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Issue 21, April 2018



challenges



unicef 

Newsletter on childhood and adolescence

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Latin America and Caribbean children's right to nutritious food



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Editorial

The second issue of the Challenges newsletter, which came out in 2006, focused on the right to food of the children of Latin America and the Caribbean. This issue returns to that subject but approaches it from a different angle, with the emphasis now being on all forms of malnutrition rather than solely on undernutrition. This shift in emphasis reflects changes in the type of food supply accessible to children in the region. The lead article offers a thoughtful analysis that, in addition to recognizing the significant inroads in this respect that have been made in Latin America and the Caribbean, underscores the development challenges posed by undernutrition, overweight and obesity among children—challenges that have yet to be addressed by the region’s societies. Chile’s experience with the reduction of undernutrition and its efforts to meet the challenges now being posed by child obesity are discussed in the “Viewpoints” section. In the “Learning from experience” section, the discussion turns to human milk banks, efforts to improve nutrition in rural schools in El Salvador and the introduction of a tax on the consumption of sugary beverages in Mexico.

The “voices of children and adolescents” section presents comments made by Mexican children about their body image. As in earlier issues, a list of publications on this subject and a calendar of child-related events are also provided.

Analysis and research



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Malnutrition among children in Latin America and the Caribbean

Amalia Palma, Social Development Division of ECLAC

Proper nutrition is a fundamental element in the realization of children's right to enjoy the highest attainable level of physical and mental health.

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Viewpoints

Chile's experience with the reduction of undernutrition and its efforts to meet the challenges now being posed by child obesity

Dr. Fernando Vio del Rio

Associate Professor Institute of Nutrition and Food Technology (INTA)

Chile is one of the few countries in the world that succeeded in eradicating undernutrition between the 1960s and the 1980s. It did so by managing to apply well-designed policies on maternal and child health even while it weathered two severe economic crises (1974–1976 and 1982–1986) in an adverse sociopolitical and cultural environment.

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The voices of children and adolescents



How do obese adolescents feel about their weight?

“I’d like to be slimmer, not so chubby.”

“I can do everything, but sometimes when I run too much, I get agitated; I’m not in good physical shape because I’m obese.”

“If I were to lose some weight, I could do more; I’d feel more like walking and running.”

“I don’t look good in my clothes because of my weight.”

“The other kids treat fat kids badly. If I lost some weight, I’d feel better.”

“They make me feel bad because they make fun of me. I really want to try to lose weight so that I’ll feel better and the other kids will treat me better.”

“I need to lose weight. I really want to try to lose weight.”

“I feel bad. Lately I’ve become very fat, and it has scared me; I’m trying to eat more healthy foods.”

Source: M. Martínez-Aguilar and others, “7th to 9th Grade Obese Adolescents’ Perceptions About Obesity in Tamaulipas, Mexico”, *Revista Latino-Americana de Enfermagem*, vol. 18, No. 1, São Paulo, University of São Paulo, 2010

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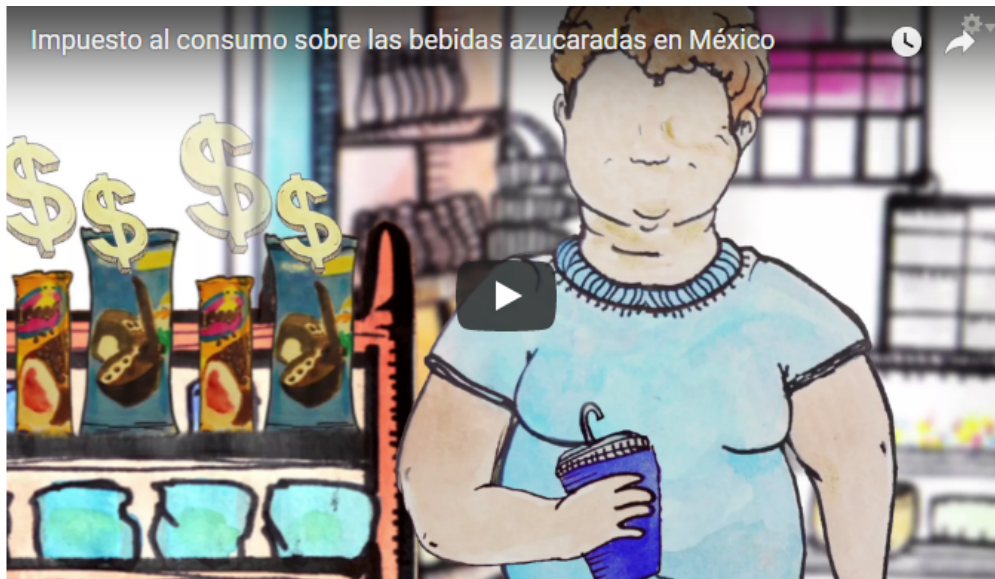
Human milk banks

Breast milk is the best food for infants. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF recommend exclusive breastfeeding from the first hour of life until at least 6 months of age.

[See more »](#)



Nutrition in rural schools in El Salvador



Tax on sugary beverages in Mexico

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Video



Children and body image

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Did you know that ... ?

... over one and a half million newborns were served by human milk banks in the region in 2015?

[Source: Global Network of Human Milk Banks, "Anuario 2015", Serie Documentos rBLH, Río de Janeiro, 2016](#)

... 11 out of every 100 children under 5 years of age in Paraguay are overweight?

[Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\) and others, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017: Building Resilience for Peace and Food Security, Rome, 2017](#)

... over 6 million children under the age of 5 in Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from stunting?

[Source: United Nations Children's Fund \(UNICEF\), "Niños y niñas en América Latina y el Caribe. Panorama 2016", Ciudad del Saber, 2016](#)

... Chilean children spend only half the recommended amount of time engaging in physical activity each day?

[Source: J. Kain and L. Moreno \(2014\), "Escolares chilenos tienen bajísimo cumplimiento de la recomendación diaria de actividad física", Nutrición y Vida, Santiago, University of Chile, 22 December 2014](#)

... El Salvador allocates 25% of its budget to specific nutrition-targeted projects?

[Source: Development Initiatives, 2017 Global Nutrition Report: Nourishing the SDGs, Bristol, 2017](#)

Key documents



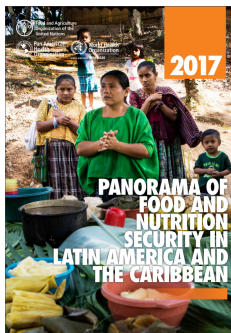
Impacto social y económico de la malnutrición. Modelo de análisis y estudio piloto en Chile, el Ecuador y México

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Análisis de regulaciones y prácticas para el etiquetado de alimentos y bebidas para niños y adolescentes en algunos países de América Latina (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica y México) y recomendaciones para facilitar la información al consumidor

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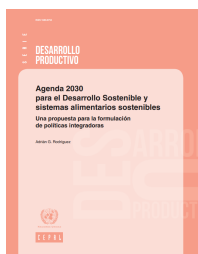
Panorama of food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean

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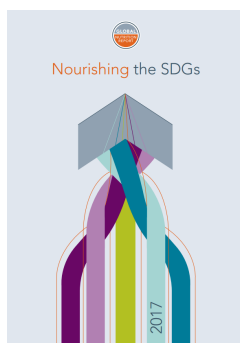
Exploratory study of marketing and advertisement of unhealthy food and beverages targeted to children in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible y sistemas alimentarios sostenibles. Una propuesta para la formulación de políticas integradoras

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Global Nutrition Report 2017: Nourishing the SDGs

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