



## **Physical & Health Education Canada 2024 Research Council Forum: Student Presentation Abstracts**

### **Abstract**

This article features the abstracts from student led research presentations delivered at the 2024 PHE Canada Research Council Forum in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. All these presentations successfully navigated a peer review process and were delivered in any one of several offered formats (i.e., oral presentations; posters; round table discussions) at the 2024 Research Council Forum. Presentations were all delivered in-person. The intent of this article is to highlight current research being undertaken and led by student members of the PHE Canada Research Council.

### **Résumé**

Dans cet article, vous trouverez un résumé des présentations des travaux de recherche menées par les étudiants lors du forum de recherches 2024 d'EPS Canada qui s'est tenu à Saskatoon, en Saskatchewan. Toutes ces présentations ont été soumises avec succès à un processus d'évaluation par les pairs et ont été présentées dans l'un des formats proposés (présentations orales, présentations visuelles, tables rondes) lors du forum de recherches 2024. Les présentations ont toutes été effectuées en personne. Dans cet article, l'objectif est de mettre en évidence les recherches actuellement menées et dirigées par les étudiants membres du Conseil de recherches d'EPS Canada.

## **We tutuska towin~Forging Paths Together: Wholistic Land-Based Approaches to the Co-Creation of Physical Literacy Enriched Early Learning Environments Rooted in Diverse Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Being and Doing**

*Fatima Ali (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Amanda Froehlich Chow (University of Saskatchewan)*

As a result of historical colonial practices and systemic racism, Indigenous children and youth continue to be disproportionately represented among children living with non-communicable chronic diseases. To address these health disparities through decolonial strength-based approaches, our interdisciplinary team of Elders/Knowledge Holders, Indigenous families, Indigenous/non-Indigenous educators, researchers, and allies came together to embrace the wholistic nature of physical literacy. As such, we have co-created decolonized resources which foster physical literacy development among early years children in urban and rural early learning settings in Saskatchewan.

Grounded in the Indigenous philosophy of ethical space and guided by *etuaptmunk* (Two-eyed Seeing), our community-based participatory action research braids Indigenous knowledges of nature-and-land-based learning and play, with Western knowledge of physical literacy. Together we have co-created *Nature's Way-Our Way*, a set of activities that support educators/caregivers to provide opportunities for early years children to develop their physical literacy through engaging in culturally rooted games. Our early learning centres partners are invited to expand the resource package and develop their own physical literacy focused activities representative of unique teachings within their Indigenous community.

## **Unearthing Pathways to Wellness: A Community-based Approach to Enhancing Physical Activity Among Indigenous Youth in Montreal Lake Cree Nation**

*Evan Boechler (University of Saskatchewan)*

Indigenous youths' experiences around positive movement opportunities in sports and PA through after-school programming in Montreal Lake Cree Nation (MLCN). My proposed study will investigate the barriers and facilitators to PA among Indigenous youth in MLCN through three interconnected phases. Phase 1 will focus on identifying barriers and facilitators to PA using a survey design. This phase will involve both Indigenous youth and community members from MLCN, collectively contributing to the identification of barriers and facilitators to youth PA within the community. Phase 2 will qualitatively explore the PA experiences of 6-10 Indigenous youth in the community. Participants will engage in semi-structured interviews, body mapping (e.g., a mind-body-social context art-based expression; Boydell et al., 2018), and focus group conversations around community PA experiences. An essential component of these interviews will be affording participants the opportunity to share their perspectives on the aspects of a PA program they believe would be most effective within their community. Building upon the findings from Phases 1 and 2, Phase 3 will focus on creating a meaningful and culturally relevant after school PA program for Indigenous youth. While the programming will be pragmatically created from community conversations, data collected and engagement with youth, some possible focuses could revolve around creating positive movement opportunities through active play, sports, and land-based activities.

## **From Classroom to Community - Emphasizing Meaningful Experiences in Physical Education to Support Students' Physical Activity Engagement in their Communities**

*Spencer Briggs (Brock University)*

If school physical education (PE) programs aim to develop a lifelong commitment to a physically active lifestyle in their students, evidence suggests they should be provided with experiences that enable them to find joy and meaning in movement both inside and outside of school (Fernandez-Rio et al., 2023). The Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) approach was developed to support PE teachers in prioritizing meaningful experiences for students (Fletcher et al., 2021). Using MPE, teachers can plan for and enact democratic and reflective pedagogies to guide their students toward educative experiences and enhance interpretations of meaningfulness (Ni Chroinin et al., 2023). For students to experience meaningfulness, PE must be considered relevant to their wider lives (Fletcher & Ní Chróinín, 2022).

When prioritized, teachers and students have reported positive experiences of Meaningful PE in teaching and learning, with some claiming, “It is how PE should be!” (Beni et al., 2021). While this evidence is promising, there is a lack of data about how MPE can support children’s engagement with physical activity inside and outside the school. Thus, it is crucial to understand how MPE supports students in taking action and making connections between their classroom and the local community. Therefore, I aim to describe (a) how teachers apply reflective and democratic pedagogies in their PE classrooms and (b) how students respond to those strategies by seeking further physical activity opportunities inside and outside the classroom. I will collect qualitative data (interviews, observations, artifacts) from two teachers and their students over one year.

