

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & WEIGHT

among American Indian Youth in NEW MEXICO 2011

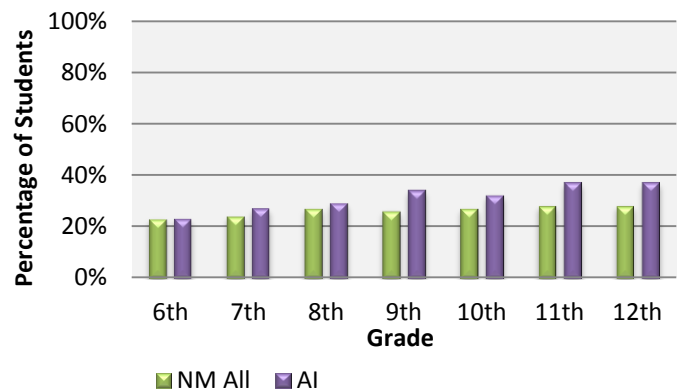


This fact sheet presents data on Physical Activity and Weight (Body Mass Index – BMI) from the 2011 New Mexico Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey (YRRS) and the 2012 New Mexico Department of Health BMI surveillance system.

## WEIGHT – MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL

### Overweight and Obese New Mexico Middle & High School Students in 2011

Overall, more **American Indian (AI) high school students were overweight or obese than all NM students in 2011**. The percentage of AI students, who were overweight or obese, ranged from 23% in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 37% in 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Middle School students were asked to describe their weight while High School students were asked to report their height and weight and were classified as overweight or obese if their BMI percentile was 85% or higher.

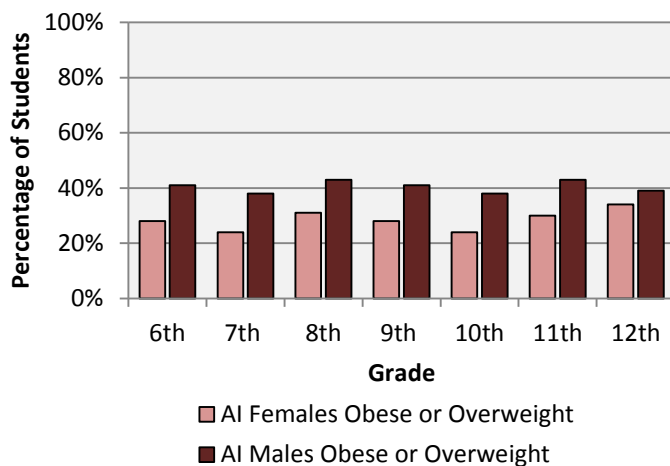


**Body Mass Index (BMI)** is a number calculated from a child's weight and height. BMI percentiles are then determined according to age and gender. Weight status categories based upon BMI percentiles are as follows for children:

#### Weight Status Category

#### BMI Percentile Range

Underweight	Less than the 5th percentile
Healthy weight	5th percentile to less than the 85th percentile
Overweight	85th to less than the 95th percentile
Obese	Equal to or greater than the 95th percentile



### Overweight and Obese AI Middle & High School Students by Gender & Grade in New Mexico 2011

AI male students were consistently more overweight and obese than female AI students for all grades 6–12. Approximately 40% of all AI males in each grade were overweight or obese in 2011.

Source: 2011 NM YRRS; [www.Youthrisk.org](http://www.Youthrisk.org)

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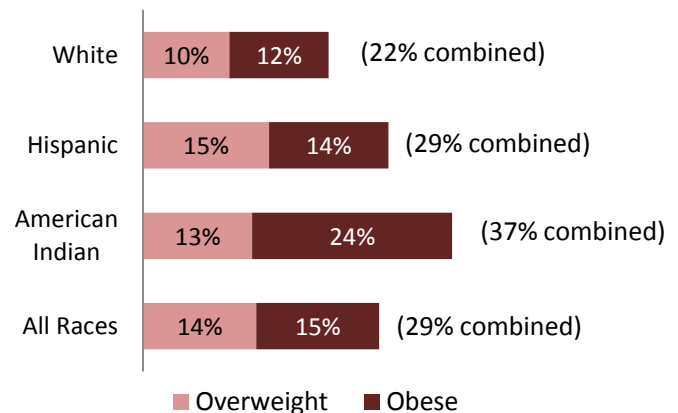


## WEIGHT – KINDERGARTEN & THIRD GRADE

In 2012, the New Mexico Department of Health collected weights and heights from 3,949 kindergarten and third grade students from a random sample of public elementary schools throughout the state.

