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Behavioural and Implementation
Science Interventions
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine



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#174 - Efficacy, scale-up and sustainment of the Get Outside, Get Active program in early childhood services

Presenting Author(s)*

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Objectives/Aims

The presentation will describe a program of work consisting of findings from three randomised controlled trials (RCTs). The trials will describe the process of establishing an effective intervention, developing implementation and scale-up strategies and planning for sustainment. The specific aims are:

1. To describe the impact of a scalable intervention (increasing outdoor free play time) delivered in early childhood and education care (ECEC) services on childcare physical activity
2. To describe the development and impact of a scalable dissemination and implementation strategy to increase the amount of outdoor free play time in ECEC post-intervention.
3. To describe the development and pilot evaluation of a strategy on sustaining increased indoor-outdoor free play opportunities in ECEC.
4. To summarise the learnings from this program of work.

Methods

This presentation describes a program of work consisting of three RCTs describing the efficacy, implementation and sustainment of the Get Outside, Get Active program

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in ECEC centres. The first RCT seeks to establish the efficacy of increasing outdoor free play time in ECEC centres on child moderate to vigorous physical activity. This cluster RCT trial was undertaken with 439 children recruited from 10 ECEC settings. The primary outcome was the mean daily minutes that children spent in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) while in care, assessed using accelerometers. Following this, we undertook a parallel group RCT with approximately 100 ECEC settings to identify effective implementation strategies to increase the provision of outdoor free play at scale. The primary outcome for this trial was fidelity, operationalised as mean minutes that ECEC services provided children with the opportunity for outdoor free play per week. This was assessed using a Free Play Record, adapted from existing ECEC measures of outdoor play. Secondary outcomes included level of educator interaction with children during outdoor free play as assessed using the Movement Environment Rating Scale (MOVERS). Lastly, we designed a low-intensity sustainment strategy to ensure ongoing provision of indoor-outdoor free play opportunities in ECEC settings. The trials were prospectively registered and reported consistent with the CONSORT and CONSORT-pilot guidance.

Main findings

Overall, this presentation will describe the process of moving from efficacy to scale-up and reflect on our learnings from this program of work. It will briefly include the processes for selecting the intervention and implementation strategies, and describe findings from the RCTs described above. The first RCT found that the intervention significantly improved child MVPA when attending care ($p=0.03$), with no significant observed adverse effects. In the second RCT, the process for selecting a scalable implementation strategy will be described and preliminary findings reported (between group differences of approximately 25 minutes of increased outdoor free play time, $p=0.04$). Lastly, we will describe the development and evaluation of a pilot RCT examining how to ensure the sustainment of indoor-outdoor free play opportunities.