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AN INVESTIGATION OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

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PURPOSE

National statistics and trends show an increase in childhood obesity, and lack of physical activity (PA) among children may contribute to these trends. The overall purpose of this study was to observe and collect data on the PA of children grades K-6 attending two local Boys and Girls Club (BCG) after school programs.

METHODS

The two BCG sites were each observed for one week at baseline. Children's physical activity data were collected using accelerometers. The research team recorded setting characteristics (physical activities offered, performed, and duration of those activities during sessions), and the behaviors of the BCG staff, including leadership and physical and verbal PA encouragement or discouragement.

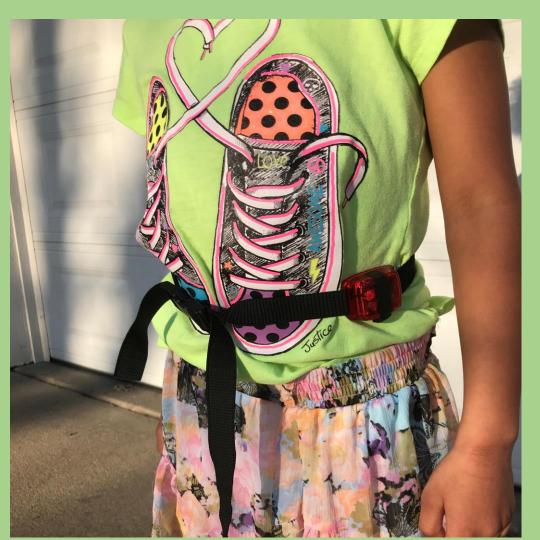
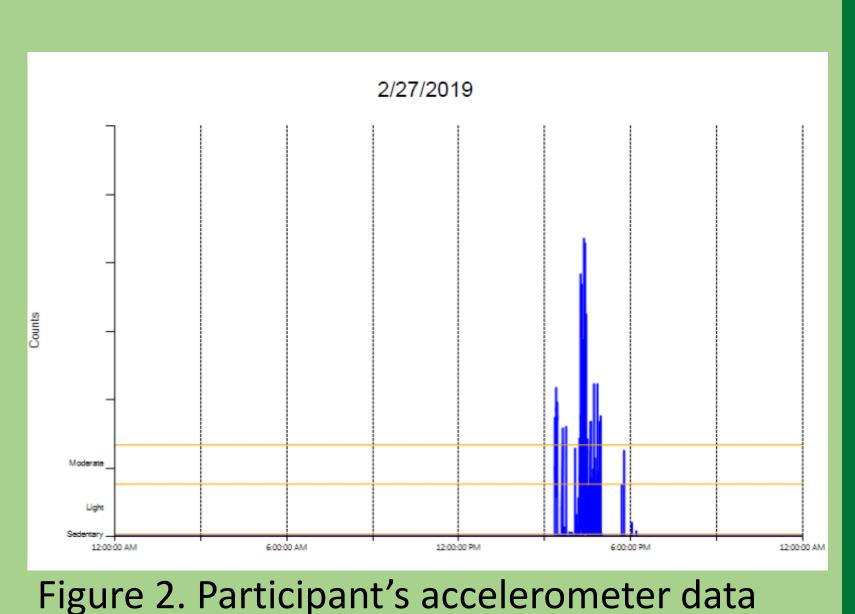


Figure 1. Child wearing accelerometer



INTERVENTION STRATEGY METHODS

Following baseline observations, one site will receive a brief training intervention introducing several options to promote and encourage PA in their program. Subsequently, the research team will observe and collect follow-up data from both sites for an additional week.

from one session

INTERVENTION STRATEGY METHODS



Enhancement and Extension

Try using two different strategies to promote physical activity: Enhancement and Extension.

Enhancement is simply improving the physical activity that is already provided. For example, try increasing the intensity level of an activity to increase heart rate, steps, and energy burn. Extending is adding additional time for activities.

By enhancing physical activity opportunities and extending the allotted time for additional activity, increases in exercise is guaranteed.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. Snack & Go

After snack time, try to give the kids at least 30 minutes to be active and burn off energy. Be intentional with this time, making sure all kids participate. Using this time has the potential to improve behavior and decrease restlessness, making them better able to pay attention during non-active recreation, such as reading or crafts

2. Kid's Choice

Instead of having overly structured games, give the kids "free play". Children are more likely to be active if they are able to choose how they spend their own time. However, make sure all kids are taking part in some type of PA and no one is sitting out.