This research will offer evidence to demonstrate how teachers prioritize meaningful experiences in PE and support students in taking action and making connections between their classroom and their local communities to support a commitment to lifelong participation in physical activity (Beni et al., 2017).

## **Exploring the Gender Gap in Physical Literacy: What Parents and Teachers Perceive**

*Matthew Chapelski (University of Saskatchewan)*

**Introduction:** Physical activity is beneficial for the well-being of children, but most Canadian children do not engage in enough physical activity to receive benefits. Physical literacy (PL) development is one solution to combat physical inactivity. Physically literate individuals have the confidence, competence, motivation and understanding to be physically active throughout their lifetime. Insight into differences that exist in PL development is essential to ensuring it is equitable for everyone. Gender is one factor that likely impacts the PL journey. Furthermore, since parents and teachers play an important role in the development of PL, it is imperative to determine if they perceive gender differences. Therefore, the purpose of our study was to assess objective and perceived gender differences in the PL of children in kindergarten and grade one.

**Methods:** The physical literacy of 186 children 5 to 7 years-of-age (77 females) was assessed using an adapted version of the PLAYfun tool. Additionally, PLAYparent and PLAYcoach questionnaires evaluated parental and teacher perspectives of PL in a subset sample. Teachers reported the self-identified gender of the students. Mean differences between boys and girls for each skill and questionnaire were assessed by MANOVA.

Results: Gender differences in motor competence favoured boys for run a square ( $p=.027$ ), run there and back ( $p=.026$ ), and throw ( $p<.000$ ). In contrast, girls had greater motor competence for skip ( $p<.000$ ) and gallop ( $p=.002$ ). There were no differences in researcher assessed confidence or comprehension for PLAYfun ( $p>0.05$ ). Only parents of boys perceived a gender difference, reporting higher balance ( $p=.005$ ) and object control motor competence ( $p=.046$ ). Teachers perceived a cognitive gender difference with girls having a greater awareness of the environment than boys ( $p=.048$ ).

Conclusion: Recognizing gender differences is essential for developing PL. Educators must provide an equitable approach to give all individuals the skills to engage in physical activity for life.

## **Enabling the Uptake of Pedagogical Innovations in Physical Education: The Role of Social Media**

*Matthew Dingwall (Brock University)*

Despite the development of many promising innovations in PE, they are often underutilized by teachers. Limited adoption prevails due to inadequate access to effective, continuing professional development (CPD). Social media has the potential to be used as an accessible, self-driven form of CPD by teachers to support ongoing learning about pedagogical innovations. The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of social media in enabling teachers' uptake and sustained use of the innovation, Meaningful PE.

Wenger's (1998) social learning theory positions learning as a social process that occurs through active engagement and participation within a community of practice (CoP). This learning is enhanced when CoP members' activities are situated, meaningful, and relevant to their work. Teachers' use of social media for the purposes of CPD can be understood and interpreted through this framework.

Qualitative data was gathered from six teachers, including individual semi-structured interviews and participants' interactions on social media (Twitter and blogs) regarding Meaningful PE. Data analysis involved two steps. First, data were analyzed inductively using Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-stage reflexive thematic analysis. Second, deductive coding based on Wenger's social learning theory enabled comparison with the outcomes of the inductive analysis.

Social media provided a valuable platform for these teachers to make meaning of their own practice, share knowledge with members of their professional community, and led to the formation of particular professional identities as innovative professionals.

This research provides evidence of the role that social media can play in supporting teachers' uptake and sustained implementation of pedagogical innovations, such as Meaningful PE. Implications for the design of CPD programs are identified, including the place of social media in their delivery.

## **Développer les habiletés de vie en éducation physique et à la santé (EPS) au secondaire: perceptions d'enseignant.e.s en EPS quant à leur rôle**

