
CONNECTION BETWEEN PARENT SUPPORT AND THEIR CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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Abstract:

Research has shown a connection between parent support and their children's participation in physical activity. Parent support may come in the form of positive role models, transportation and payment of fees, providing encouragement or motivation. The physical activity levels of children's parents and siblings have a positive influence on their own participation in physical activity, just as the modeling of sedentary behaviours by parents and siblings influences a development of a sedentary lifestyle in children. When children learn an appreciation for physical activity and when they learn how to participate in physical activities, they tend to be more physically active than their peers who are simply exposed to physical activity. Most of us are familiar with the most common barrier to a regular physical activity routine -- the lack of time. Work, family obligations and other realities of daily life often get in the way of our best intentions to be more active. There are many additional barriers that vary by the person and life circumstance. **Barrier:** Family care giving obligation, Lack of time, Friends and family don't share your interest in physical activity, Lack of motivation and/or energy, The study purpose of this study was to investigate parents' perceptions of the health and physical activity. There is no question that physical activity affords participate a number physiological and psychological health benefits. Specifically significant adults are primed to structure the environment and exhibit behaviours that enhance children's physical competency beliefs, self-esteem and enjoyment of physical activity. In turn, these perceptions and emotions are the keys to solving the mystery of motivating kids in physical activity.

Key words: Physical, **Barrier**, Perceptions, Health, siblings and Encouragement.

Introduction :-

Most students liked physical education class that included some form of game play. In addition, they stressed the need for adding interesting activities that included active participation while having fun. Student recommendations included strategies for improving instruction and for grouping students by skill levels for appropriate challenge. For many years interest in children's physical activity has focused upon beneficial health-related outcomes, such as risk of cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis and obesity. From Socio psychological vantages however, the focus on consequences of physical activity precludes an understandings of the determinants of physical activity behaviour. That is, what motivates children and teenagers to continue and sustain physical activity levels? Why is there such a dramatic decline in physical activity during adolescence and how can be stem the tide of declining physical activity levels? Such a motivational perspective hones in on possible intervention strategies that can be implemented by parents, teachers, coaches and peer groups who play such an active role in the lives of the youth in home, neighborhood, school and sports context, keeping kids motivated to participate in physical activities will then naturally lead to touted health outcomes. This article adopts a motivational stances in identifying the factors that strongly predict physical activity in kids. following most salient themes: (1) all parents believed participation in physical activity has immediate and long-term positive health impacts on their child and most of the parents thought their child would benefit from being more physically active, (2) most parents observed that their child participated in physical activities primarily for social reasons, most notably to be with their peers with or to be with their sibling(s), and that without such motivation their child would choose inactive activities, (3) parents of teenagers identified a need for their child to learn an individual sport to have sporting opportunities that do not require ability-matched teammates and opponents, and (4) parents recognised their need for help from physical activity specialists through either parent education regarding home-based physical activity programmes or an increase in appropriate community-based physical activity programmes for their child with Down syndrome.

The Guidelines for school and community programmes to promote lifelong physical activity among young people (CDC 1997) highlights the contributions that social contextual, psychological and emotional factors play in youth's physical activity behaviour. Most notably, perceptions of competence (eg. physical ability, physical appearance) enjoyment of physical activity and social support by parents, teachers, coaches and peers were cited as essential influences on physical activity in children and teenagers. Recent studies by sport and exercise

Psychologists provide empirical evidence for the role of these predictors of participation behaviour and specify the mechanisms by which these constructs effect change in behaviour. (weirs, in peers Ferrer-caja, in press). Motivation is defined as behavioural choice, effort, resistance and performance and can be translated to the Physiological jargon of frequency, intensity, duration and level of physical activity.

