



Factors Influencing the Implementation of 30 Minutes Structured Physical Activity in After-School Programs



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OBJECTIVES

After-school programs (ASP's) are considered to have great potential to provide opportunities for increasing physical activity. One factor that may influence the success of a physical activity intervention is program implementation. The purpose of this study was to understand factors that influence implementation of 30 minutes structured physical activity in ASP's.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were after-school staff from four after-school sites that attended three trainings over the academic year. Organizational leaders (n = 2), site program managers (n = 4), and 4th grade group leaders (n = 13) were interviewed and completed a survey. The mean age of group leaders was 21.3 (SD = 1.1), 69.2% were female, 76.9% were white, 100% were in college or graduated, and 84.6% were meeting physical activity recommendations.

PROCEDURES & DATA ANALYSIS

Interviews were conducted by a trained interview facilitator (Lead Author) at the end of the first school year implementing the HOP'N intervention. A brief survey questionnaire was also completed for demographic information, self-report PA levels, and self-efficacy to implement the PA intervention.

Interviews were transcribed, checked for errors, and imported into QSR NVivo software. A coding guide was developed to assist in the coding process. One independent coder was trained, and inter-rater reliability was approx. 70%, but after reviewing the data, increased to 100%.

TABLE 1 – SUMMARY OF BARRIERS & FACILITATORS

Topic	PM's (n=4)	GL's (n=13)
Believe implemented	3	10
Barriers		
Organizational		
Prioritizing PA	3	11
Lack school support	3	7
Lack PM support	1	9
High GL turnover	N/A	8
Low training attendance	0	8
Staff		
Low GL motivation	3	11
Providing enjoyable CATCH games	3	11
Facilitators		
Organizational		
Equipment/Gym Space	4	12
Training	4	8
Scheduling PA	4	13
Support from OL	2	N/A
Staff		
High self-efficacy	3	10

TABLE 2 – TRAINING ATTENDANCE OF GL'S INTERVIEWED

Trainings Attended	Fall GL's (n=2)	Spring GL's (n=6)	Fall & Spring GL's (n=5)
3	50%	0%	40%
2	0%	16.7%	40%
1	0%	33.3%	20%
0	50%	50%	0%

RESULTS

Program managers and group leaders perceived that they were successful in implementing 30 minutes of daily structured PA. However, they believed that increasing the amount of unstructured PA daily and offering a max. of 3 days a week of structured PA met the evidence-based protocol.

Organizational barriers included: prioritizing PA, lack of school administration support, lack of PM support, high GL turnover, and low training attendance. Staff barriers included: low GL motivation, and providing children with enjoyable CATCH games.

Organizational facilitators included: trainings, equipment/gym space, scheduling structured PA, and support from organizational leaders. Staff facilitators included PM and GL self-efficacy to implement.

Individual strategies to improve implementation included: restructuring the after-school program with stations, help from PE teacher, and a GL that made a conscious effort to participate in all the games rather than watch from the sidelines.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizational and staff barriers must be overcome to implement structured PA in ASP's. First, continuous staff training is required due to high staff turnover and shifting responsibilities. Second, ASP's need to prioritize the implementation of daily PA and receive funding for implementation. Third, ASP's may need to develop PA specialists for delivering activity. Finally, ASP's need to offer PA daily, structured or unstructured to increase caloric expenditure and prevent obesity in children. Future investigations should examine whether trainings over a 2 or 3 year period impact priorities of ASP's and implementation of daily structured PA.

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