

Researchers develop course to boost physical activity at childcare centers ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

Western researchers who study activity among young kids have created an online course to help tackle a pervasive problem: Children are not getting enough daily movement, especially while in childcare.

"We've been working in childcare settings for more than a decade, trying to understand environmental factors that influence physical activity in kids," said Trish Tucker, professor in the School of Occupational Therapy at Western.

According to Tucker, children should be engaged in 180 minutes of physical activity every day, with 120 of those minutes ideally happening in childcare settings. For preschoolers (3- and 4-years-old) one-third of the total 180 minutes should be moderate to vigorous activity.

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Alongside post-doctoral associates Brianne Bruijns and Matthew Bourke, Tucker has been testing a new course, Training EARly CHildhood educators in physical activity (TEACH). It's aimed at teaching Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) about the role physical activity plays in child development.

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For now, ECEs or ECE students must contact the research team to access the course, but it is freely available to any ECE in Canada who is interested in using it. The goal is to eventually implement it across the country. There's already interest from public health units in Ontario and New Brunswick, Tucker said.

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Related link:

Associations between childcare physical activity and sedentary time and early childhood developmental outcomes: A compositional ^[3]

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Region: Ontario ^[5]

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