Perceptions of Physical Competence :

Perceived competence refers to individuals judgments about their ability in a particular area such as school, peer relationships or physical activity. Our interest is in perceived physical competence or how children evaluate how adequate they are in sports, physical attractiveness and physical fitness. Considerable evidence shows that youth who report stronger beliefs about their physical competencies are more likely to enjoy activity and sustain interest in continuing involvement than children who report lower levels of physical competence. Greater enjoyment and interest in turn enhance children's motivation to be physically active (weiss & Ebbeck, 1996 in press). Because physical competence reliably predicts motivated behaviour. One naturally may ask the question "How do children know how physically capable they are? What information do youth access to form self-evaluations of ability? Such information is essential for understanding how to enhance perceived physical competence in youth. Several studies have sought to answer these questions (Weiss & Ferrer-eaga, in press). In physical activity or sports contexts, available information includes outcome, social and internal sources. Outcome sources include things such as performs statistics, fitness, testing standards, external rewards (e.g. trophies, ribbons) and event outcome (e.g. winning, finish place) social sources include feedback and reinforcement from parents, teachers and coaches as well as evaluation by and comparison to peers.

Internal sources include self-referencing such as skill improvement in relation to past performance enjoyment of activity, effort, exerted and achievement of personal goals. Although each of these sources is available to youth in the physical domain age and gender, difference exist in the relative use of these sources (Horn & Horries 1996).Heller, Hsieh and Rimmer found that individuals with Down syndrome experience high costs, lack of transportation, difficulty accessing equipment and fitness facilities, and difficulty finding experienced personnel to train them. (Heller, Hsieh and Rimmer) reduced these barriers by providing a centre-based programme and found the experimental group experienced more positive attitudinal and psychosocial outcomes and fewer cognitive-emotional barriers. The researchers did not assess adherence or long-term benefits.

Younger children (about ages 5-9 years) tend to use mastery of simple tasks. Trying hard, enjoyment of activity and feedback from parents as primary means by which to judge

physical ability. For example making contact with the ball, learning athletic skill, exerting effort in skill learning and receiving parental approval for participation constitute sources of competences information for this age group. Over the course of the childhood and early adolescent years a shift from these sources to peer comparison (evaluation and teacher /coach feed back emergence. Youth ages 10-15 years become more competitive and seek to do better than same-age peers. When there ability stacks up favourably to their classmates. This information conveys that they are physically competent. Because teachers and coaches express approval verbal and non-verbally in the presence of one's peer group. This source of information is yet another index of physical achievement. In later adolescence emphasis on social comparison and evaluation again shifts. This time to use of more internal source. Teenagers ages 16-18 years now depend more on achievement of self set goals, attraction towards physical activity and personal improvement as primary indicators of competence. Because of the public nature in which physical activity and sport takes place, peer comparison and teacher/coach feedback remain salient forms of self judgment criteria.

Social support from parents, Teachers / Coaches and Peers.

Significant adults and peers have emerged time and again as sources of physical competences and self-worth, sources of enjoyment, and determinants of commitment to activity, parents, teachers/coaches and peers through their feedback reinforcement, modeling, and structuring of opportunities have tremendous influence on childrens perceptions of physical competence, enjoyment of physical activity. Self esteem, motivation and physical activity behaviours. (level, frequency, intensity).

Parents

A number of studies illustrate a strong link between parental beliefs, expectancies and behaviours with children's competency beliefs, enjoyment of and levels of physical activity. Parents are especially important as transmitters of information about their child's competence and the value of physical activity through the mechanism of modeling and reinforcement behaviours. For example parents who recognize and reinforce their child's interest and participation in physical activity through verbal and non-verbal means, and who model enjoyment of their own physical activity convey the message that physical activity is an important domain.

Teachers / Coaches

Coaches and teachers feedback and reinforcement comprise informational (i.e. instruction) or evaluative (e.g. praise, criticism) responses to participation and performance. Several intervention studies by Smith and Smoll (1996) demonstrate that the quantity and

quality of coaches feedback result in positive outcomes for young sport participants. Coaches who engaged in more frequent praise for desirable behaviours (effort, technique) encouragement following skill errors and instruction following performance attempts were associated with players who were higher in perceived ability, enjoyment and intention to continue, playing and lower in anxiety and attrition rates. Perhaps one of the more powerful find was the significant pre-post season increases in global self-esteem for children who began the season with low self-esteem and who played for trained coaches.

Peers

One's peer group and close friends (classmates, teammates, neighborhood) are powerful socializing agents who contribute beyond the influence of adults to children's psychosocial development in school and physical activity involvement. Both peer acceptance and close friendship are salient aspects of peer relationships and interactions. Peer acceptance refers to one's popularity and status within one's peer group. Children and teenagers abilities tend to be more popular with their peer group. Moreover, unskilled youth may be the source of ridicule, exclusion and lack of opportunities. Children who feel that they are popular with their peer group are motivated to continue participation to maintain their friendships, experience greater enjoyment and less anxiety associated with physical activity and person and report higher levels of motivation.

