INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- Childhood obesity is a serious global health challenge (World Health Organization, WHO, 2014).
- Globally, the number of overweight and obese young children has increased from 32 million in 1990 to 42 million in 2013 (WHO, 2014).
- In the U.S., 16.9% of children are obese and 31.8% are either obese or overweight (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2015).
- Obesity is associated with cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, chronic inflammation, type 2 diabetes mellitus, asthma and psychological problems (Krebs, Himes, Jacobson, Nicklas, Guilday & Styne, 2007).
- The Cornell study reports that an obese person incurs medical costs that are $2,741 higher than if they were not obese. Nationwide, that translates into $190.2 billion per year, or 20.6 percent of national health expenditures.

A key tool for combating obesity in children is parental involvement which is predicated with their recognition of their child's weight (Lundahl et al., 2014). There are a number of parents who do not accurately assess their child's weight status (Lundahl et al., 2014). These parents are less likely to take initiatives in achieving and maintaining their child's healthy weight (Chen, Lemon, Pagoto, Barton, et al., 2014).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design
Non-experimental, quantitative, correlational, descriptive, cross-sectional study

Population
- Convenience sampling
- Parents of children 5-17 years old in Dutchess County
- Power Analysis 95% confidence level confidence interval of 5, N = 381

Data Analysis
Frequencies, means and standard. Descriptive analysis
Variables were cross-tabulated and Pearson Chi Square analysis were calculated. Spearman rho correlation tests were done to examine relationships between variables.

RESULTS
- Samples (n = 1,008) who met the inclusion criteria and completed the survey
- 1,200 surveys were distributed in different offices
- 1,075 surveys collected, with a response rate of 90% 
- 11 did not meet the inclusion criteria
- 56 surveys were not completed and were therefore excluded from the study

DISCUSSION
- A high percentage of parents (76%) perceived their children's weight as normal when the children were actually either overweight or obese.

IMPLICATIONS
Insights on how to achieve the goals of weight management.
Target specific populations to provide proper education and help parents recognize their child's actual weight status.
The child's BMI should be discussed at every visit so that early intervention at all ages would be instigated immediately when necessary.

LIMITATIONS
The research used a convenience sampling restricted to one specific county of New York.
Generalizability of the results were restricted to parents of children between 5 to 17 years old.
Parents’ height and weight were self-reported which depicts a potential inaccuracy of the information.

REFERENCES