*Karolane Girard (Université de Sherbrooke)*

L'acquisition d'habiletés de vie (HV) occupe une place importante dans le développement global des jeunes. Cette préoccupation se reflète dans le programme de formation de l'école québécoise, où le cours d'EPS vise à la fois le développement de l'efficacité motrice et des HV. Par son contexte interactif, le cours d'EPS est reconnu comme un milieu de choix pour le développement des HV (Hellison, 2011). Toutefois, la plupart des études sont effectuées dans des contextes parascolaires. Très peu d'études documentent l'actualisation des HV en contexte d'EPS. L'objectif de cette étude est de décrire les perceptions d'enseignants en EPS quant aux stratégies visant le développement des HV d'élèves du secondaire. Des entretiens semi-dirigés ont été effectués auprès de douze enseignants d'EPS (n = 12) d'écoles secondaires du Québec. Les verbatims ont fait l'objet d'une analyse de contenu mixte. Les résultats montrent qu'afin de favoriser le développement des HV de leurs élèves, les enseignant.e.s d'EPS utilisent des stratégies qui se rapportent principalement à leur façon d'interagir avec les élèves : être de bons leaders et de bons modèles, entre autres. De plus, ils/elles s'assurent d'offrir un environnement d'apprentissage positif, notamment en énonçant les objectifs du cours et en mettant en place un système de règles et de routines claires. Toutefois, par manque de temps, d'outils et de ressources disponibles pour les appuyer dans leurs pratiques, ces derniers affirment ne pas intégrer davantage le développement des HV dans leurs cours d'EPS. Cette étude a permis de mettre en lumière l'écart entre ce que les enseignant.e.s perçoivent faire pour développer les HV en EPS et les attentes du programme. Il semble pertinent de s'intéresser aux occasions de formation offertes aux enseignant.e.s d'EPS afin qu'ils puissent actualiser ces apprentissages et ainsi tirer profit du potentiel de l'EPS pour le développement global des jeunes.

## **Wahkohtowin: The Connectedness of Our People within a Wellness Program**

*Mckenna Hall (University of Saskatchewan)*

Research has suggested that programs that focus on physical activity and wellness should give youth unique opportunities, offer leadership roles, and create exposure to positive adult role models (Bean et al., 2014). Studies have highlighted how the importance of role models and mentors enhance physical activity experiences and that the consistent guidance for Indigenous youth can combat feelings of doubt and fear towards stepping out of their comfort zone (McHugh et al., 2019; Williamson et al., 2020). To build off of previous findings, my research explored the relationships between Indigenous girls and university women athletes within the Montreal Lake Wellness Hub - partnership focused around on reserve physical activity & wellness programming. In partnership with Husky Athletics, Women from the University of Saskatchewan Huskie Soccer team have been involved with programming in and outside of Montreal Lake Cree Nation (MLCN) for the past 2.5 years. This study focused on the perceptions of both the youth and women athletes to better understand how they experienced the relationships built throughout the program. Photovoice was used in this study to capture how the girls in MLCN viewed the Huskie Women Soccer athletes in terms of their relationships and experiences participating in the wellness activities. Semi-structured interviews with the university athletes were also used to discuss their experiences working with the youth in MLCN and the impact of their relationships. Findings from both groups align with past research that denotes that exposure to positive role models enhances physical activity experiences for youth. Furthermore, it became clear that these experiences were positive, inspirational and shaped future career opportunities for mentors.

## **Wîcihitowin: Working Together to Sustain On-Reserve Wellness Programming**

*Payton Hall (University of Saskatchewan)*

“You guys won’t come back - no one ever comes back.” Indigenous youth living on-reserve often experience one and done programming where adults come in and out of their lives for a short period of time. It is not surprising that this type of programming is common. Spending limited time working in isolated communities is easier than a long term commitment given the isolation, problematic working conditions, increased student needs, limited support services, and inadequate professional support networks (Monk, 2007). On top of that, the work itself can be exhausting, expensive, and requires consistent grant-funding to help support limited education/recreation budgets. This revolving door approach diminishes the relationships that need to be built with youth in order to promote healthy behaviors. Our experience has shown us that this work is not always easy, but that the rich relationships we have developed with the youth—and with the other community and team members—sustains us. The research question I intended to address was how can we make recurring on-reserve wellness programming sustainable for both the professionals involved and the communities that desire it?

Our qualitative study utilized semi-structured interviews to better understand experiences of 7 Wellness programmers—all of whom are current physical education teachers and coaches—who have worked in the community of Montreal Lake Cree Nation for at least 3 years. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data and to interpret the results (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Having a personal passion for physical activity, a feasible role, and strong, stable relationships all emerged as major themes that sustained programmers. While this is one particular study in one specific context, we hope that these findings help sustain physical educators and coaches who hope to engage Indigenous youth, living on reserve, in meaningful movement opportunities.

## **I’m New Here: Exploring the Influence of Social Ecological Factors on the Physical Activity Behaviours of Southeast Asian Youth who are Newcomers to Canada.**

*Emily Johnson (University of Saskatchewan)*

The term newcomer refers to people who have immigrated within the past ten years and are still adjusting to the culture and customs of their new country. Many newcomer youth report unique experiences with settlement that requires them to settle in the society of their new country. Physical activity (PA) may be beneficial to newcomer youth because it provides an opportunity to experience language and culture in a setting not dominated by verbal communication, however, PA levels of Canadian newcomer youth are lower than Canadian born youth. Among young newcomers in Canada, those arriving from Southeast Asian countries have the lowest PA levels. The purpose of this research was to understand the individual, social, community, and policy factors that influence the PA behaviours of Southeast Asian high school aged youth who are newcomers to Canada. Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design, this study collected data in two phases. Phase 1 was quantitative and used questionnaires and pedometers to measure PA levels of the participants (N = 8). Phase 2 used focus groups and a semi-structured interview guide based on McLeroy et al.’s (1988) ecological model of health promotion (EMHP) to explore the social ecological factors that influence participants’ (N = 8) PA behaviours. Results from Phase 1 revealed that on average less than 10% of participants met Canadian PA guidelines. In Phase 2, participants identified factors that influenced their PA behaviours in every level of the EMHP (e.g. intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and policy). Opportunities such as PE classes, intramurals, and church events provided the majority of opportunities for newcomer youth to be active. Participants provided suggestions to enhance their school PA experiences.

