

## **The acceptability and feasibility of a novel peer-led school-based physical activity intervention for adolescent girls: The girls' peer activity (G-PACT) project**

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**Introduction:** This study assessed the feasibility and acceptability of a novel peer-led physical activity (PA) intervention for adolescent girls aged 13-14 years.

**Methods:** The intervention employed a three-tier peer-led model underpinned by Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The 8-week intervention was delivered in three schools and involved 233 participants. Each school recruited 12-16 girls to become PA-leaders, who received leadership training delivered by undergraduate PA students, who subsequently acted as their intervention mentors and role models. The PA-leaders were encouraged to support their school peers to engage in more PA. Two of the schools provided organised after-school PA opportunities which the PA-leaders actively promoted. The acceptability, practicality, engagement, and perceived success of the intervention was investigated using focus groups and interviews. Qualitative analysis adopted deductive and inductive methods, using SCT and SDT as thematic frameworks, and then exploring additional emergent themes.

**Results:** The intervention was perceived as feasible and acceptable between mentors (n = 6) and leaders (n = 47). However, the relationship between leaders and their peers (n = 196) suggested uncertainty in delivery and engagement. Disparity was reported from the peers in how much and what information was conveyed to them by their PA-leaders.

**Conclusions:** This intervention was reported to be feasible and acceptable among mentors and PA-leaders. Teachers were supportive of the intervention and the intervention demonstrates innovation incorporating undergraduate students as mentors and role models to adolescent girls. Further research is needed to clarify the roles and responsibilities for the PA-leaders.

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