



Podium Recommendations from the Physical Activity Working Group of the Children's Alliance

Item Type	Report (Project Report)
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Full Citation	Murray, Pamela and Physical Activity Working Group, et al. (2024) Podium Recommendations from the Physical Activity Working Group of the Children's Alliance. Project Report. The Children's Alliance, Exeter.
Journal/Publisher	The Children's Alliance
Rights/Publisher Set Statement	Written permission to make Children's Alliance reports available on WRaP received via email from Paul Wright (Children's Alliance Public Health Director) 17/07/24
Link to publisher	https://childrensalliance.org.uk/

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Recommendations for the Mental Health Prevention Review



The following recommendations have been placed into GOLD, SILVER and BRONZE segments. We envisage that in such a format they can provide you with a succinct set of evidence-based recommendations that you can easily choose to have more details/evidence presented to you.

The GOLD recommendations indicate the best evidenced based options, though they may be the more expensive choices.

The SILVER recommendations are still important but are either cheaper, or they would need less overall change. The SILVER options are also often 'steps to the GOLD recommendations.'

Finally, we have the BRONZE recommendations that may have a lower to no significant associated costs but would still assist in promoting a healthier society and play a part in steps to the SILVER or GOLD recommendations.

These recommendations are brought to you by forty plus professionals with expertise in Physical Activity for children and young people.



GOLD OPTION 1

Return to the Every Child Matters

(ECM) agenda: Specifically the commitment to being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle.

Every child matters - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). ECM focused our minds on the aim of making our country a better place for babies and children. ECM was shelved when the coalition took power in 2010.

Investment in community sports facilities for the prevention of physical and mental ill

health: Significantly increase investment in community sports facilities and provision of community sport via devolved authorities/local authorities and in consultation with stakeholders. This should be a cross-government and cross-party drive to enhance access to high-quality sports facilities in local communities. The approach should be equitable; that is, underserved and underprivileged areas should be prioritised using IMD data (amongst other datasets) with the aim of reversing a decade-long programme of austerity and associated impacts and truly levelling up - i.e., reducing health inequalities.

Play to become a protected characteristic: In the Equality Act 2010, nine characteristics were identified as 'protected characteristics'. These are the characteristics where evidence shows there is still significant discrimination in employment, provision of goods and services and access to services such as education and health. Play should be deemed as a critical part of physical and emotional health.

SILVER OPTION 2

Policy and financial support for

nurseries and childminders: The Early Years Foundation Stage is the English statutory guidance for providers of education and care for children and babies. First launched in 2007 as part of the ECM agenda, physical development and the need to provide physical activity is a statutory requirement of the EYFS. However, nurseries and childminders are closing their doors because of staff shortages and difficulties with funding. They need support from the government to be able to survive and thrive, and in turn to be able to provide the high quality education and care that our youngest citizens deserve as a right.

Filial Play to be part of the education and training in all early years and primary school

settings: Filial play can be used to support infants and children who's mental and emotional development has been be impaired for some reason.

Physical literacy: Prioritise the promotion of physical literacy, emphasising the importance of our relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life. Targeted efforts should be focussed on education, awareness/advocacy campaigns and community engagement programmes.

BRONZE OPTION 3

Implementation of trauma-informed inclusive pedagogies that are relational and contextual to the needs and aspirations of all learners:

Place focus on the role of physical activity in the prevention and mitigation of toxic stress-inducing adversity, as well as resilience building and prevention of physical and mental ill health. Demonstrate the role that community coaches can play as role models and trusted adults in safe, supportive environments to reduce and mitigate the impact of adversity in childhood, adolescence and in adulthood. Integrate trauma-informed approaches across community sports programmes, youth services, and public health interventions.

Community engagement and reward: For children and young people to become increasingly engaged in 'community good projects.' These would introduce a reward scheme which offers access to local activities such as a free swim, roller disco, badminton court, clubs etc. There are examples of such schemes across the nations,. Such overarching schemes could help to tie individual well-being with community well-being.

Raising the value of the subject of Physical Education across the curriculum e.g. to become a core subject in England, to ringfence it so that the time may not be taken for other elements of the curriculum and/or other school wide priorities. That PE is specifically taught to prepare children to better understand and engage in physical activity on a daily basis for their childhood and most importantly through the life-course.