



Mexican American and U.S.
Latino Research Center

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am please to announce that Dr. Nelda Mier, Associate Professor in the School of Rural Health, Texas A&M Health Science Center, has been awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study the issue of childhood obesity among Latino children. Childhood obesity has the potential of leading to emotional problems in childhood such as low self-esteem as well as physical problems in later life including hypertension and Type 2 (adult-onset) diabetes.

Congratulations, Dr. Mier, and we wish you great success in your study of this serious challenge to Latino youth.



*Edward Murguia, Director
Mexican American & US
Latino Research Center*

Dr. Nelda Mier's Study



*Nelda Mier, Associate Professor, School of
Rural Public Health, Texas A&M HSC*

“Assessing the Built Environment in *Colonias* to Influence Policy Promoting Physical Activity in Mexican-American Children and Families”

Reduced physical activity (PA) is a critical contributor to childhood obesity and data indicate that Mexican American children are more likely to be obese and sedentary than other ethnic groups. Research shows that the built environment is associated to PA resources and behaviors. However, minorities in underserved communities have limited access to recreation facilities. Promoting environments supportive of PA require effecting policies. This study proposes to produce environmental policy recommendations promoting PA in economically-disadvantaged, understudied Mexican American children and families. The aims are: (1) Engage stakeholders in environmental policy changes to promote PA among *colonia* children and families; (2) assess the *colonias*' built environment for its support or not of PA, and (3) investigate *colonia* children's perceptions about environmental barriers and motivators to PA.

Congratulations, Dr. Mier!