

## **Two Studies of Partnership Approaches to Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programming: A Process Evaluation and a Case Study**

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This dissertation consists of two studies that examine partnership approaches to comprehensive school physical activity programs (CSPAP). Both studies function in tandem to advance the knowledge base about school – university partnership approaches to CSPAP programming. Study 1 examined the first-year classroom component of the Partnerships for Active Children in Elementary Schools (PACES) intervention, and Study 2 examined the implementation of a Health Optimizing Physical Education (HOPE)-based CSPAP. Both studies utilized school-university partnerships in their design and implementation.

The purpose of Study 1 was to examine the effects of different PACES treatment levels on classroom movement integration promotion during the first year of implementation, and qualitatively examine program implementation processes from the perspective of intervention classroom teachers. Four schools participated in the study. The first school received all three levels of the intervention (Community of Practice [CoP], Community-based Participatory Research, [CBPR], and Service Learning [SL]), the second school received two levels (CoP and CBPR), the third school received one level of the intervention (CoP), and the fourth school served as a waitlisted control. Three teachers from each school (N=12) participated. Process data were collected in the Fall 2014 (baseline) and Spring 2015 (~ four months of intervention) using the System for Observing Student Movement in Academic Routines and Transitions. Semi-structured

interviews with the intervention teachers ( $n=9$ ) were conducted after ~four months of intervention.

There were no significant differences between intervention classrooms and control classroom in PA promotion, but differences in classrooms receiving two levels of the intervention (CoP+ CBPR) and three levels of the intervention (CoP+CBPR+SL) when compared to classrooms receiving one component of the intervention (CoP) and the control school were found. The difference between the classrooms receiving two or more intervention components when compared to classrooms receiving one component and the control classrooms were approaching significance ( $U = 5, p = 0.037, d=1.22$ ).

Quantitative and qualitative results supported the CBPR component having the most marked impact on classroom-based physical activity promotion. This study provides rich information about process variables in the context of a classroom-based physical activity intervention, and the types of support universities can offer schools for physical activity promotion.

The purpose of Study 2 was to examine the enablers and barriers related to the development, implementation, and sustainability of a two-year university-supported HOPE based CSPAP implemented at a middle school. The study employed a qualitative case study design. The literature on program diffusion and school-university partnerships for CSPAP implementation and sustainability guided data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each member of the implementation team ( $n=5$ ), the funding agency ( $n=1$ ), each health-physical education teacher at the school ( $n=7$ ), follow-up interviews with the implementation team ( $n=5$ ), and a focus group interview with students ( $n=5$ ). Documents were collected from the

implementation team (e.g., field notes, meeting minutes) and from the teachers (e.g., lesson plans, newsletters, etc.). Next, prolonged field observations were conducted at the school during physical education, health, and before and after school programming. Data was coded using the theoretical model of program diffusion. Trustworthiness included member checking, data and researcher triangulation, researcher debriefing, and an audit trail. The findings about the implementation suggest that HOPE and CSPAP programming takes a lot of effort to implement, training should be centered on marketing, advocacy, and physical activity management, and needs assessments should be used before the start of new programming. Several components of the HOPE-based CSPAP sustained including before and after school programming and an annual 5k run. This study provides insider perspectives from health-physical educators, students, and a university intervention team about the implementation and sustainability of a HOPE-based CSPAP. The study suggests that program implementation and sustainability of a CSPAP are linked to strong external support mechanisms.