Active Play for All Children: Building Evidence and Advancing a Culture of Health

Dialogue4Health Web Forum
Physical Activity Research Center
July 16, 2020
Playing should be a part of every childhood.
Agenda

▪ Brief overview of the Physical Activity Research Center – PARC.

▪ Present results from 4 studies on policies and practices with potential to promote physical activity for children.

▪ Emphasize new evidence on youth activity for specific race and ethnic subgroups.

▪ Seek suggestions on dissemination strategies for practitioners and policy makers.
What is PARC?

- **Physical Activity Research Center (PARC)** builds evidence about policies, practices, and aspects of the built environment that promote safe and developmentally appropriate physical activity for all youth and families.

- **4 large research studies** to identify promising solutions tailored to understudied groups at higher risk of physical inactivity and obesity – **low income children of color**.

- **5 Commissioned Studies** to provide “actionable” results and relevant to Voices for Healthy Kids advocacy efforts.
The PARC Team

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Policy and Practice-Relevant Youth Physical Activity Research Center Agenda


Background: The Physical Activity Research Center developed a research agenda that addresses youth physical activity (PA) and healthy weight, and aligns with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Culture of Health. This paper summarizes prioritized research studies with a focus on youth at higher risk for inactive lifestyles and childhood obesity in urban and rural communities.
Youth Physical Activity in Summer: Patterns and Disparities
The UC San Diego study is examining summertime physical activity patterns in diverse, lower-income adolescent populations.
Co-PIs: James F. Sallis, PhD & Terry Conway, PhD

Physical Activity and Recreation in Children in Communities of Color – PARC3
The NC State University project studies public park use and physical activity among children in lower-income and racial and ethnic minority communities in Raleigh-Durham and New York City to inform planning decisions about park design.
Co-PIs: Myron F. Floyd, PhD & J. Aaron Hipp, PhD
Implementation of Play Streets in Diverse Low-Income Rural Communities
The Johns Hopkins and Baylor is examining whether culturally relevant Play Streets can be adapted to low-income rural communities to increase physical activity among elementary and middle school-aged children. Co-PIs: Keshia Pollack Porter, PhD, MPH & Renée Umstattd Meyer, PhD, MCHES

Youth Engagement and Action for Health!
The Georgia Tech project assesses how training youth to be advocates for changes in the built environment can foster health and produce positive policy and environmental change. Co-PIs: Nisha D. Botchwey, PhD and Anna J. Kim, PhD
Building Evidence to Reduce Inequities in Youth Physical Activity and Obesity

Edited by Eduardo L. Franco
Last update 3 June 2020

Welcome to the Special Issue on Active Living Research (ALR) Conference Series
Edited by Eduardo L. Franco
How to Improve Physical Activity and Health for All Children and Families

Physical activity is critical for healthy development in the young, but many children are being left behind. Physical Activity Research Center (PARC) investigators examine physical activity across built environments, parks and recreation, schools, and rural areas—all through an equity lens.

BY M. RENÉE UMSTATTD MEYER, J. AARON HIPP, NISHA BOTCHWEY, MYRON F. FLOYD, ANNA J. KIM, KESHIA M. POLLACK PORTER & JAMES F. SALLIS

Stanford Social Innovation Review
Summer 2019
Resources

- **Scientific papers**, including Virtual Special Section in *Preventive Medicine*
- **Additional papers** from large studies and commissioned studies
- Lay audience **Brief** for each study
- **Infographic** for each study
- Short **video** to highlight need for ALL youth to be physically active

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Poll Question:
Which category best describes you?

