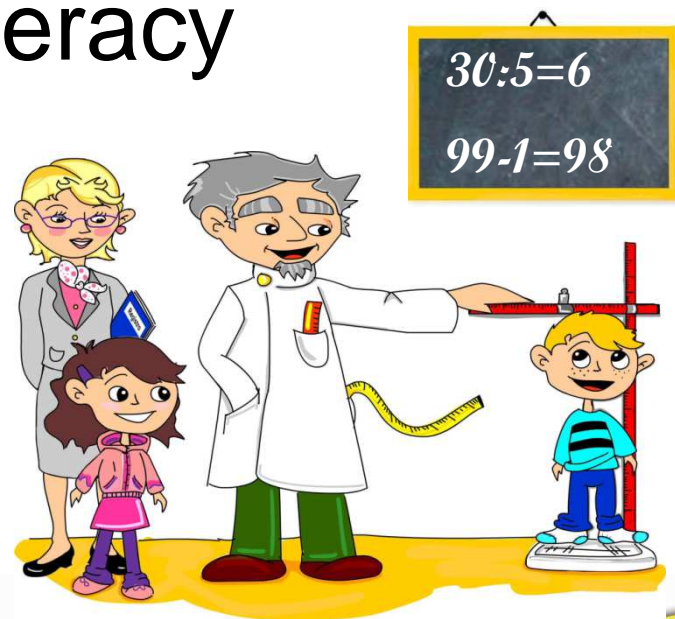


OKkio alla SALUTE:

an Italian project to assess
childhood obesity and
promote health literacy

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Istituto Superiore di Sanità
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In a health improving context, it is important to encourage people to ask questions and be able to understand the answers:

What is my main problem?

What do I need to do?

Why is it important for me to do this?

How can I follow a healthy lifestyle?



Description

- In 2007 the Italian Ministry of Health started a national nutritional surveillance system, *OKkio alla SALUTE* for **specific target groups:** children, parents, teachers, pediatricians...
- This is coordinated by our Institute and is part of the WHO/Europe project:

Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI).

Obesity in Young Children

- The impact of obesity particularly concerns younger children.
- Over 26% of preschool children are overweight or obese.
- Furthermore, the prevalence of obesity in this age group continues to increase every year.

Obesity in Young Children

- Innovative approaches to obesity prevention - during early childhood - are critically needed.
- Addressing literacy and numeracy through improved healthcare provider communication skills and improved educational materials, both in print and online, is a potentially successful strategy.

It is essential to prepare and carry out an in-depth scientific survey (description, objectives, methods, participants...).

Careful study of survey results is necessary to promote appropriate kinds of health literacy dissemination.

Objectives of the project



- To estimate the prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity among Italian children of primary school age.
- To examine the main risk factors (*nutrition, physical activity, sedentary pastimes*) thus promoting a healthy style of life.
- To realize print and online information in order to improve health literacy in child education.

Methods 1/1



- **Study population:** Children of school grade 3 (8-9 years old)



The choice of this particular age was based on biological (the nutritional aspect is little affected by puberty) and cognitive development aspects (children are able to answer simple questions more precisely).

Methods 1/2



- **Sampling:** Cluster sampling (*survey method in which groups or cluster of sampling units, and not individual units, are selected from a population for analysis in all the Italian regions*) was made on grade 3 primary-school classes. A representative sample was taken from each region.

Methods 1/3



- **Data collection:** Parents, children and teachers were asked to complete short anonymous questionnaires to discover and analyze children's behavioural risk factors.
- Children were weighed and their body mass index was calculated according to the *International Obesity Task Force* that establishes overweight and obesity.
- All data collected was entered into a special database for analysis by health professionals.

Participants to *OKkio alla SALUTE*

Biennial (2008-2010) data collection involved about:

