



Lack of Food Linked to Developmental Risk

Posted on: Wednesday, 16 January 2008, 15:00 CST

Children in homes with food insecurity -- limited or uncertain food availability -- are more likely than others to be at developmental risk, a U.S. study says.

Researchers from Boston University School of Medicine and Boston Medical Center, in collaboration with researchers from Arkansas, Maryland, Minnesota and Pennsylvania, studied a sample of 2,010 families and found that 21 percent reported food insecurity.

Children from food-insecure households, compared with those from food-secure households, were two-thirds more likely to experience developmental risks. Household food insecurity, even in the presence of appropriate weight-for age, is an important risk factor for the health, development and behavior of children less than 3 years old.

Providing nutritional and developmental interventions to young children and their families is a proactive step that might decrease the need for later, more extensive interventions for developmentally or behaviorally impaired children of school age, lead author Ruth Rose-Jacobs of Boston University School of Medicine said in a statement.

The findings were published in the journal *Pediatrics*.

Story from REDORBIT NEWS:
<http://www.redorbit.com/news/display/?id=1218293>

Published: 2008/01/16 15:00:15 CST

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