

CREATING HEALTHY EATING ENVIRONMENTS SCALE (CHEERS)

CONTENT VALIDITY FOR A CHILD CARE SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CREATING HEALTHY EATING ENVIRONMENTS SCALE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to develop and validate the CHEERS self-assessment scale that was designed to measure the nutrition and physical activity environment in community-based child care programs. The study aimed to determine the concepts for inclusion and item wording in the final CHEERS survey.

PARTICIPANTS

10
Individuals for Content Analysis

An expert panel was recruited for content validation, which consisted of:

4
Registered Dietitians

5
Early Childhood Educators

1
Early Childhood Physical Activity Specialist

1
Registered Nurse

The expert panel was representative of metropolitan, mid-size, and small cities with backgrounds from the University of Alberta and Mount Royal University. Each participant was chosen based on their expertise and knowledge of child care and nutrition.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHEERS INSTRUMENT

The CHEERS survey was created by Dr. Lynne Lafave with the guidance of an expert panel to measure the nutrition and physical activity environment in child care programs.

The initial CHEERS survey consists of 64 items within five subcategories:

1. FOOD SERVED
2. HEALTHY EATING ENVIRONMENT
3. HEALTHY EATING PROGRAM PLANNING
4. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT
5. HEALTHY BODY IMAGE ENVIRONMENT



STAGE ONE

The scale items and detailed instructions were sent to the expert panel to analyze the content and provide feedback. The panel went through the initial 64 items with 5 subscales proposed for the CHEERS survey and rated each item based on its importance to the study.

FOOD SERVED (23 items)

HEALTHY EATING ENVIRONMENT (18 items)

HEALTHY EATING PROGRAM PLANNING (6 items)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT (12 items)

HEALTHY BODY IMAGE ENVIRONMENT (? items)

Expert Judge's Table of Specifications	IMPORTANCE			CLARITY	
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	As Is	Rewording Feedback
Item 1					
Item 2					
Item 3					
Item 4					
Feedback for Missing Concepts					

STAGE TWO

Stage two was conducted in a face-to-face meeting where the researchers and the expert panellists discussed the areas of improvement, reassessed the items and voted on a finalized list to be included in the research. Sixty-two items within five subcategories were agreed upon for pilot testing.

FOOD SERVED (24 items)

HEALTHY EATING ENVIRONMENT (17 items)

HEALTHY EATING PROGRAM PLANNING (6 items)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ENVIRONMENT (12 items)

HEALTHY BODY IMAGE ENVIRONMENT (3 items)

PILOT TESTING

Eight child care centres were recruited to test the scale for clarity, readability, and general feedback.

Feedback was taken into consideration for the scale and the CHEERS survey was finalized.



CONCLUSION

The CHEERS assessment tool was created with the input of professionals within the early childhood education, nutrition, and health fields. The findings of this study show that the CHEERS scale is credible and appropriately represents the overall child care and nutrition and physical activity environment. Overall, the CHEERS research team aims to improve the overall health of preschool-aged children in Alberta and promote healthy and active lifestyles into adulthood.