

TEACH Pilot Study Poster Full-Text

Title: TEACH Pilot Study. Implementation of an e-Learning Course in Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour for Pre- and In-Service Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)

Authors: Faith E.A., Heidary, Brianne A. Bruijns, Patricia Tucker

Acknowledgments: Special thanks to my supervisors, Dr. Trish Tucker & Brianne Bruijns; the USRI Coordinators; and Child Health & Physical Activity Laboratory, for all of their guidance and support throughout this experience.

Introduction: Early childhood educators (ECEs) are highly influential in promoting healthy movement behaviours (e.g. physical activity [PA] & sedentary behaviour [SB]) in early childhood. It is essential that ECEs gain foundational knowledge & confidence in their ability to incorporate appropriate amounts of high-quality movement experiences for children in their care. However, ECEs do not currently receive related education in their current pre-service programs or professional development in practice.

Intention: The Training EARly CHildhood educators in physical activity (TEACH) study intends to improve ECEs' knowledge, confidence, and intentions regarding promoting healthy movement behaviours by providing comprehensive training in PA and SB, outdoor and risky play in childcare settings via an e-Learning course.

Objective: Test implementation (e.g., fidelity, feasibility, acceptability, etc.) of the TEACH e-Learning course in PA and SB in a sample of Canadian pre-service (i.e., post-secondary students) and in-service (i.e., practicing) ECEs.

Why e-Learning?: The e-Learning method of delivery is cost-effective & has the ability to reach a wide range of ECEs in various provinces.

Methods:

- Developed via Delphi process
- Four modules (~90 mins/module).
- 32 pre-service ECEs completed course
- 121 in-service ECEs completed course
- pre-post (within-subjects) study design.
- Implementation outcomes measured post-intervention via a process evaluation survey, interviews, and e-Learning course metrics

Results (self-efficacy)

- acceptable
- compatible
- effective
- feasible
- appropriate in complexity
- technical difficulties

- longer than anticipated course duration
- fidelity: pre-service (68%), in-service (63%) ECEs.
- most enjoyed content: outdoor play—pre- and in-service ECEs (87.5% and 91.7%, respectively); risky play (84.4% and 88.4%, respectively).

Conclusion:

- These findings demonstrate the value of e-Learning for professional development interventions for ECEs
- Participant feedback will be used to make improvements to the TEACH e-Learning course to improve scalability of this training

Future Implications:

- Informed larger study, broadening its reach across Canada
- 150 ECEs were endowed with the foundational knowledge & confidence to lead movement learning for the benefit of all kids under their care (tree branch effect)