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Title

The impact of food insecurity and burnout on high school students' interest in pursuing a healthcare career

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Social determinants and vulnerable populations

Presenters

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Abstract

Context: Adolescent food insecurity results in poor overall health including increased rates of depression, anxiety, burnout, poor academic performance, and higher dropout rates (Dush, 2020). PULSE (Pre-health program for Underrepresented Leaders in STEM Education) is an outreach program developed and coordinated by PSCOM students that supports high school students with backgrounds underrepresented in medicine to pursue a career in healthcare.

Objective: Explore contributors to food insecurity and burnout in students participating in the PULSE program.

Study Design/Analysis: IRB approved prospective study. Surveys were administered to PULSE students. Descriptive statistics including frequency counts for categorical variables and mean and standard deviation for continuous variables were reported. Pearson correlation coefficients were reported.

Setting: Survey was administered to students via REDCap.

Population Studied: US high school students enrolled in the fall 2022 PULSE program.

Instrument: The School Burnout Inventory (SBI) (Salmela-Aro et al., 2009) and the Child Food Security Service Module (CFSSM) (Niemeier & Fitzpatrick, 2019) were used.

Outcome Measures: SBI and CFSSM scores.

Results: 101 students; mean age was 16 years and were 67% female, 28% male, 4% freshman, 20% sophomore, 37% juniors, and 40% seniors. Self-reported race included 41% Caucasian, 34% Asian, 11% Other/mixed, 10% Black, and 3% Hispanic/Latino. Of note, 53% spoke a second language at home, 6% would be first generation college students, 83% were interested in pursuing a healthcare career. Being a first-generation college student was significantly associated with food insecurity (4.0, SD = 4.8 vs 0.3, SD = 1.4, $p < 0.0001$) but not with burnout ($p = 0.9$). We found no significant correlation between food

insecurity and burnout (Pearson correlation coefficient: 0.078, p-value: 0.436). Food insecurity was not significantly associated with interest in pursuing a healthcare career (interest in healthcare = 0.6, SD = 2.08 vs not interested = 1.7, SD = 2.89, p=0.5).

Conclusion: While food insecurity and burnout were not correlated with interest in pursuing a healthcare career, being first in the family to attend college was significantly associated with food insecurity. Further study is needed to explore factors that may mitigate food insecurity and burnout in high school students and the impact of these variables on their interest in healthcare.