

POSTER: BOYS AND CHILDREN WHO ARE COMPETENT IN FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILLS ARE MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE ON THE PLAYGROUND

*Yung-Ju Chen ¹ , Jacqueline Goodway ² , Kieley Stroupe ² , Dimetrius Brandon ² , Ruri Famelia ² , and Jerraco Johnson ²

¹ Minot State University, Teacher Education and Kinesiology, Minot, ND, USA,
ruth.chen@minotstateu.edu

² The Ohio State University, Human Sciences, Columbus, OH, USA

To investigate the predictors of self-selected physical activity in fourth- grade students on the school playground. Methods: Sixty-seven fourth-grade students (41 boys, 26 girls) from 2 suburban schools in a Midwest city were recruited. The percentage of recess time students spent in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) on the playground was measured using accelerometers across 5 school days. The participants' fundamental motor skills (FMS) and perceived physical competence (PPC) were measured using the Test of Gross Motor Development – 3 and the Physical Competence Subscale of the Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children, respectively. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were conducted. Students' age, sex, body mass index, gross motor quotient, and PPC mean scores were included as the predictors of the time students spent in MVPA on the playground in the regression model. Results: On average, the students spent 44% of recess time engaging in MVPA. While they demonstrated an overall high level of PPC, there were significant delays in their FMS development, with 58% of participants ranked below the 25 th percentile in their gross motor quotient. Sex (boy) and gross motor quotient positively and significantly predicted the percentage of recess time in MVPA. Implications: While prior research has highlighted developmental delays in FMS in children in urban and rural settings, this study found similar developmental delays in FMS in suburban school students. While MVPA rates were reasonably high at 44%, there is still room to increase the percent off MVPA during recess to meet the national physical activity guideline for children (i.e., 60 min of MVPA a day). Given that FMS was a strong predictor of playground MVPA, schools need to focus on equipping students with the capability (e.g., FMS) that enables them to choose to engage in MVPA when options are given.