3. Eliminate Elimination

A lot of potential physical activity time can be wasted if kids have to sit on the sidelines because they are "out". A simple solution: Get rid of elimination games. There are instances, such as dodgeball, where elimination is an important part of the game. Instead of sitting out, alter the rules in ways that can combat this. (Ex: Do 20 jumping jacks to get back in)

4. Save It For a Rainy Day

In case of bad weather or the gym being unavailable, prepare different ways to utilize available space to still allow activity. If classrooms and hallways are the only available space, try implementing games such as "Duck Duck Goose" that can still promote exercise in small spaces.

5. Shake It Up

Schedule multiple short games. Try games that vary in intensity level. Providing a variation of activities to do over a longer period of time can eliminate boredom and increase participation. For example, play tag for 5-10 minutes and then switch to a basketball game before ending the session with dodgeball. This will keep all kids interested and active— even if they don't like a specific game.

6. SAAFE

Use the acronym SAAFE help plan and execute physical activity.

Supportive—Encourage physical activity

Active—Keep kids moving whenever possible

Autonomous—Let the kids be kids by allowing free play

Enjoyable— Step into their shoes. If you were a kid, what would YOU want to do? Don't be

Fair-Keep a variety and be inclusive in all

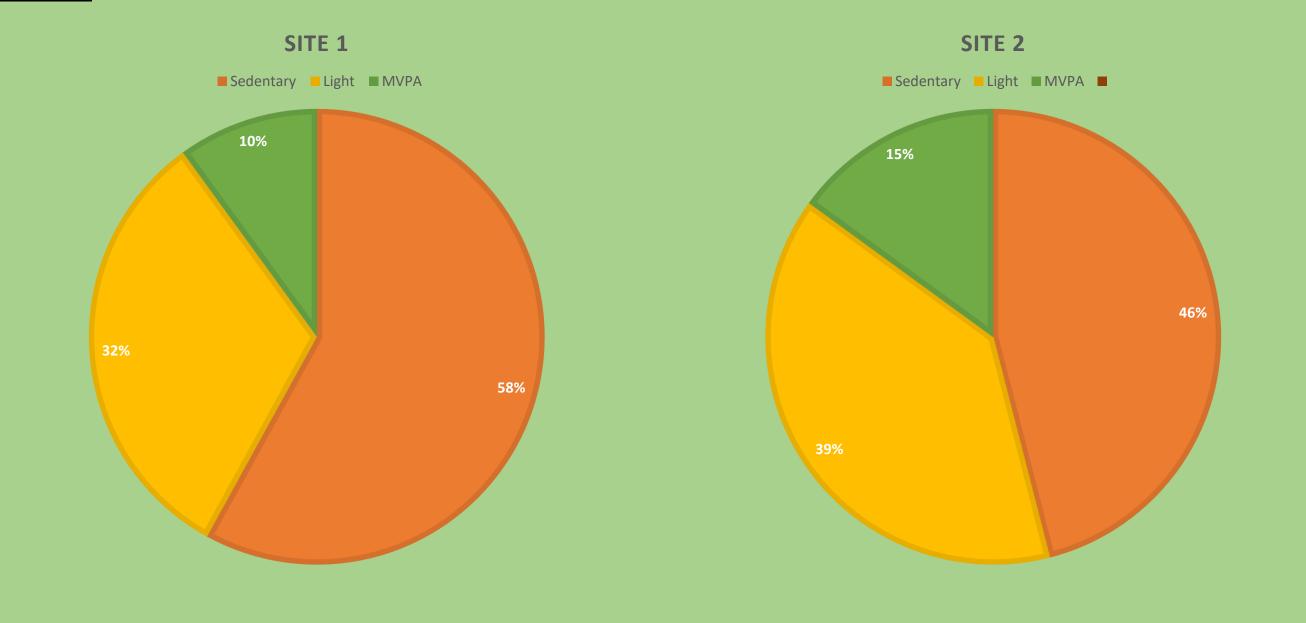


in school! According to the CDC, higher levels of PA among kids is associated with higher grades and lower absenteeism and tardiness.

Figure 3. Guiding Principles to Increasing Children's PA brochure

RESULTS

Baseline results showed children at Site 1 averaged 58% of the session in sedentary time, 32% in light activity, and 10% in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA). Children at Site 2 averaged 46% in sedentary time, 39% in light activity, and 15% in MVPA. Site 1 offered an average of 29 minutes of active recreation time a day, and Site 2 offered an average of 43 minutes per day.



RESULTS

At Site 1, researchers recorded 9 instances of PA encouragement and 6 instances of discouragement, compared to 20 PA encouragement and 19 discouragement instances at Site 2.



CONCLUSION

For the one week follow-up observation, we expect to see a reduction in average sedentary time per session, increases in the children's MVPA, more positive PA promotion from BGC staff leaders, and provision of more PA opportunities in the Boys and Girls Club after school program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kansas LSAMP

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