## **The Voice of Community Practitioners: Adapting to Changes in Funding Regimes in Community Health Promotion**

*Ashley Johnson (Queen's University)*

Community partnerships, defined as an inclusive, representative group of community members who come together to work toward a common vision (Vail, 2007), are a popular and valued approach in health promotion (Butterfoss, 2007). Government and private foundations that typically provide financial support for community programs are now requiring partnerships as a core condition for funding initiatives. This is driven by the belief that partnerships are more likely to achieve success and sustainability than single agency led efforts (Joss & Keleher, 2011). Funding represents an ongoing and difficult challenge for most community partnerships; a collaborative's capacity to secure financial and human resources typically contribute to its sustainability and progress (Roussos & Fawcett, 2000).

The forced condition of partnering has been influenced by various levels of government contracting out public services such as health and education to community organizations, which historically would have received core funding for these services. These organizations now only typically receive funding for certain projects aligned with government initiatives. This new funding environment has been coined the "project – funding regime". An ethnographic exploration of three community organizations in three provinces across Canada, identified challenges associated with this new project funding regime (Gibson et al., 2007). To expand on these findings and add to the literature in this area, the following study uses a different methodological approach, investigates funding sources outside of government contracts, and captures the voice of different community organizations after more than a decade of further experiencing this regime.

Specifically, using a phenomenological methodology, this study explores the lived experiences of individuals who have experienced applying for grants and are participants within a community partnership in health promotion. This presentation will outline the study design and preliminary findings and will discuss practical recommendations for how funding entities can support the success and sustainability of partnerships.

## **Integrating Strength & Conditioning into High School Physical Education: A Scoping Review and Narrative Synthesis**

*Michael Larocque (University of Calgary)*

*Dr. Michelle Kilborn (University of Calgary)*

Physical activity for adolescents promotes a significant number of health benefits spanning across the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual domains. However, it has been frequently reported that adolescents do not reach the recommended amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) or muscular-strengthening exercise (MSE). While many school-based physical activity policies specifically target MVPA, efforts to increase MSE in adolescents have been significantly less popular due, in part, to misunderstandings surrounding the safety and effectiveness of this type of physical activity. One promising solution is enhancing the implementation of strength and conditioning (S&C) principles into physical and health education (PHE) programming, either through partnerships between S&C professionals and schools or through physical and health education teacher education (PHETE). Enhancing S&C principles in PHE can provide student athletes with more equitable access to sport performance, injury prevention, and rehabilitation services. However, the potential benefits of this integration spans beyond athletic populations. These principles can help physical educators design safe, effective,

and meaningful opportunities for their students to build a positive relationship with exercise and improve their health and well-being.

This scoping review with narrative synthesis aims to characterize the high school S&C professional, identify strategies for implementing S&C principles within high schools, and ultimately develop evidence-informed PHETE sessions for current and pre-service teachers. A total of 8 electronic searches were performed across education, kinesiology, and public health databases which included MEDLINE, CINAHL, EMBASE, SportDiscus, ERIC, Education Research Complete, Academic Search Complete, and Web of Science. Twenty-two studies were selected for inclusion in this literature review. Content analysis identified four primary themes which included differentiated instruction, assessment, long-range planning, and implementation strategies. Findings of this review provide guidance for the S&C professional working in the school setting as well as PHE teachers looking to promote S&C principles in their programs.

### **Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy for Acculturation and Identity Exploration of Newcomer Students: Physical and Health Education Teachers' Experiences**

*Younghoon Lee (McMaster University)*

*Dr. Kyoung June Yi (McMaster University)*

Students in physical and health education (PHE) in Canada are increasingly diverse due to the constant influx of newcomers, making a PHE environment a place where diverse cultures and languages of students are blended. Previous asset-based pedagogies, such as a culturally relevant pedagogy and a culturally responsive pedagogy, considered students' diverse cultural ideas and practices as valuable resources for promoting students' academic achievement and social inclusion. These pedagogic approaches, however, were criticized for their limitations on valuing intercultural sharing to support multiculturalism and using students' diverse cultures to teach dominant social and cultural norms.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) emerged to develop, maintain, and perpetuate multiculturalism by sustaining the diverse cultural practices and identities providing students with expanded possibilities of engaging in different cultures. With multicultural competence and experiences, students can rework their cultural identities and practices based on their heritage cultures and other cultures they experience in their social environments. As a culturally sustaining approach is still new, there is a lack of empirical studies on how to practically harness this approach in PHE contexts.