### Overweight and Obese Kindergarten Students by Race/Ethnicity

In examining racial and ethnic disparities among kindergarten students, the prevalence of obesity among American Indian students (24%) was significantly higher than Hispanic students (14%) and twice as high as White (12%) students.

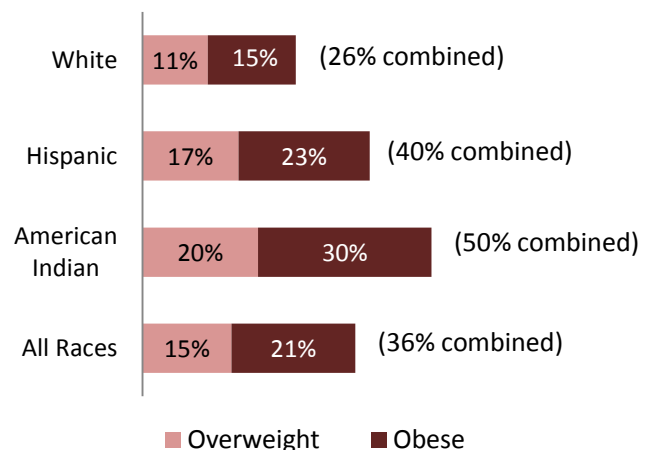


### MONITORING THE WEIGHT OF CHILDREN IS IMPORTANT!

*According to the American Diabetes Association, being overweight or obese at younger ages increases a person's lifetime risk of being diagnosed with diabetes.*

### Overweight and Obese Third Grade Students by Race/Ethnicity

Almost one in three AI third graders (30%) in New Mexico were obese and one in two (50%) were either overweight or obese. AI students have higher rates of obesity than their counterparts from other racial and ethnic groups.



*Source: New Mexico Department of Health Office of Nutrition and Physical Activity, "The Weight of Our Children New Mexico Obesity 2012 Update" report <http://healthykidsnm.org/resources/NMDOH-HKNM-About-2012-NMChildhoodObesityUpdate.pdf>*

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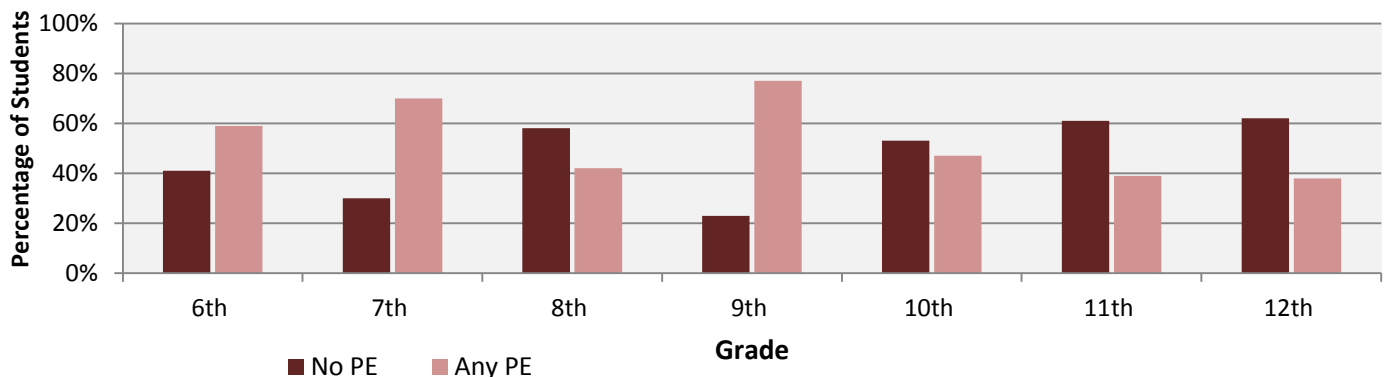
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## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

### Physical Education (PE) in School for AI Students Grades 6-12

The percentage of AI students who received PE in school in 2011 fluctuated across grades. In grades 8, 10, 11 and 12 more than half of AI students received no PE in school.