➤ **classes:** 2.500



➤ **children:** 44.000



➤ **parents:** 45.000



➤ **teachers:** 2.300

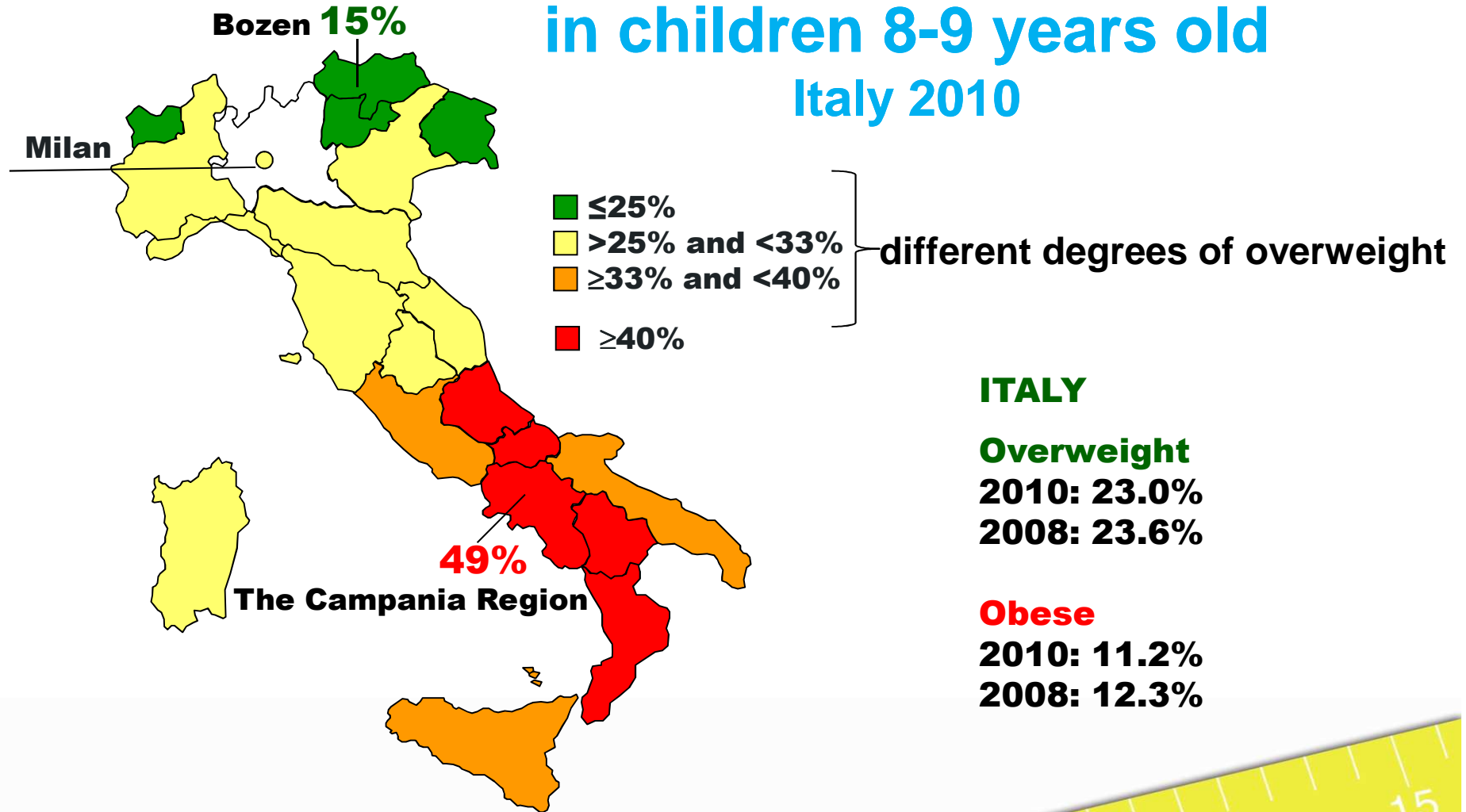


 **Response rate: 97%**

The third data collection is currently in progress...

