

# Parent Support is Associated with Healthy Movement Behaviours for Canadian Children and Youth with Disabilities during the Initial Restrictions of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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## Background

- Heathy childhood development is fostered through ample physical activity, low sedentary behaviour, and adequate sleep. Collectively, these are known as the 24-hour movement behaviours (Carson et al. 2016).
- Children and youth with disabilities (CYWD) tend to have lower levels of physical activity and higher levels of sedentary behaviours, on average, compared with their typically developing peers (e.g., Bedell et al., 2013).
- Parental support of healthy movement behaviours is important, particularly for CYWD (Bassett-Gunter et al., 2020).
- COVID-19 has reduced children and youth's physical activity and increased their sedentary behaviours. Parents likely play an important role in supporting their child's healthy movements during a pandemic.



## Objective

To assess the association between parental support and healthy movement behaviours of CYWD during the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Methods

### Participants:

- We recruited parents of CYWD (n=151) in April and May 2020. Parents were participants in the National Physical Activity Measurement (NPAM) study. A national study that assesses the movement behaviour of school-aged CYWD living in Canada.

### Survey Development and Administration:

- Parents were invited to complete the 2020 COVID-19 and Childhood Movement Behaviours Survey (Moore et al., 2020) online using RedCap®
- The survey assessed child demographics, current movement behaviours, changes in movement behaviours, and parental support variables.

### Analysis:

- We assessed the association between movement behaviours and parental factors using Pearson and point-biserial correlations (\*p<.05 and \*\*p<.01).



## Results

### Proportion of CYWD Meeting the 24-hour Movement Guidelines:

- Only 1.3% of CYWD were meeting the 24-hour movement recommendations
  - 5.3% were meeting the physical activity recommendation
  - 13.2% were meeting the screen time recommendation
  - 66.2% were meeting the age-specific sleep recommendations



### Associations between Parental Support and their Child's Movement Behaviours

- Parent encouragement was positively associated with increased child's outdoor PA (.23\*\*), wheeling, walking, biking (.19\*\*), indoor PA (.16\*\*), chores (.19\*), and family-based PA (.26\*\*).
- Parental co-play was similarly positively associated with the child's increased outdoor PA (.26\*\*), wheeling, walking, and biking (.39\*\*), and family-based PA (.26\*\*).
- Overall parent capability and opportunity to support movement behaviours was positively associated with the child's increased child's outdoor PA (.38\*\*), wheeling, walking, and biking (.26\*\*), chores (.16\*), and family-based PA (.37\*\*), as well as increased sleep quality (0.31\*\*) and decreased TV and screens (-.22\*\*).

## Conclusions

- Parents of CYWD have an important role to play in encouraging healthy movement behaviours.
- CYWD should have equal access to healthy movement and play. The COVID-19 pandemic has reduced these opportunities for CYWD and their families.
- As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, return to play recommendations should describe the role of the family in supporting healthy movement behaviours of CYWD.
- Accessible and inclusive activities need to be prioritized to support CYWD's return to play.



## References

- Bassett-Gunter et al. *Eur. J. Adapt. Phys. Act.* 2020; 13(2), 11
- Bedell et al. *Arch Phys Med Rehabil.* 2013; 94(2), 315-323
- Carson et al. *Prev Med.* 2017 Feb; 95:7-13
- Moore et al. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act.* 2020 Jul 6;17(1):85

