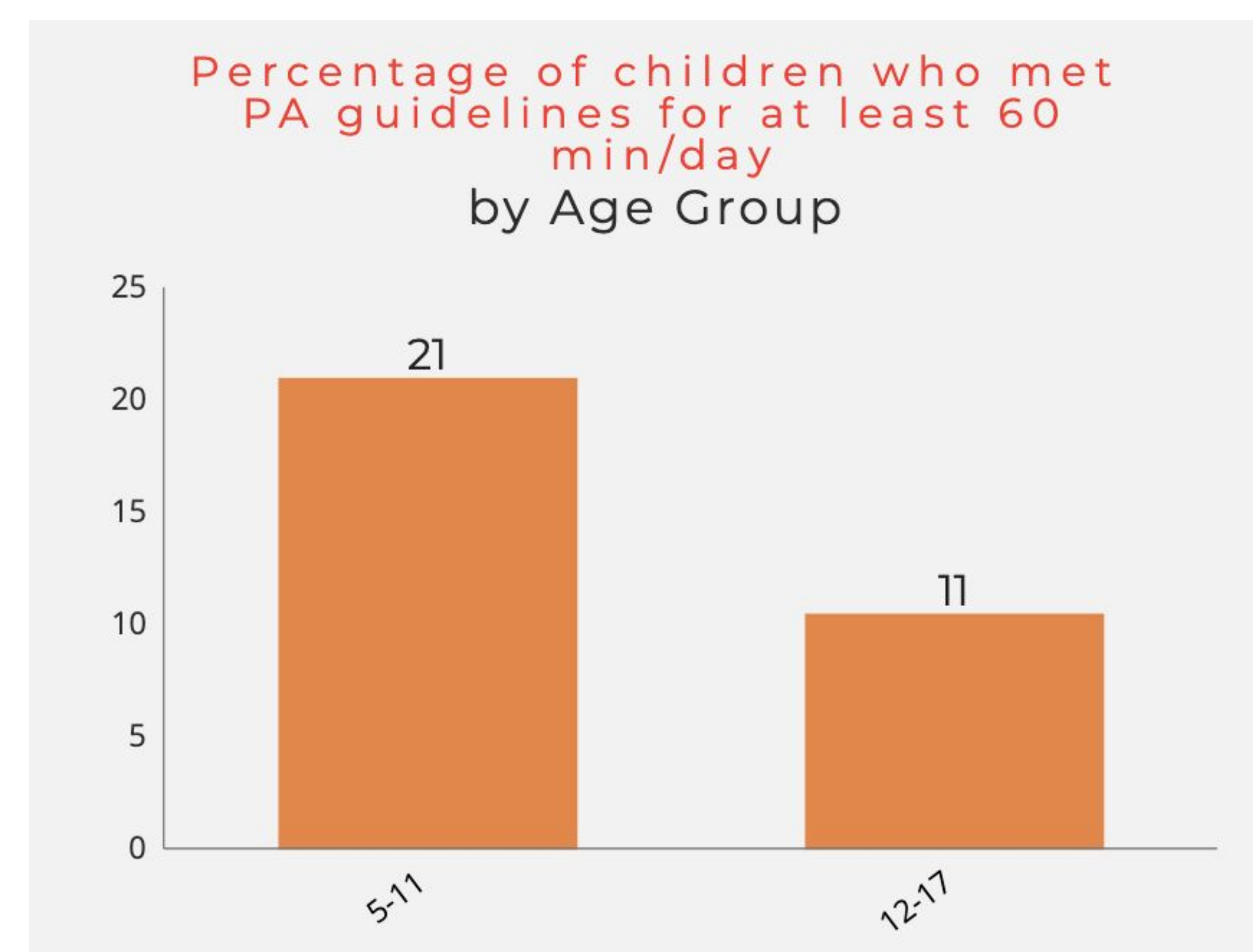
## Methodology

- A cross-sectional study was conducted among parents of K-12 children (n=100) who attend school in California to ask about their child's physical activity habits pre-pandemic and over the course of the pandemic.
- Promoted our surveys through social media platforms, and apps that requested anonymous parent participation, within different counties in the state of California.
- Evaluated data with information requested with activities conducted pre pandemic, and activities conducted as a result of the pandemic.
- Analyzed survey data, with amount of time spent on activities prior to the pandemic, and as result of the pandemic.

## Results



- The average percentage of district breakdown was split into three groups: Northern California (41%), Southern California (59%), and central California (0%).
- Breakdown for our study population in California was split into two groups, the following groups were, 5-11 age group 62% (62 participants), 12-17 age group 38% (38 participants).
- The percent change from pre-pandemic to post-pandemic for all categories is as follows: 56.4% decrease in the overall number of students getting 60+ minutes of physical activity per day, 62.6% decrease for 46-60 minutes per day, 92.9% increase for 31-45 minutes per day, 775% increase for 15-30 minutes per day, and 44.4% decrease in the number of students getting no physical activity.



- Due to the pandemic, only 21% of children aged 5-11 and about 11% of children aged 12-17 have been meeting the physical activity guideline of exercising for at least 60 minutes per day.

## Conclusion

- Ultimately, the key findings from this study indicate that there is an overall decrease in physical activity levels as a result of the pandemic with lockdowns, school closures, and remote learning.
- Further research is needed to establish other factors that contribute to the decrease in physical activity levels among K-12 children and how social and public health policies can effectively tackle this drastic decrease.

## Policy Implications

- Mandate one hour of physical education in schools (both during online schooling and as students return to in-person instruction), ensure that this physical activity is monitored/enforced by school faculty and/or parents, and develop after-school exercise programs (both virtually and in-person) to encourage children to engage in physical activity

## References

- Babey, S. H., Wolstein, J., & Diamant, A. L. (2018). Few California Children and Adolescents Meet Physical Activity Guidelines. Policy brief (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research), 2018(8), 1–8.
- Childhood obesity causes & consequences. (2020, September 02). Retrieved February 19, 2021, from <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/causes.html>