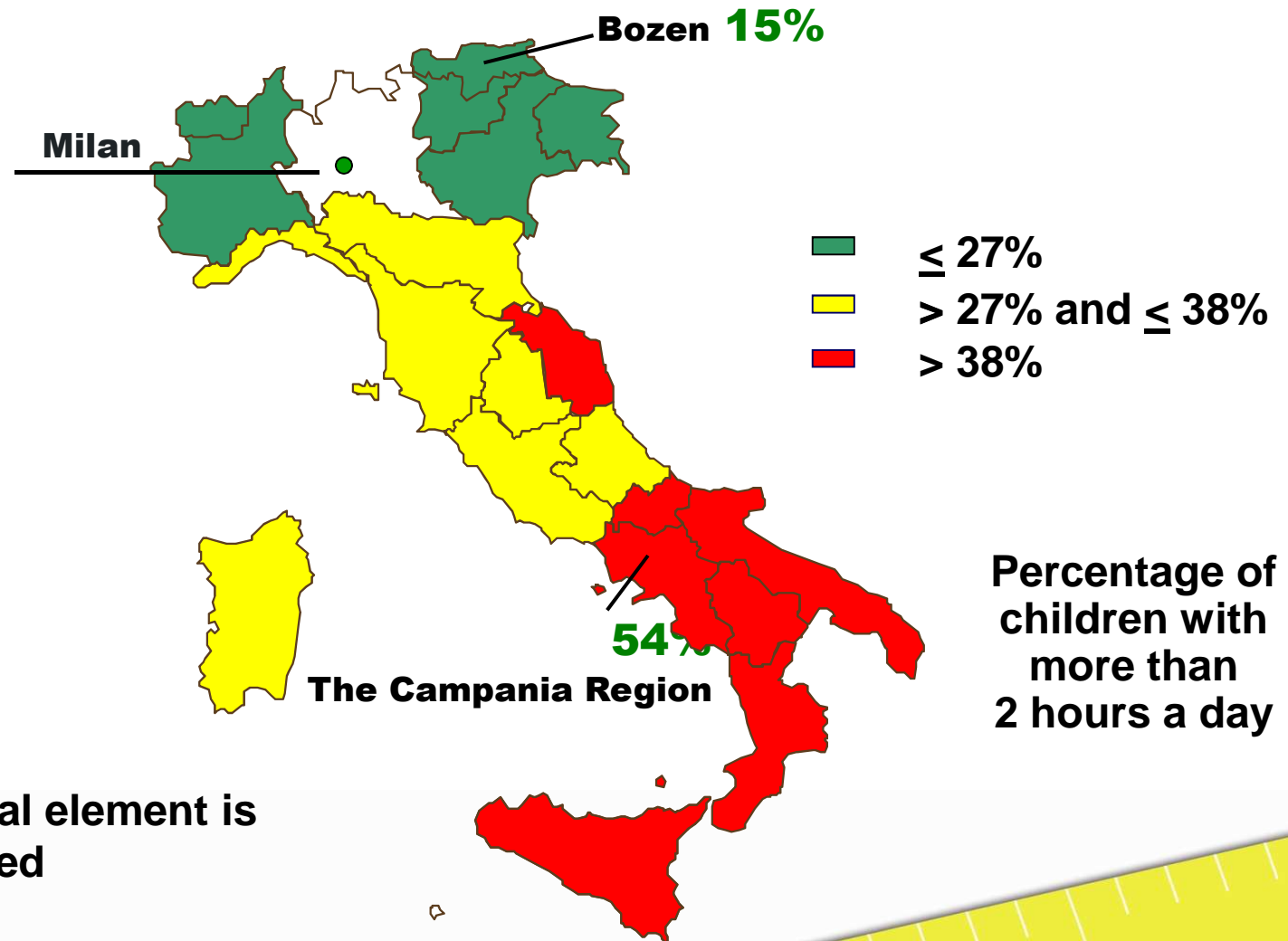
Evaluation

Overweight and obesity by region in children 8-9 years old Italy 2010







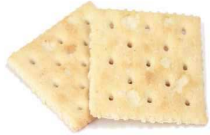


Children spending more than two hours a day playing video games or watching TV



A geographical element is clearly involved

Bad eating habits of Italian children in school before and after the training campaigns



		2008	2010
Sandwiches		31%	23%
Fruit juice		20%	21%
Crackers		13%	13%
Sweet snacks		25%	13%
Fruit		7%	11%

How a clear communication
on health information and services
will help create and promote
health literacy

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Documentation

print and online information for...

- **children:** interactive educational devices, to be used in the classroom, multimedia kits on CD (with user manuals for teachers), didactic cartoons, educational toys.
- **parents:** guidelines for a healthy Italian diet, a new food pyramid, recipes with fruit and vegetables to be prepared with their children.
- **teachers:** print recommendations for a correct diet with fruit and vegetables to be consumed during break, educational material...



Documentation

print and online information for...

- **teachers and families:** meetings with the support of health workers to inform on proper nutrition and promote physical activity.
- **pediatricians:** information courses, based on medical advice, to promote the correct diet necessary for maintaining a healthy weight and at the same time enjoying physical exercise.
- **health personnel:** data collection and data analysis.
- **all:** printed brochures, online information, information boards, posters, advertising, slogans...



Examples of educational print materials for children, parents, teachers, pediatricians...



OBIETTIVO SPUNTINO, un progetto per promuovere scelte salutari nella Scuola Primaria
 Teresa Denise Spagnoli, Struttura semplice sorveglianza e prevenzione nutrizionale Asl TO3 Collegno (TO), Alessandra Suglia, Dora

- Introduzione
- Il progetto
- I primi risultati
- Le riflessioni del gruppo di progetto

Introduzione



SE VUOI ESSERE UN CAMPIONE...
 E' IMPORTANTE MANGIARE LE COSE GIUSTE, NEL MOMENTO GIUSTO E NELLA GIUSTA QUANTITA'

FRUTTA E VERDURA	5 porzioni	OGNI GIORNO
CEREALI	2 porzioni di pane porzione di pasta o riso (meglio se integrali)	OGNI GIORNO
LATTE E YOGURT	3 porzioni	
CARNE	2-3 volte	OGNI SETTIMANA
PESCE	2-3 volte	
LEGUMI	3 volte	
UOVA	2 volte	
FORMAGGIO	2 volte	
CONDIMENTI	croccanti di olio extravergine di oliva al giorno	
DOLCI	1-2 volte la settimana	

...SALTA LA CORDA NON LA COLAZIONE!
 guadagnare salute

VIVI IN MOVIMENTO GUADAGNA SALUTE!



Forchetta e Scarpetta
 Il piacere del movimento e della buona alimentazione




Examples of educational online materials...

Bad eating habits and bad advertising



Examples of educational online materials...

Fruit in schools - TV spot 2012



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Conclusions

- Although in Italy the **prevalence of obesity, bad diet and lack of regular exercise** is high, in the North it is lower.
- Between 2008 and 2010 we observed a **slight decrease in overweight and obesity** and some changes in risk factors.

Waiting for the 2012 results, we can say that...

printed and online information has played an active and impressive role in promoting and improving health literacy within each group studied.

Thank you!



For more information:

<https://www.okkioallasalute.it/>

<http://www.epicentro.iss.it/okkioallasalute/>