

NEXT STEPS

Throughout fall 2014 Vivo and MRU will analyze the results of Phase 2 with plans to release them by the end of the year. The findings will be implemented in 2015 by:



- Expanding curriculum development to include programs for early childhood (ages 3-5) and grade 3.
- Training Vivo's 110 part-time instructors and 10 full-time staff to deliver programs that maximize physical activity time by introducing proven instructional strategies and techniques.
- Creating a new program model that can be shared with the recreation sector across the country.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHILD+YOUTH ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT AND OTHER VIVO RESEARCH VISIT WWW.VIVO.CA.

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FOR MORE INFO, VISIT vivo.ca

GET OUT OF THE WAY AND LET THEM PLAY

REPORT CARD NO.2
SPRING 2014

IN THE 2014 release of Active Healthy Kids Canada's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth*, Canada received a B+ for built environments; however, disconcertingly we're still receiving a failing grade in physical activity and sedentary behaviours – among the lowest score of the 15 countries compared.

"The question is, if our policies, places and program are well developed, why is this not translating into enough activity for our kids? To increase daily physical activity levels for kids we must encourage an accumulation of physical activity throughout the day through a mixture of sport and spontaneous active play", cites Active Healthy Kids Canada.

What then can recreation centres across the country do to raise the bar on physical activity levels in children and youth? The answer is about thinking, planning, programming and teaching differently.

Vivo, in partnership with Mount Royal University, is pioneering a new evidence-based prototype illustrating how multi-sector partners, together with the community, can create grassroots solutions to shift attitudes and behaviours about healthy active living.

In 2012, we launched a first of its kind initiative – The Child+Youth Action Research Project – a 10 year longitudinal study to increase physical activity levels in children, youth and adults. Phase 1 of the study concentrated on collecting important baseline data while Phase 2 focuses on developing a program delivery model that increases physical literacy and influences activity behaviours for grade one and two students

The Phase 2 program intervention was launched in January 2014 with great success. 57 children were randomly assigned to a control group or an intervention group. The intervention group participated in a non-traditional intentionally designed 17-week multi-activity program while the control group registered in a series of conventional courses.

* To read AHKC's Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth visit activehealthykids.ca

"Any activity is more important than no activity. This program changed our thinking. Instead of believing we only have 20 minutes so we can't do something, our attitude now is 'great we have 20 minutes - let's fit in a walk'."

~Toby, PARENT

This report card is the second in a series. Each will be designed to provide summary information arising from the Child+Youth Action Research Project.



2013/2014 KEY LEARNINGS

Offering quality programs with purposeful and measurable outcomes that are developmentally appropriate should be a primary focus of any physical activity program. Learning how active kids really are during traditional recreation courses, evaluating lesson content and better understanding the quality of instructor engagement with participants are important baseline benchmarks.

LEARN MORE

2013/2014

KEY LEARNINGS

Baseline Program Evaluation



1

RAISE ACTIVITY LEVELS

Kids spend 61% of class time standing, sitting or lying down in a typical 1 hour recreation program.



2

STRENGTHEN PROGRAMMING

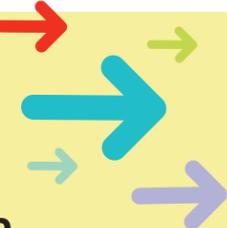
36% of class time kids spend listening and learning without activity and only 3% of time in free play.



3

ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT

Instructors spend 54% of time teaching and managing the class while 8% of time is focused on praising kids' efforts and behaviours.



4

MOVING FORWARD

Let's get moving more! By increasing free play, decreasing class management time and increasing individual praise, we can increase kids' physical activity levels in recreation programs.

PRIOR TO LAUNCHING PHASE 2, research assistants established a baseline for current program quality using the System of Observing Fitness Instruction Time (SoFit) to evaluate existing programs at Vivo as well as physical education classes at elementary schools in Calgary. The results of this study were used to help inform the development of the Phase 2 curriculum. [To view the full SoFit results visit vivo.ca.](http://vivo.ca)



AT THE CONCLUSION OF PHASE 2, parents were asked to document their experience through video diaries and focus groups, and interestingly a pattern began to emerge. For many families engaged in the intervention group the changes in attitude and behaviour by the end of the 17 weeks were palpable and surprising.

"Our biggest take away is to be more involved as a family. We can't expect our kids to be active and healthy if we don't role model it."

~Ramin, PARENT

"I learned that even if you don't know how to do something you just need to keep trying."

~Malik, PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

"My son's amount of physical activity has increased and surprisingly his schoolwork has improved dramatically over the course of the study. We've changed our diet, changed some other behaviours and it's made a huge difference."

~Jody, PARENT

ONE FAMILY'S STORY

We registered our daughter in the study as a simple exercise in getting her more active and exposing her to a variety of different sports and activities. At first it was a struggle – cajoling, negotiating and pushing her to attend the twice-weekly classes. Gradually though, we noticed her excitement increase as her self-confidence began to blossom. As her fitness level and hand-eye coordination improved, so did her keenness to attend the sessions. Not only was she affected physically, but her greater belief in herself improved her willingness to share and socialize with other participants and her instructors. As a result, we've witnessed the emergence of a better-quality relationship with her brothers and sister at home and a willingness to put herself out there and try new things. Now, our once shy reticent child is registered in a variety of programs for the fall and has planned a full slate of engaging outdoor activities over the summer.

~ Ayman, PARENT