

Lifestyle Triple P in the Netherlands: effects on child and parent outcomes

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Background

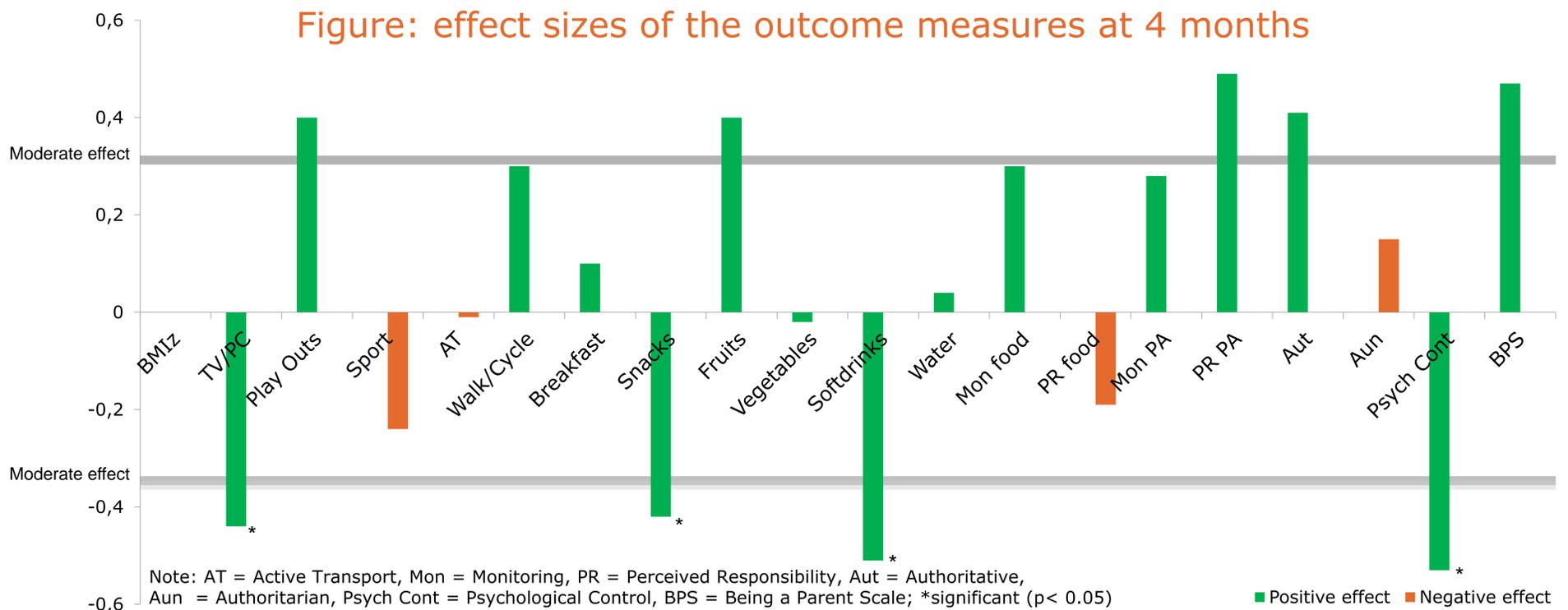
Childhood overweight and obesity are having an increasing public health impact. In the Netherlands, about 13% of the children are overweight and 3-4% are obese.

The role of parents in the development of children's weight status is increasingly emphasized. Lifestyle Triple P is a modification of the Level 4 group Triple P, tailored to the needs of parents of overweight children. West and colleagues (2010) demonstrated the efficacy of LTP in Australia. We translated the program and performed an RCT to investigate whether LTP is also effective in the Netherlands. The aim of the current study was to assess short-term results (at 4 months) of the intervention.

Results

Of the 86 families which were included in the study, 83% were present at T1. The children were on average 7,2 years old and 44% were male. 22% of the children were overweight at baseline and 63% obese. Effect sizes at 4 months follow-up are depicted in the figure. No effects of the intervention were found on anthropometric outcomes. We found small to moderate effect sizes for a broad range of outcome measures (related to nutrition, physical activity, parenting practices and parenting styles).

Figure: effect sizes of the outcome measures at 4 months



Methods

After baseline measures, parents of 86 4-8 year-old overweight children were randomized to either the intervention (6 LTP groups) or the control condition. Parents in the intervention group received a 14-week intervention, in which they learned a range of strategies related to healthy nutrition, physical activity and positive parenting. Measurements were conducted at baseline and at 4 months.

Statistical analyses

Univariate t-tests and non-parametric tests were conducted to evaluate any differences between the intervention and control condition on a range of parent and child outcomes. Furthermore, we calculated effect sizes – Cohen's d – to test differences between the intervention and control condition.

Discussion

Although we did not find many significant differences between the intervention and control condition at 4 months follow-up, we found a consistent pattern of positive small to moderate intervention effects. Especially effects on intermediate outcomes were found. These results are promising for long term follow-up.

As a next step, it is important that multivariate multi-level analyses are conducted (to control for potential nesting effect within groups). Also, long-term effects of the intervention should be determined in order to determine whether changes are maintained.

Strengths of the current study are its RCT design and the broad range of outcome measures. Challenges were related to recruitment and intervention implementation.