

## **ORAL: SIX YEAR FOLLOW-UP OF A COMMUNITY-BASED FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR**

### **SKILL INTERVENTION IN BELGIAN CHILDREN**

\*Eline Coppens 1,2 , Nikki Rommers 1,2 , Farid Bardid 1,3 , Frederik J.A. Deconinck 1 , Kristine De Martelaer 2,4 , Eva D'Hondt 2 , and Matthieu Lenoir 1

1 Ghent University, Department of Movement and Sports Sciences, Ghent, Belgium;  
ecoppens.coppens@UGent.be

2 Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Department of Movement and Sport Sciences, Brussels, Belgium

3 University of Strathclyde, School of Education, Glasgow, United Kingdom

4 Utrecht University, Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Utrecht, The Netherlands

**Objective:** The aim of this study was to examine the long-term effectiveness of the 'Multimove for Kids' program, a fundamental motor skills intervention for typically developing children between 3 and 8 years, and to determine the influence of participation in organized sports on motor competence (MC) six years after the intervention. **Method:** Of the 992 children who took part in the 'Multimove' program, 399 (intervention group: N=228, control group: N=171) were tested again at 6-year follow-up. MC was measured with the Test of Gross Motor Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. To examine the long-term impact of 'Multimove' on MC and the effect of participation in organized sports a latent growth curve analysis was conducted. **Results:** After the 30-week intervention, the intervention group outperformed the control group ( $=5.57$ ,  $p<.001$ ). However, when the entire study period, including the 6-year follow-up, was considered, the intervention group made less progress in MC than the control group ( $=-0.41$ ,  $pp=.05$ ). Looking at the engagement in organized sports, it was found that years of experience before the intervention had no significant influence on the evolution of MC, whereas a positive effect was observed for children's average sports participation (h/week) during the 6-year retention period ( $=0.14$ ,  $pp=.001$ ). Finally, children practicing predominantly object control oriented sports during retention, obtained better MC scores at follow-up ( $=0.01$ ,  $p<.01$ ). **Conclusion:** The effect of the 'Multimove' intervention does not have a long-term effect on MC. However, participation in organized sports has a positive influence on MC evolution over time. **Implications:** More longitudinal evidence is needed to determine the optimal characteristics of effective interventions in order to expose children to positive sports experiences, allowing them to develop MC, which is a key factor in improving the likelihood for long-term engagement in sports and other forms of physical activity.