

# Intervention Fidelity Within Trials of Infant Feeding Behavioral Interventions to Prevent Childhood Obesity: A Systematic Review\*



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## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Certain infant feeding behaviors (e.g. early or inappropriate weaning onto solids) in the first 2 years of life have been associated with the later development of childhood obesity. These feeding behaviors represent a potential target for prevention of childhood obesity.

To date, studies of the effectiveness of infant feeding behavioral interventions or programmes to prevent childhood obesity are inconsistent. However, little is known about if or how these interventions were implemented as intended (i.e. with fidelity).

## OUR GOAL:

To review the use and/or reporting of methods to improve and measure intervention fidelity within trials of infant feeding interventions to prevent childhood obesity, and their association with study quality, effectiveness, and publication year.



54%

Average use/reporting of fidelity strategies in studies (ranging from 28.9%- 76.9%)

No patterns were observed between NIHBCCC fidelity scores and study quality, study effectiveness, or year of first publication.

Only 2 studies reported results of fidelity of delivery assessment

10 trials (16 papers) were identified

## WHAT WE FOUND

Issues with fidelity use/reporting suggest that previous trial findings showing inconsistent effectiveness of infant feeding interventions **may not** fully reflect the intended interventions.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



**For clinicians and policy-makers:** Improving how fidelity is enhanced, assessed and reported will enable effective infant feeding interventions to be more successfully and easily implemented in practice.



**For researchers:** The review highlights methodological areas for improvement (i.e. addressing fidelity of provider training) and provides examples of methods that can be used to enhance and assess fidelity across multiple fidelity domains (e.g. design, training, delivery)



**For researchers, clinicians and policy-makers:** Evaluating and reporting fidelity will provide better interpretation and understanding of the actual effectiveness of infant feeding interventions.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

1. Improving attention to the fidelity of training for intervention providers and subsequent levels of skill and knowledge
2. Focusing more on the fidelity of treatment within control or comparison groups
3. Ensuring better reporting across all fidelity domains

Designed by Rebekah Roy, HRB Trials Methodology Research Network summer student 2018

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