

## **A national review of healthy behaviors among children with language disorders**

Myia L. Graves, Southeastern Louisiana University  
Kristen Morgan, Southeastern Louisiana University

Little is known about the health behaviors among children with language disorders. The purpose of this study was to determine the level of physical activity, obesity, and screen time among children with language disorders according to parent-report data. Participants included children and adolescents ages 6-17 with language disorders (n= 4,440) and without (n= 46,261). The National Child's Health Survey (NCHS) 2021 data was analyzed using SPSS. Differences between groups were determined through ANOVA analyses and descriptive statistics. Preliminary results suggest that children with language disorders engaged in less organized physical activities (sports teams, organized activities), outdoor play on weekdays and weekends, and exercise/ play/ sport lasting 60 minutes or more compared to children without ( $p < .001$ ). Children with a language diagnosis had a higher average body mass index percentile (M= 58.27, SD= 42.22) compared to children without (M= 55.29, SD= 49.98;  $p < .001$ ). Children with language disorders (M=4.41, SD= 9.9) actually spent less time with the TV, cellphone, computer ( $< .001$ ) compared to TD (M=4.95, SD= 13.3) which suggest their screen time is limited. While parent-reported data suggest the health behaviors among children with language disorders is lower than children without, there is a need for objective data to further support findings. Understanding the relationship between health behaviors and language disorders could help caretakers, teachers, and coaches identify opportunities to support their participation in physical activities, sport, and recreation, and body composition.