

## **ORAL: INVESTIGATING THE AGE-RELATED ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PERCEIVED MOTOR COMPETENCE AND ACTUAL MOTOR COMPETENCE IN EARLY ADOLESCENT YOUTH**

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**Objective:** The purpose of this research was to gather data on fundamental, functional, and perceived motor competence in adolescents, differentiated by year group, to discern if participants could assess their perceptions of ability. **Method:** Data were collected on adolescents (N=373; 47.7% female; 52.3% male; mean age:  $14.38 \pm 0.87$  years), across six second-level schools in Ireland, including measurements of fundamental movement skills (FMS), functional movement and perceived motor competence. With regard to assessment measures for FMS, a combination of the Test of Gross Motor Development-2 and the Victorian Fundamental Motor Skills Manual was utilized. For functional movement, the Functional Movement Screen TM was utilized while perceptions of competence were assessed using a modified Perceived Self-Confidence Scale and the Perceived Functional Confidence scale. **Results:** Poor levels of fundamental and functional movement were observed across male and female cohorts with significant differences between year groups detected. Participants in 1st year scored highest in overall fundamental movement skills, however, for overall functional movement, 3rd year participants scored highest. High levels of perceived motor competence were reported across the entire sample, and these scores did not align with actual motor competence, nor did alignment between these measurements improve with aging, countering theorized age-related associations. **Implications:** The high reported levels of perceived motor competence in spite of their low actual competence suggest that greater alignment between these concepts as children age and progress into adolescence may not be as apparent as theorized. The low levels of motor competence among Irish youth must be addressed to raise physical activity levels. Future interventions should target low levels of actual motor competence, while emphasizing cognitive aspects of movement, to ensure greater accuracy between actual and perceived motor competence as veridical perceptions may be critical to activity patterns of 21 st century adolescents.