This study, by using interpretivist phenomenological analysis, aims to explore the lived experiences of PHE teachers to examine how teachers incorporate students' diverse cultures as sources and means to support newcomer students' processes of acculturation and identity exploration in culturally sustaining ways. The overarching research question is: how do PHE teachers approach and engage in CSP to promote positive experiences among students in their acculturation and identity exploration? Focus group interviews, email correspondence, textual documents, field notes, and self-reflective journals will be used for data collection. Thematic data analysis will be used to identify, analyze, organize, and interpret themes relevant to the research questions.



## **Addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action through Physical Activity, Sport and Health Promotion Research**

*Brittany McBeath (Queen's University)*

*Dr. Lucie Lévesque (Queen's University)*

*Dr. Leah Ferguson (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Brittany Wenniseríostha Jock (McGill University)*

Published in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has outlined 94 Calls to Action that can be used to address the legacy of colonialism in Canada. Through this discussion panel, we will critically appraise current work toward achieving the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action that apply to health and sport. We will also provide insight into strategies to further advance these calls as guided by the 5 R's of Research Framework - Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility, Relevance and Reflexivity (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Kovach, 2009) as employed by each panelist in their work as community-engaged Indigenous and ally scholars. Each panelist will share examples unique to their research landscapes.

Our discussion will be informed by the unique perspectives of four panelists including:

Brittany McBeath who is of mixed Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk) and Scottish ancestry brings the perspective of a graduate student trainee working in the field of Indigenous health promotion, cultural safety and community mobilization for chronic disease prevention.

Dr. Leah Ferguson is of Métis and mixed-settler ancestry who, through her sport research, works with Indigenous athletes to promote positive sport experiences and wholistic wellness outcomes. Leah brings the perspective of a mid-career academic working in the field of sport research.

Dr. Lucie Lévesque who is of mixed French-Canadian and Irish ancestry brings the perspective of a senior academic working in the field of implementation science, health promotion and physical activity.

Dr. Brittany Wenniseríostha Jock who is Kanyen'kehá:ka (Mohawk) brings the perspective of an early career academic working in the field of nutrition, food security and Indigenous health promotion.

## **A Qualitative Study of the Relationship Between Awe, Spirituality and Connection to Nature using a Phenomenological Approach and Photo-elicitation Techniques**

*Bridget McClarty (Simon Fraser University)*

The intent of this study was to identify what it means to have a meaningful or spiritual connection to nature and the role of awe in such a connection. Participants were recent graduates of a university outdoor recreation program. The study used a phenomenological approach and photo-elicitation methods. An online platform (Zoom) was used to conduct, record, and transcribe semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis of the data revealed six prominent themes: connection to self, connection to others, connection to place (presence), connection to the universe (spiritual), awe, and well-being. The results indicated that awe facilitates feelings of connection, and feelings of awe and connection increase our (spiritual) well-being.

## **Much the Same or Radical Change? The Case for a Multi-Sectoral Approach to Quality PE** *Steve McGinley (University of British Columbia)*

The purpose of this study is to better understand the intricate relationships and collaborative efforts of stakeholders taking a multisectoral approach to the promotion and development of physical literacy (PL) and physical activity (PA) in schools. Recently, a group of provincial (British Columbia) and national (Canada) healthy school, physical education (PE), and PL champions, teachers, and expert stakeholders came together to adopt a multisectoral approach to guide, advise, develop, and deliver a school-based health promotion initiative being prototyped for British Columbia (BC) elementary K-7 teachers in schools (hereafter called the School Physical Activity and Physical Literacy (SPA-PL) project). With this in mind, the overarching research question is: How are multisectoral partnerships developed, implemented, and sustained in promoting and developing physical literacy (PL) and physical activity (PA) within schools?

This research will explore the SPA-PL stakeholders' perceptions of how successful the SPA-PL project was as a multisectoral collaboration in supporting K-7 teachers in promoting and developing PL and PA within schools. As well, this research will analyze the SPA-PL project with the goal of filling a current gap in the literature with an understanding of the essential ingredients in a successful multisectoral approach to promoting and developing PL and PA in schools.

This presentation will provide an overview and current progress of the research including: a scoping review of the promotion of health, physical activity and physical literacy in schools, data collection and data analysis will be presented.

## **Post Covid Health and Teaching Realizations and Changes Regarding PHE** *Julia Nord-Leth (University of British Columbia)*

The Covid-19 pandemic triggered significant changes in the realm of Physical and Health Education (PHE) within schools globally and in particular in British Columbia. Teachers had to shift to distance teaching, adapt new hygiene measures, embrace outdoor learning, accommodate changing class sizes, all the while emphasizing their student's overall well-being. The goal of this study is to examine PHE curriculum and teaching methodologies used following the pandemic, to further enhance teaching and learning within PHE contexts. Within this examination there is a specific emphasis on better understanding how educators are focusing on students' physical and mental health. The study will draw from interviews with secondary PHE specialist teachers and middle school teachers in British Columbia as a way to learn what and how educators are now taking away from what they might have learned during the Covid-19 context.