- Practitioner/Professional
- Researcher/Academic
- Advocate
- School Board or Administrator
- Gov't Official
- Student
- Other: ________________
Jim Sallis, PhD
Distinguished Professor Emeritus
University of California San Diego
Racial/Ethnic Variations in School-Year Versus Summer Differences in Adolescent Physical Activity

James Sallis, Terry Conway, Kelli Cain, Carrie Geremia, Edith Bonilla, Chad Spoon

UCSD PARC Study
Published in Preventive Medicine December 2019
Youth obesity prevention efforts have not been effective in low-income areas and some communities of color. Better evidence is needed to guide tailored approaches to subgroups at highest risk of obesity. Children and adolescents gain up to 3 times more weight/BMI in the summer than the school year. Summer weight gain is greater in some race/ethnic groups. Children and adolescents are less active in the summer than the school year. Race/ethnic differences have not been reported. The present study was designed to improve understanding of school-year vs summer differences in physical activity among high risk subgroups.
Study Aims

- Examine physical activity and sedentary behavior among diverse subgroups of adolescents in low-income areas

- Examine preferred activities, preferred places to be active, and psychosocial resources among diverse subgroups of adolescents in low-income areas

- Primary comparisons across 3 dimensions:
  - Summertime versus school year
  - Race/ethnicity subgroups
  - Sex differences
Study sample

- 207 youth completed surveys twice
- 150 youth also had accelerometer data in both seasons
- All youth recruited from low-income geographic areas

Analyses compared race/ethnic groups:
- African Americans (n=56)
- American Indians (n=30)
- Asian/Pacific Islanders/Filipinos (n=21)
- Latinos (n=49)
- White, non-Hispanics (n=51)
Current and Preferred activities and places

- Current and preferred activities were similar across groups
  - Walking, exercise, running
  - Water play was highly preferred by girls

- Current and preferred places to be active
  - In and around the home were top places in almost every subgroup in both seasons
Lower summer MVPA was found in all subgroups (average of 14 min/day), so summer interventions are needed for everyone
- Interventions may need to be tailored for each subgroup
- Interventions to reduce summer screen time should be prioritized for African American adolescents
- Walking is a priority target behavior for all subgroups of low-income youth, so parks and trails can serve this need
- Community-organized walking programs within lower-income neighborhoods seem promising
  - Overcomes travel barriers and security concerns
  - Multiple stakeholders could collaborate to organize the walks
  - Could be tailored to needs and resources of each community
  - Low cost, but leaders and promotion are needed

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Are adolescents less physically active in the summer? What are differences by race, ethnicity, and sex?

The Issue

Children and adolescents gain more weight in the summer than the school year. African American and Latino youth gain more weight in the summer than do youth from other racial or ethnic groups. Some studies have found that youth are less physically active in the summer, which is surprising because they are not required to sit for many hours in school during the summer. It is unknown whether this seasonal difference varies across race, ethnic, and sex subgroups. The aim of this study was to examine race/ethnic and sex differences in adolescent physical activity, sedentary behavior, and related variables, comparing the school year and summer.

Recommended actions to increase physical activity of diverse and disadvantaged adolescents in the summer

Background

Our research with 207 low income adolescents from five racial/ethnic groups found that all adolescents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or sex, were substantially less physically active and reported more screen time in the summer than the school year. Based on those findings, the recommendations below can be undertaken by multiple stakeholders to increase physical activity in the summer and ultimately improve health. Results from the study provide direction for promoting adolescent summer time physical activity generally and for tailoring actions for specific subgroups.
Making walking safe and convenient in our neighborhoods can help teens be more active during the summer. Learn more: [www.paresearchcenter.org](http://www.paresearchcenter.org)
Youth PA and COVID-19

- It is more essential than ever for children & adolescents to meet PA guidelines during the pandemic
  - Helps manage stress
  - To maintain overall physical and mental health
  - Because PA improves immunity and inflammation if children become infected

- Closing of parks, trails, & schools creates challenges
  - During closings, staff could organize distanced neighborhood walks
  - Refer youth to online activity classes & lessons
  - Advocate for openings, managed through education, monitoring, metering of entrance to parks & trails
  - Advocate for regular & frequent “open streets” in all neighborhoods, during and after closures