Children do not recall enough information about their dietary intakes and physical movements when interviewed with current protocols, a concern in cases of obesity, food-borne illness, and physical injury. The current study assessed if the Cognitive Interview could enhance children's food and movement recalls. Twenty-one children (M_{age} = 8 years, 3 months) attended an after-school event with snacks and movements and were interviewed about their experience one to three days later. As hypothesized, children recalled more food and movement facts if they received the Cognitive Interview as opposed to a popular USDA/NICHD protocol, particularly if they were 8 years of age or older. The children did not differ in accuracy across groups. These findings have important implications for medical interviewing practices.

**Method**

- **Children ate snacks and performed an exercise routine at an event**
  
- **Due to three days later, interviewed about event**

Children's medical recalls were measured using the Cognitive Interview (CI) and a Control Interview (CI). Two predictions were made based, in part, on these results:

1. **Total Food and Movement Facts:** Children should perform better if interviewed with the CI as opposed to the control that embeds questions from the MPP and the PAC. Older children (8 yrs.) should also perform better than younger children (below 8 yrs.). Nonetheless, the main effects of interview type and age group were qualified by an interaction. Older children should perform better if they received the CI as opposed to the control, whereas younger children should not perform differently whether they receive the CI or the control.

2. **Proportion Accurate:** Children should not differ in accuracy across groups.

Although main effects were found for interview type (F(1, 17) = 4.74, p < .05) and age group (F(1, 17) = 11.44, p < .01), these effects were qualified by a significant interaction (F(1, 17) = 12.14, p < .01). Older children recalled more food and movement facts when interviewed with the CI compared to either younger children interviewed with the CI or those in the control condition.

**Results**

- **Control Interview**
  - 28.00
  - 27.43

- **Interview Type**
  - Cognitive Interview
    - 28.00
    - 27.43

- **Total Facts Recalled**
  - Below 8 years
    - Control Interview: 27.43
    - Cognitive Interview: 28.00
  - 8 years and above
    - Control Interview: 28.00
    - Cognitive Interview: 29.00

**Discussion**

- Our study has important implications for medical interviewing practices. Older children interviewed with the CI recalled more information about their food intakes and physical movements than children interviewed with a standard interview protocol. This is an important finding for pediatric professionals who rely on such information to diagnose and treat children in the medical setting.

- Although the CI did not improve younger children's recalls, it did not hinder them either. Future researchers may wish to examine underlying processes that can explain our results:
  - Children with higher verbal ability tend to recall more information when they are interviewed with the CI as opposed to various control protocols, whereas children with lower verbal ability tend not to recall more information if they are interviewed with the CI as opposed to various control protocols.
  - Age was used as a rough measure for verbal ability in this study.

- Children should be measured for verbal ability before being interviewed about their food intakes and physical movements in future studies.

- Future researchers may also wish to:
  - Replicate our findings with a larger sample of children.
  - Have actual pediatric health professionals as interviewers.
  - Use a computer-generated task as opposed to an oral recall task, based on recent trends in the medical community.

**Selected References**


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