|  |
| --- |
| **Title of Research Presentation**  Students’ perceptions of school sugar-free and exercise environments increase healthy eating and physical activity |
| **Background/Objectives**  Childhood obesity is an emerging public health problem. In Taiwan, one-third of children are overweight and obese. Taiwan Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health provide financial resources and technical supports for local governments and schools to adopt Health Promoting School approach. Experts were invited to work with schools to promote students’ healthy development. The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between students’ perceptions of school sugar-free and exercise environments and their healthy eating and physical activity behaviours.  **Methods**  The participants in this study included students from primary schools, middle schools, and high schools. A probability-proportionate-to-size sampling method was used to systematically draw a random sample of schools in Taiwan. A total of 2,433 students (5th-6th grade) in primary schools, 3,212 students in middle schools (7th-9th grade), and 2,829 students in high schools (10th-12th grade) completed the online survey in 2018. The response rate was 92%.  **Results**  The results showed that the rates of students reported that their schools implemented sugar-free policy, eating more vegetable in school lunch, and daily 2-hour outdoor activity was higher in primary school (60.6%, 85.9%, 80.8%) than in middle school (40.3%, 74.5%, 71.2%) and high school (23.9%, 66.5%, 59.9%). The multivariate analysis results showed that after controlling for grade level and gender, students’ perceptions of school sugar-free environment were negatively associated with sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. School’s implementation of plain water campaign was positively associated with their daily water intake, while school’s implementation of fruit and vegetable campaign was positively associated with students’ vegetable consumption in school lunch. In addition, students’ perceptions of school exercise environment were positively associated with their physical activity levels.  **Discussion**  The findings indicated that adopting HPS approach and combining behavioural and environmental measures to implement school sugar-free, water, fruit, vegetable and exercise campaigns had positive effects on increasing students’ healthy eating and physical activity. Governments should encourage schools to implement sugar-free policy and exercise environments to promote students’ healthy eating and physical activity.  **Keywords**  School, sugar-free, healthy eating, physical activity |