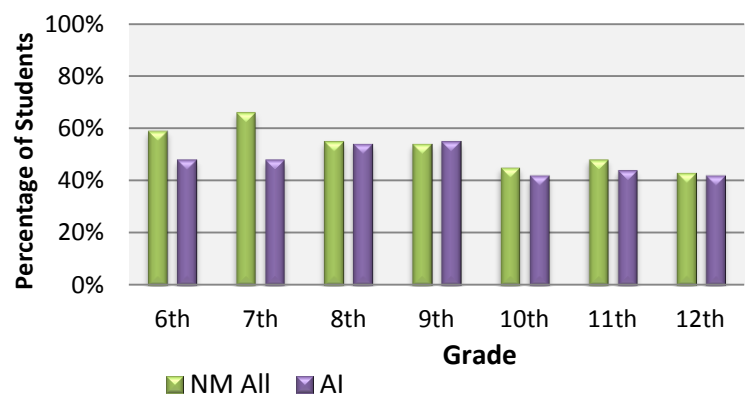


### RISK & PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR OBESITY/OVERWEIGHT

- ❖ American Indian High School Students who **exercise for 60 minutes at least 5 days a week** are 1.6 times more likely to be at a healthy weight than AI students who exercise less.
- ❖ American Indian High School students who have **some PE at school** are significantly more likely to be at a healthy weight than AI student who receive no PE.
- ❖ American Indian High School students who watch **3 or more hours of TV on school days** are significantly more likely to be obese than AI students who watch less TV on school days.

### New Mexico Middle & High School Students who Exercised for 60 Minutes on at least Five of the Last Seven Days

In grades 6 and 7, AI students were significantly less active than all NM students in 2011. The range of physical activity for AI students peaks at 55% in grade 9 and dips to 42% in grades 10 and 12.



Source: 2011 NM YRRS; [www.Youthrisk.org](http://www.Youthrisk.org)

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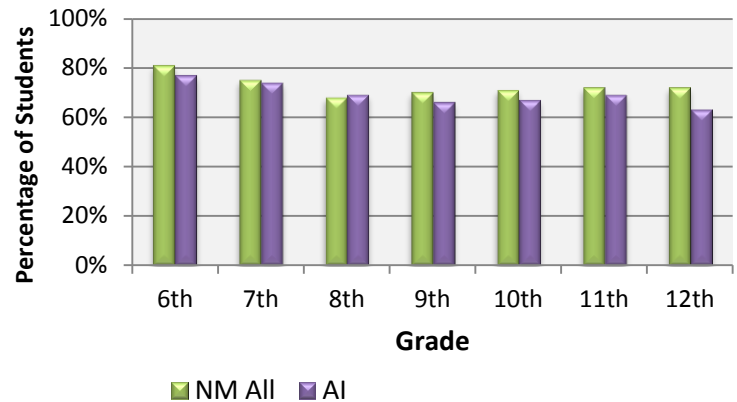
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## Middle & High School Students who Watched Less than 3 Hours of TV on School Days by Grade

Overall, slightly fewer AI students watched less than 3 hours of TV on school days than all students with the exception of 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The average percentage of AI students who watched less than 3 hours of TV on school days was 69% in 2011, which is significantly less than the Healthy People 2020 goal of 86.8%.

Source: NM YRRS & Healthy People 2020. <http://www.healthypeople.gov>



## Recommendations and Resources

- Advocate for physical education in school for all youth in all grade levels.
- Be aware that American Indian youth experience elevated rates of childhood obesity which puts them at risk for diabetes and other chronic illnesses in adulthood.
- Contact your tribal youth and wellness centers to learn about available activities and nutritional education.
- Check out the Physical Activity Kit (PAK) specifically designed for American Indians of all ages and see if there is a trainer in your area at [http://www.ihs.gov/hdpd/index.cfm?module=dsp\\_hdpd\\_pak](http://www.ihs.gov/hdpd/index.cfm?module=dsp_hdpd_pak).
- Learn what programs are available in your community such as:
  - ❖ **MoGro** – Provides access to affordable healthy food in some tribal communities. <http://www.mogro.net>
  - ❖ **IHS Comprehensive School Health Education Program** – A comprehensive School Health Program that incorporates school environment, education, worksite promotion, community partnerships, physical education, and nutrition, mental health and other health services. <http://www.ihs.gov/healthed/index.cfm?module=she#shp>
  - ❖ **Let's Move! In Indian Country** – <http://www.doi.gov/letsmove/indiancountry/index.cfm>
  - ❖ **The Notah Begay III Foundation** – <http://nb3foundation.org/>

*The NM YRRS is a joint project of the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH), the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC), the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center (AASTEC), and the Division of Adolescent and School Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC-DASH). For more information on the NM YRRS visit [www.Youthrisk.org](http://www.Youthrisk.org).*