

## Introduction

- Child care providers play an important role in helping preschool-aged children develop healthy eating habits, food preferences, and dietary intake.
    - 76% of 3-5 year old children spend time in non-parental care each week (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015)
    - 3-5 year olds spend 28 hours per week in non-parental care (U.S. Department of Education, 2006)
  - One strategy child care providers can use to promote healthy eating is role modeling.
    - Most effective role modeling: adults eat the same healthy foods as children (Addressi, et al., 2005), avoid consuming unhealthy foods in front of children (Palfreyman, et al., 2014), and talk enthusiastically about their preference for healthy foods (Hendy & Raudenbush, 2000).
- Research Aims:** Explore child care providers':
- use of role modeling and differences by care facility type.
  - understanding of how to use role modeling and its importance.

## Methods

### Concurrent Nested Mixed Methods Approach

#### Quantitative Strand

- Sample:** 338 Head Start teachers (n=38), center-based (n=113) and home-based (n=187) child care providers
- Inclusion criteria:** employed as a child care provider or Head Start teacher at a licensed facility in IL & responsible for feeding 3-5 year old children a main meal at least 3 times a week.
- Data Collection:** 10 page mailed (30%) or online (70%) survey; Incentive: \$15 amazon.com gift card
- Measures:** Role modeling – 5 NAP SACC items (Ward et al., 2014)  
Covariates - provider age, race, education, years employed as a child care provider, and CACFP participation

#### Qualitative Strand

- Sample:** sub-sample of 50 survey respondents; Head Start teachers (n=10), center-based (n=20) and home-based (n=20) child care providers
- Data Collection:** In-depth phone interviews; digitally recorded; professionally transcribed; Incentive: \$25 amazon.com gift card

#### Analysis

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

**6 steps:** 1.) Became familiar with the dataset. 2.) Generated initial codes. 3-5.) Searched for themes, reviewed themes, defined and named themes. 6.) Produced final report.

#### Analysis

Logistic regression models were fit to explore the relationship between role modeling practices and care facility type. All models were adjusted for the covariates.

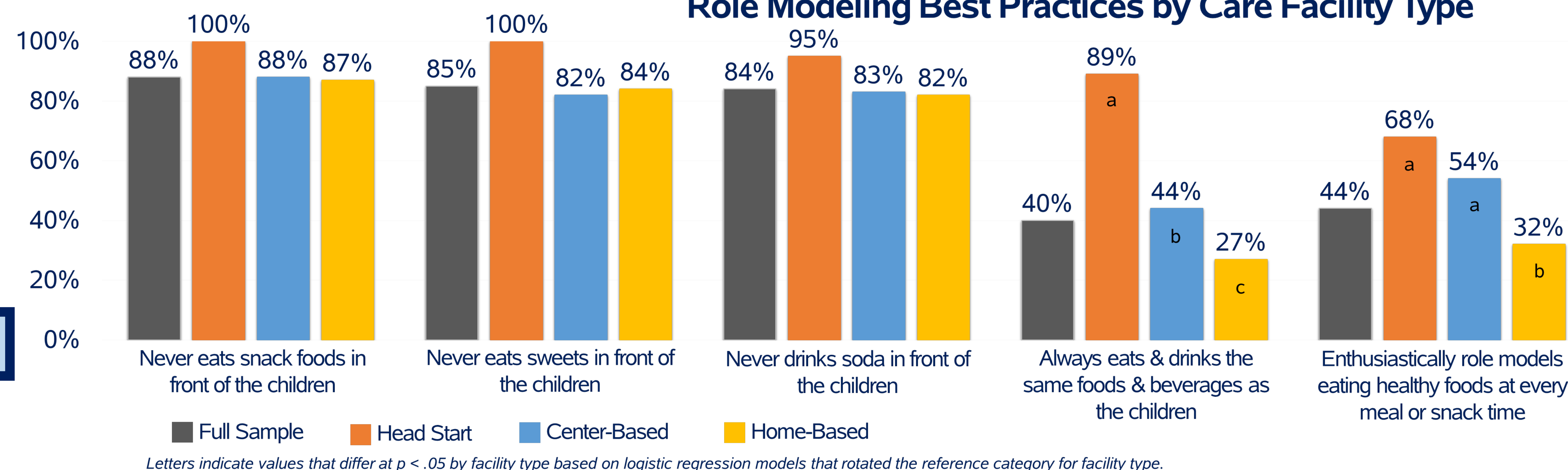
## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

	Survey Sample (n=338)		Interview Sample (n=50)	
	n or mean	% or STD	n or mean	% or STD
<b>CACFP</b>	261	80	30	60
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
White	236	73	37	74
African American	55	17	8	16
Other	33	10	5	10
<b>HS, GED, or Associate's</b>	189	58	24	48
<b>Years as child care provider</b>	14	9.7	12	8.5
<b>Provider Age, &lt; 50 years</b>	187	58	37	74

### Quantitative Strand

#### Role Modeling Best Practices by Care Facility Type



### Qualitative Strand

Most providers understood the importance of eating the same healthy foods as the children. Fewer reported the importance of being enthusiastic about eating healthy foods.

"Role modeling means I can't ask them to eat something healthy and then stand over there and eat junk food. I need to eat the way I want them to eat." (Home-based provider)

Providers understood the importance of and encouraged peer modeling.

"Some children will eat foods that others won't. So we can point out that I'm eating this and he's eating this. It makes it a little easier for them to try things." (Center-based provider)

Limited resources sometimes meant providers had to choose between eating the same food as the children and making sure all children had enough food.

"I put a small spoonful on my plate, I still have the same variety, but—They only get the food I give them and they clean the bowls out. I try not to take much so that I can give seconds." (Head Start teacher)

## Conclusions and Implications

- Training and outreach should focus on role modeling practices during mealtimes and target home-based providers.
- Ensure providers have a full serving of each meal to facilitate role modeling, CACFP should be modified to reimburse for providers' meals.

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