In early days of the pandemic, physical activities and time spent outside were key to population health and wellbeing. However, post-pandemic research indicates that the lockdown experience had detrimental effects on physical literacy skills development. As a result, greater emphasis and integration of physical literacy skills and health education are needed to support students' wellbeing. In particular, research reveals that students need more autonomy within PHE programs to have meaningful and applicable engagement. This study aims to explore how and what PHE educators are doing now to support and improve students' physical literacy skill development and students' mental well-being.

In conclusion, at the time of the pandemic. Topics such as social justice, mental health, student autonomy and outdoor learning became central themes in PHE. This study aims to better understand how the pandemic-related changes to education are now being used to promote a holistic approach to education, with a particular focus on maintaining mental and physical well-being through PHE.

### **B Active: “We Built this Community”**

*Nathalie Rheume (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Emily Humbert (University of Saskatchewan)*

High school students who identify as female, both need and deserve the opportunity to receive the wide range of physical, social, and emotional benefits derived from participation in physical activity. The 2020 Participation report card noted that at all stages of life, females are less active than males. “B ACTIVE” was created to answer the need for equitable and accessible physical activity programs for high school students during the school day (outside of phys-ed classes). This student led program is offered in one core community high school in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

B ACTIVE provides opportunities for female high school students to participate in lunch hour activities that enhance their physical fitness, knowledge of nutrition, and mental health. The mission of B ACTIVE is to provide a safe, comfortable, and fun space for participants to develop their wholistic health and well-being. A student leadership council plans and implements ten events during the school year. The B ACTIVE program has been offered for three years, and all involved felt it was time to evaluate the program. A case study methodology was used to better understand the experiences of all involved in the B ACTIVE program. To gain this understanding, a student researcher spent six months as a participant observer in the B ACTIVE program. Data was also collected through document analysis, participant survey, individual interviews with current and past participants, student teachers and the teacher who co-created and supports the program. Data was analyzed by following Braun and Clarke’s (2022) guide to reflexive analysis. The analysis identified the following themes: (i) The importance of creating a safe and comfortable space for females of all abilities, cultural backgrounds and interests, (ii) A sense of building and belonging to a community that supports females, (iii) The impact of B Active on the school community.

### **Meaningfulness in CEGEP PE**

*Krista Smeltzer (Université de Sherbrooke)*

CEGEP physical education (PE) is uniquely situated to move students along their physical literacy journey by supporting meaningful activity experiences. Despite mandatory PE classes, there is a high percentage of inactive students. While research has identified why CEGEP students are inactive, there is a need to explore how students can buy into and value physical activity as a central component to enhance the quality of their life. To facilitate this study Meaningful Physical Education (MPE) (Fletcher, Ní Chróinín, Gleddie, & Beni, 2021) was used as a lens to understand how students and teachers perceive meaningfulness in CEGEP PE. Specifically, the study explored student perceptions of significant experiences during CEGEP PE; examined whether the features of MPE were consistent or differed from those identified in elementary and secondary PE; and considered how teachers planned, delivered, and assessed for meaningfulness.

Participants in the study included 200 CEGEP students, two teachers, and the teacher-researcher. This study used a mixed methods design. Student questionnaires measured the extent of the five MPE features in CEGEP PE. The constant comparative method was used to analyze emerging themes from a purposive sample of student self-engagement assessments, student field texts, and teacher interviews.

Preliminary results indicate that all all 5 features of MPE are present in CEGEP PE, with a greater emphasis on personal relevance. Teacher interviews revealed that planning, delivery, and assessment are deeply rooted in fostering long-term physical activity potential, autonomy, fun,

self- and fitness- related knowledge, and prioritizing physical activity as agents to promote meaningfulness. This study has the potential to contribute valuable insight into how meaningfulness can be fostered at the CEGEP level, while expanding current knowledge about specific pedagogies and strategies that enable the prioritization of MPE in CEGEP curriculum.

### **Supporting Teacher Wellness and the Implementation of Movement Integration in the Classroom**

*Kristina Sovoloewski (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Marta Erlandson (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Alexandra Stoddart (University of Regina)*

*Dr. Lee Schaefer (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Louise Humbert (University of Saskatchewan)*

Only 28% of Canadian children and youth are meeting Canada's physical activity (PA) recommendations. In response to this, researchers and educators have developed movement integration (MI) opportunities to bring PA into the classroom. However, many teachers face intrapersonal barriers to implementing MI directly in their classroom. Currently, teachers are experiencing higher levels of occupational stress and burnout which has detrimental effects on their health and wellbeing, job performance, and retention within the field. With high demands placed on teachers, they may not have the opportunity to enhance their own health and wellbeing, and the research suggests if teachers value their own PA, they are more likely to implement MI opportunities for their students (Webster et al., 2015).

