

## ***Implementation and follow-up of a project aiming to promote physical activity in overweight adolescents***

Rompen, J., Lepage, S. & Cloes, M.

*Department of Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Liege (Liege, Belgium)*

### ***Background and purpose***

For a few years, the Department of Sport and Rehabilitation Sciences of the University of Liege has organized physical activity (PA) promotion events for overweight children and adolescents. One of the biggest difficulties has always been a lack of adherence and participation in these activities. According to the Self-determination Theory, exercise programs designed to satisfy the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness might increase PA adherence and promote a long-lasting active lifestyle (Deforche, Haerens & Bourdaudhuij, 2011). The first purpose of this study was to implement a project aiming to promote physical activity in overweight adolescents. It consisted in 2 series of 8 collective PA sessions, leading to a team participation in a public charity sport event. The sessions included aerobic and resistance exercises as well as educational content. This study also aimed to evaluate the motivation of the participants for this project and its impact on their lifestyle.

### ***Methods***

15 overweight adolescents voluntarily participated in this study (aged 12 to 18 years). Data were collected using a questionnaire and interviews before and after the program. A short questionnaire was also completed by the participants and the instructor at the end of each PA session.

### ***Results***

After the first 8 sessions, no dropout has been observed and the attendance rate reached 79.2%. Moreover, the motivation level of the participants regarding the sessions seemed high. On a scale of 0 to 5, it reached an average of 3.71±0.49 and 4.17± 1.3, from the point of view of the instructor and the participants, respectively.

### ***Conclusions and implications***

These preliminary findings are encouraging to continue with the project. Future data will allow us to analyze the evolution of motivation and adherence of the participants through the program and to evaluate its impact on PA habits of the participants.

## ***References***

Deforche, B., Haerens, L., & Bourdeaudhuij, I. D. (2011). How to make overweight children exercise and follow the recommendations. *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*, 6(S1), 35-41. <https://doi.org/10.3109/17477166.2011.583660>

## ***Contact***

[jerome.rompen@uliege.be](mailto:jerome.rompen@uliege.be)