

## PREVALENCE OF OVERWEIGHT AMONG BOYS IN A METRO MANILA PRIVATE GRADE SCHOOL

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This study included 1822 boys from Grade I to VII of a private school in Metro Manila. The age range from 6.75 to 14.83 years. In this study, weight: height ratio [WHR – (actual weight/50<sup>th</sup> centile weight for age) x 100] was used to assess overweight (value >110) and obesity (value >120).

When using the Philippine (FNRI-PPS) growth reference as the standard, the mean WHR of these boys was 123±23.7.

1164 boys (64%) were overweight-obese (64% referred to those with WHR >110, *including\* those >120*).

300 boys (17%) with WHR 111-120 --- overweight

864 boys (**47%**) with **WHR>120 -- obesity**

When using National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) growth reference as standard, the mean WHR was 118±22.3.

1029 boys (57%) were overweight-obese (57% referred to those with WHR >110, *including\* those >120*).

285 boys (16%) with WHR 111-120 --- overweight

744 boys (**41%**) with **WHR>120 -- obesity**

In this study, there was no significant difference between the two references used as the standards since *most of the children were above average, overweight and obese*. The difference may be seen if there were more undernourished ones.

Another method used to assess obesity was body mass index (BMI).\*

Mean BMI of these boys (aged 6-14 yr) was 20±4.1.

966 boys (53%) with BMI <20

865 boys (**47%**) with **BMI >20**.

609 (33%) with BMI 20-24

247 (14%) with BMI 25-37

The prevalence of overweight and obesity among the study subjects was very high. Majority of the school boys were from the middle and upper socioeconomic classes with Chinese ancestry, which could be considered a “high risk” population.

In the developing country like the Philippines, obesity was notably found in the affluent socioeconomic classes. The ethnic background and cultural values also could have contributed to overweight and obesity.

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\* An approach to define the BMI cut-off value is based on the *percentile-for-age relative* to a reference population. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adopted the 85<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentiles of NHANES II to define at risk of overweight and the presence of overweight in children.