The purpose of this research is to determine if enhancing teachers' own PA, health, and wellness prior to a job-embedded MI intervention results in greater impact on student outcomes. Although the overall project will have three phases, this presentation will focus on phase one. For phase one, teachers will participate in a behaviour change intervention consisting of two 20-minute sessions per week over 8-weeks with the first session focusing on theory-based learning guided by self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977) and the second session being movement-focused. Teachers will be asked to complete questionnaires before and after the intervention and invited to a focus group interview regarding their experiences with the behaviour change intervention and if their behaviour and value of PA as well as their willingness to use MI in the classroom changed overtime. Participants will be able to review their own transcript from the focus group discussion. Phase one is currently ongoing and results will be presented. Supporting teachers to improve their own health and wellness may significantly impact the health and PA behaviours of students as well as teachers' pedagogy for PA promotion.

### **What is the Influence of Music on Performance in Practice and Competition Among University Competitive Fencers?**

*Tamara Tait (Brock University)*

Fencing as a sport and music as an expressive form are two topics that may seem very distant in comparison, but both have many aspects that are intertwined. The purpose of this study was to understand how music is used within practice and competition settings and how rhythm, tempo, and timing in fencing might be influenced by music. This study used grounded theory and its three-phase grounded theory analysis and applied a social-constructivist lens. The research question was: What is the influence of music on performance in practice and competition among university competitive fencers? The participants were interviewed using semi-structured

interviews and the researcher kept retrospective notes on observations as an insider to the fencing community.

The main findings were split into two groups that included practice and competition. Practice music influence showed that music was used to increase motivation but could also cause distraction from the practice. It also showed how one learned to develop fencing rhythm using music, and how auditory cues from music and from saying sounds that correspond to physical movements help with the development of timing. Other findings were that fencers have practice structured around the way they learn, moving from learning in parts to wholes or easy to complex. Also noted was that each weapon has its own style that is free to be discovered and developed. Competition music influence was discovered to be almost non-existent and due to external stressors, fencers tend to not be aware of what their body is doing. Also, partner rhythm within a competition is difficult to manipulate as both opponents are trying not to follow each other's footwork. Music seems to have an influence on those who use it to their advantage, but is connected to the athletes, coaches, and their way of learning.

### **How did they get here?: Insights from post-secondary Indigenous student-athletes**

*Megan Tomy (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Lee Schaefer (University of Saskatchewan)*

Meaningful physical education (PE) and physical activity (PA) experiences are essential to develop physical literacy into adulthood (Giblin et al., 2014). After conducting a literature review, it is clear many Indigenous students do not have meaningful experiences in PE and PA (Halas, 2004). This is partly to do with historical colonization practices brought on by the Canadian government that created long-lasting impacts on Indigenous education and PA. The impacts of colonial logics can be seen in multiple facets of Indigenous life (see TRC Calls to Action). One study revealed only 21% of Indigenous adults were engaging in 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous PA during weekdays (Young & Katzmarzyk, 2007) compared to 49.2% of non-Indigenous adults meeting 24-hour movement guidelines (Statistics Canada, 2021). A study conducted in Saskatchewan showed only 7.4% of Saskatoon Tribal Council youth met PA guidelines (Lemstra et al., 2012). To better understand Indigenous PE and sport experiences, we need to understand the barriers, and most importantly, facilitators to sport and PA that Indigenous youth experience.

My proposed research will be a 2-phase study around better understanding the experiences of Indigenous post-secondary student athletes and more specifically attending to questions surrounding what facilitated Indigenous student-athletes' participation in sport and their trajectory toward being post-secondary student-athletes? In Phase 1, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with six Indigenous post-secondary student-athletes, that will be transcribed and reflexively thematically analyzed (Braun & Clark, 2006) to understand their temporal experiences with PE and PA. Phase 2 will consist of two subsequent focus groups with the student-athletes to discuss themes that emerged from the interviews. Better understanding the participants' experiences and facilitators that supported their pathways to becoming university athletes will help in better understanding how we may enhance PE and sports opportunities for Indigenous youth to engage in meaningful movement opportunities.

## **Meaningful Play and Active Learning: Easy-Play Model as an Innovative Approach to the Enhancement of Academic Learning and Well-being in Early Childhood Education**

*Isabella Villeneuve (Brock University)*

*Dr. Chunlei Lu (Brock University)*

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Easy-Play Model (EPM) as an innovative approach to reconceptualizing early childhood education (ECE) in order to foster academic learning and well-being simultaneously. The EPM is a learner-centred play approach featuring autonomy, enjoyment, inclusiveness, optimal challenge and unlimited ways of play (AEIOU). This model helps students to engage in enjoyable play-based activities that nurture both academic growth and overall well-being (Lu, 2023). As a comprehensive framework for play-based learning and well-being in school, home, and community, the EPM marks a significant stepping stone in the ECE development. It promotes active learning and active living through play, nurturing a love for meaningful play and deep learning (Fullan, 2021).

