

MEDIA RELEASE

Early Nutrition Programming Symposium, Granada 23 April 2008

www.earlynutrition.org

Date of Issue: 20 April 2008

Embargoed until: 00.01am 23 April 2008

Key words: Spain, Andalucia, obesity, breastfeeding to reduce obesity rates,
early nutrition programming

Andalucian children among the fattest in Spain *Breastfed babies are less likely to become fat children*

Andalucia has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity in Spain according to the Action Plan to address childhood obesity in that region (*Plan Integral de Obesidad Infantil de Andalucia 2007-2012*¹).

Only children from The Canary Islands, Cantabria and Murcia are fatter. Other data show that in Andalucia the prevalence of overweight and obesity combined is 32% in boys and 31% in girls: however it is much higher among younger children than older children and reaches 40% and 45% respectively in boys and girls aged 6-9 years. This suggests there will be an even greater problem in the future.

Recent research on whether the way babies are fed influences their risk of becoming overweight children was presented at an International Symposium on Early Nutrition Programming in Granada, Andalucia on 23rd April 2008.

Professor Berthold Koletzko has shown that the diets of babies and infants can affect the likelihood that they will put on weight later in childhood. Breast fed babies are less likely than formula fed babies to become overweight children. Now, evidence from the first intervention trial of infant feeding and later obesity, the EU Childhood Obesity programme, has shown that using a lower protein content infant formula produced growth rates which were closer to those of breastfed babies.

“The first results of the EU Childhood Obesity Programme emphasise the importance of promotion of and support for breastfeeding, together with the development of the right composition of infant formula, and support for the choice of appropriate complementary food,” said Project Co-ordinator **Professor Koletzko (Munich)**

This study was carried out in five European countries, including Spain. **Professor Ricardo Closa**, from **University Rovira i Virgili, Reus**, co-ordinator of the Spanish arm of the study, said:

“We hope that the results of this study will persuade more women in Andalucia to breastfeed their babies for longer. Breastfeeding gets babies off to the best possible start and can also reduce their chances of becoming overweight in childhood.”

About 80% of Spanish women start breastfeeding their babies but this soon drops to 42% by 3 months and only 24% are still being breastfed at all by 6 months. In Andalucia however, only 6% of babies are still receiving any breast milk at 6 months.

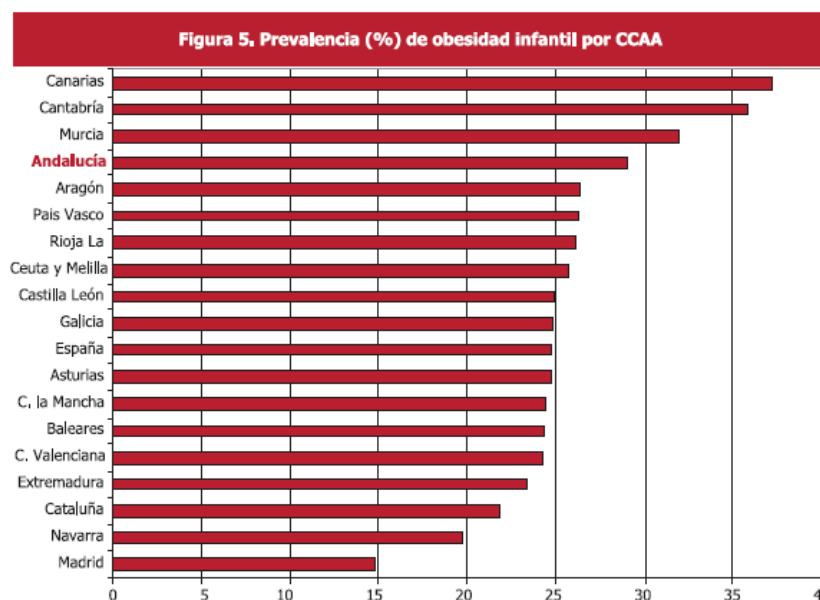
Promoting breastfeeding is one of the four lines of action proposed by the Action Plan for Andalucia 2007-2012 to address childhood obesity. **ENDS/ notes over page**

¹ Plan Integral de Obesidad Infantil de Andalucia 2007-2012

[http://209.85.135.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/salud/library/plantillas/externa.asp%3Fpag%3D%255Csalud%255Ccontenidos%255Cplanobesidadinfantil%255CPIOBIN%2520BAJA.pdf&prev=/search%3Fq%3DPlan%2BAndaluz%2Bde%2BObesidad%2B2007-2013%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG](http://209.85.135.104/translate_c?hl=en&u=http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/salud/library/plantillas/externa.asp%3Fpag%3D%255Csalud%255Ccontenidos%255Cplanobesidadinfantil%255CPIOBIN%2520BAJA.pdf&prev=/search%3Fq%3DPla n%2BAndaluz%2Bde%2BObesidad%2B2007-2013%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG)

Notes to Editors

The following figures are taken from the Action Plan to address Obesity in Andalucía (pages 20, 21 and 35)



Fuente: Encuesta Nacional de Salud de 2003⁽⁵⁾

Tabla 5. Comparación de resultados entre estudio enKid* y EAS-m 2003

Prevalencia de Sobrepeso (incluye obesidad)

	NIÑOS		NIÑAS	
	enKid	EAS-m 2003	enKid	EAS-m 2003
De 6 a 9 años	37,7	40,5	22,9	45,6
De 10 a 13 años	41,9	16,6	20	24,2
De 14 a 15 años	26,2	12,1	17,1	16,8

*Debe tenerse en cuenta que en el estudio enKid, el grupo de más edad incluye hasta los 17 años

Tabla 12. Prevalencia de la Lactancia Materna (%)

	España 2001	Cataluña 2002	Andalucía 2004
LM al alta	80	81,1	81,6
LM a 1 mes	60,5	-	63,0
LM a 3 meses	42,4	55,6	40,5
LM a 6 meses	23,6	21,4	6,4

Prof Berthold Koletzko, Prof Ricardo Closa and key partners available for interview

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