

Psychosocial Outcomes and Physical Activity Levels of Children Participating in the Fun and Fit for Life Program

MEGAN DUGIE AND NATHAN CORSI

Department of Health and Human Performance; Texas State University; San Marcos, TX

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Mentors: Kipp, Lindsay (lindsaykipp@txstate.edu); Meaney, Karen (km66@txstate.edu); Griffin, Kent (lkg37@txstate.edu)

ABSTRACT

The Fun and Fit for Life Program attempts to combat health disparities for low-income children, by providing the opportunity to engage in positive youth development and physical activity experiences. Program goals include creating a mastery motivational climate; teaching three key values (cooperation, participation, respect), and promoting enjoyable physical activity. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate program effectiveness by assessing perceived physical competence, personal and social responsibility, coach-created climate, and physical activity levels. **METHODS:** Children from local after school groups, such as the Boys and Girls Club, were recruited to participate in the Fun and Fit for Life Program (4-6 90-minute sessions), taught primarily by undergraduate physical education students. Participants age 8-13 years-old (n=60) completed a pre and post survey to assess psychosocial variables. A subset of the children (n=48, age 6-10 years-old) wore accelerometers throughout the duration of the camp, to measure activity levels. **RESULTS:** Paired t-tests showed that personal and social responsibility at the end of camp were significantly higher than before camp started ($p < .05$). Perceived physical competence did not change from beginning to end of camp. Regression analyses showed that greater perceptions of a mastery climate predicted increases in personal responsibility, social responsibility, and perceived competence ($p < .05$). In terms of activity level, children were engaged in physical activity for an average of 60% of each 90-minute session. **CONCLUSION:** Findings suggest that Fun and Fit for Life is having a positive impact on children from a low-income environment. Children improved in their personal and social responsibility and engaged in light, moderate, and vigorous physical activity.