

# Trends in nutritional status and stature among school-age children in Chile

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**Objective** We studied the prevalence of weight excess and short stature among school-age children in Chile over the past decade. **Methods** We designed a descriptive cross-sectional, school-based study to analyze nutritional and stature trends in prepubertal and pubertal boys and girls from 1986 to 1998. **Results** Between 1986 and 1998, we detected significant increases in obesity risk (body mass index between the 85th and 95th percentiles): from 8.3% to 19.6% in prepubertal males, from 5.4% to 14.6% in pubertal males, from 10.2% to 16.2% in prepubertal females, and from 9.7% to 24.9% in pubertal females. Obesity (body mass index > 95th percentile) increased significantly, from 4.3% to 29.5% in prepubertal males, from 1.6% to 14.6% in pubertal, from 4.7% to 24.0% in prepubertal females, and from 2.3% to 17.6% in pubertal females. During this same period, the prevalences of short stature (height for age below the 10th percentile) decreased from 40.9% to 12.0% in prepubertal males, from 44.2%