Friends

It refers to specific aspects of a dynamic peer relationship such as similarity, companionship, esteem enhancement, loyalty and emotional support. Studies show that children sports as an arena in which to develop close friendships that allow opportunities for emotional support and self esteem affirmation.

Several positive dimensions of best activity related friendship emerged for 8-16 years old participants such as self-esteem enhancement, companionship pleasant play and association, intimacy, loyalty, emotional support and conflict resolution. Younger children (ages 10-13) cited companionship and pleasant play more frequently as character ships of their best sport friendships. While older youth (ages 14-18) rated loyalty and intimacy, things in common and conflict higher. Girls rated self-esteem enhancement and supportiveness, loyalty and intimacy and things in common higher friendship quality on companionship and pleasant play reported greater sport enjoyment and a stronger desire to stay involved in their participation.

Enhancing physical activity in kids

This article targets several determinates of children's motivation and physical activity perceptions of competence and self-esteem, influence, enjoyment and physical activity

behaviours. Thus intervention strategies must focus upon maintaining and enhancing children's self evaluations of physical ability to ensure continued interest and participation, enjoyment and other positive emotional experiences sustain commitment toward and actual levels of physical activity. The activities that kids do must be fun and more appealing than alternative unhealthy activities. Finally social support by parents teachers, coaches and peers is essential to positive self beliefs, enjoyment and motivation to continue activity.

Provide optimal challenges

An optimal challenge is one that matches the difficulty level of activities to the child's capabilities. Thus children's successful mastery of skills is within reach. But they must exert necessary effort and persistence to attain the goal. Skills that are too easy in relation to a child's talents are boring and do not allow for realistic goals. Skills that are too difficult invoke anxiety and frustration when persistent efforts are unsuccessful. Because children's use mastery of skills, effort expenditure and self improvement as criteria for determining how physical competent they are optimal challenges offer children a prime opportunity for developing and demonstrating competence that is at the cutting edge of their capabilities.

Create mastery motivational climate

Coaches and teachers influence children's beliefs, affective responses, and behaviours by shaping the learning environment or motivational climate focuses upon how success is defined. How children are evaluated. What is recognized and valued and how mistakes are viewed. A mastery motivational climate is one that promote learning, effort and self improvement and mistakes are viewed as bort of the learning process. Success is self-referenced and personal improvements are recognized, praised and emphasized. In contrast, a performance climate emphasizes norm referenced modes of success and evaluation for recognition that focus upon favorable comparison to peers. The motivational climate that is perceived by participants impacts their perceptions of ability, attraction towards physical activity and motivation.

Make Physical activity fun

Time and again enjoyment emerges as a strong predictor of motivated behaviour. When we enjoy the activities that we do. We want to do them more often. This is not only applies to children and teenager but adults as well. What makes activities fun ? We know from studies with children and adolescents that high action and scoring, high personal involvement in the action. Close games and opportunities to affirm friendships are key to activity enjoyment.

Help children themselves

Mastering skills, achieving personal goals are progressively improving are internal sources of information children and adolescents use to judge their physical competence. Competence, beliefs, in turn influence levels of self-esteem, enjoyment, motivation and physical activity levels. Thus teaching children self regulated learning strategies such as goal setting of self-monitoring allow them to adopt self-reliant standards for enhancing their perceptions of competence. Goals that are specific optimally challenging and self referenced will point youth in the right direction for sustaining physical activity motivation. Self monitoring of physical activity may include the use of training logs or diaries that can be used to compare current to past physical activity frequency, intensity and duration.

Conclusion

There is no question that physical activity affords participate a number physiological and psychological health benefits. People know that they should exercise. But staying motivated to be physically active at levels to accrue these benefits in another story. Because active children may lead to active adolescents and adults. We should focus our efforts on our youngest members of society. Specifically significant adults are primed to structure the environment and exhibit behaviours that enhance children's physical competency beliefs, self-esteem and enjoyment of physical activity. In turn, these perceptions and emotions are the keys to solving the mystery of motivating kids in physical activity.

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