Aligning with established ECE approaches (e.g., play-based learning), play is embraced as a natural and essential means for children's development. This study is of educational importance, as it introduces a novel framework that holistically develops both student academic learning and well-being. Nonetheless, the EPM does not seek to replace existing ECE frameworks; but rather integrate into and enrich the theoretical foundation of ECE (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; Piaget, 1985) and inquiry-based learning (Dewey, 1938; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). Its practical significance lies in offering educators tangible tools to co-learn and guide their daily practice for the holistic development of students. The strategies to implement the EPM in ECE include teachers' comprehensive understanding of the importance and the framework of this model, teachers' role change (e.g., leader, facilitator, guide, co-learner), students' role change (e.g., drivers of their own study), and working relationships with guardians. Additionally, implications for theory, practice, and future research directions are also discussed. In conclusion, the EPM appears to be promising in the reconceptualization of ECE, offering a comprehensive and versatile approach to enhancing student academic learning and well-being.

## **A Scoping Review of Culturally Responsive and Wholistic Wellness Indigenous After-School Programs**

*Derek Wasyliv (McGill University)*

*Dr. Lee Schaefer (University of Saskatchewan)*

Indigenous populations within Canada continue to demonstrate resilience, strength, and perseverance despite a long legacy of colonialism (TRC, 2015). The systematic implementation of policies and procedures over centuries continue to infringe upon Indigenous social, economic, political, educational, and health systems (Castleden, Morgan, & Lamb, 2012). To combat these pervasive societal problems, Indigenous and allied scholars recommend focusing on prevention and fostering environments that support Indigenous youth development and in turn positive health outcomes (Ferguson et al., 2021).

Thus, this study utilized the Arksey and O'Malley framework (2005) to conduct a scoping review aimed to better understand how culturally responsive spaces and after-schooling programming can be co-composed to promote wholistic wellness amongst Indigenous youth (Delormier & Marquis, 2019; Tai Rakena, 2021). We explored national and international research examining Indigenous health outcomes (physical, social, emotional, spiritual) associated with after-school programming. Our review was guided by the following two research questions: 1) How do current Indigenous after-school programs develop the wholistic wellness of Indigenous

youth? 2) How have Indigenous after-school programs been conceptualized through Indigenous ways of knowing to better promote wholistic wellness?

Five electronic databases were searched and a total of 3814 eligible articles were identified for review with a total of 45 articles meeting initial inclusion criteria and a total of 9 articles fitting full inclusion criteria. Through thematic analysis, five major themes were identified: 1) Importance of relationships; 2) Importance of fostering an environment of belonging; 3) The importance of valuing youth voice; 4) Importance of flexible community centered programming and research; and 5) Utilizing a strength-based approach for cultural resurgence in programming. This presentation will delve into these themes with the intent to provide the audience and pre-service physical education teachers with insights on how culturally responsive PE programs may be co-constructed to benefit the wholistic wellness of youth.

### **Navigating the Ethical Space: Embracing Community-Based Participatory Research and Collaborative Autoethnography in Physical Health Education Teacher Education & Physical Education Programming**

*Derek Wasyliv (McGill University)*

*Dr. Lee Schaefer (University of Saskatchewan)*

*Dr. Alex McComber (McGill University)*

Research has historically been conducted on Indigenous populations rather than with Indigenous peoples (Smith, 2021). Specifically, Indigenous people within Canada have been and continue to be plagued with unsustainable wellness programming and oppressive research practices. These practices have often been cited as ‘helicopter’ approaches which reflect the fact that an extensive body of health-related research has been conducted about Indigenous populations around the world with little impact on their overall well-being (Cochran et al., 2008). In an attempt to reconcile these past research atrocities and move forward in a good way, the last two decades has seen a shift in research ethics and focus on ethical research methodologies. (Battiste, 2019).

The purpose of this study was to use a culturally responsive approach to inquire into how a non-Indigenous allied researcher developed relationships and respectfully negotiated entry into the Indigenous community of Kahnawake alongside the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Program. This study focuses on how we collaboratively co-composed culturally responsive programming and research related to physical education, diabetes prevention and wellness programming. Operating within a community based participatory research (CBPR) framework we utilized collaborative autoethnographic (CAE) and collaborative analysis to engage in conversational method (storytelling) alongside an Indigenous knowledge holder. CAE is a qualitative method that adopts working within a community of researchers to collectively collect, analyze, and interpret autobiographical materials to better understand a certain sociocultural phenomenon (Chang, Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2012). This collaborative inquiry highlights the ethical CBPR research process and the complexities which arose when attempting to interweave Indigenous and Eurocentric approaches into physical education and wellness programming.

By sharing our experiences, we hope to help produce a metaphorical road map of usable knowledge for pre-service teachers and educators interested in ethically engaging with Indigenous communities; as well as those engaging in academic-community based collaborations, projects, and research.