

1-1-2004

## Designing and researching a youth development model for physical activity participation

Jan Wright

*University of Wollongong, [jwright@uow.edu.au](mailto:jwright@uow.edu.au)*

Stuart Woodcock

*University of Wollongong, [stuart.woodcock@mq.edu.au](mailto:stuart.woodcock@mq.edu.au)*

Jeanette Webb

*Department of Sport and Recreation*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/edupapers>



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Wright, Jan; Woodcock, Stuart; and Webb, Jeanette: Designing and researching a youth development model for physical activity participation 2004, 176-197.  
<https://ro.uow.edu.au/edupapers/197>

## DESIGNING AND RESEARCHING A YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Jan Wright  
Stuart Woodcock<sup>1</sup>

Jeanette Webb<sup>2</sup>

### Statement of the Problem

The project to be described in this paper was originally conceived in the context of research that points to depression as a major factor influencing the health and well-being of young women (Biddle 1995; Yarcheski 2001) and other research that suggests a relationship between participation in physical activity and improvements in the protective factors associated with depression. In the literature which investigates the relationship between physical activity and mental and emotional well-being, there are two main themes: firstly, that participation in physical activity has psychological benefits such as deep physical and mental relaxation (Morgan 1985, cited in Brehm and Iannotta 1998), improved body image (Brehm and Iannotta 1998), positive emotional well-being (Butler and Steptoe 1996) and positive self-perceptions (Biddle 1995; Hadley, Ginther-Wang and Scharck 2002); and secondly, that participation in physical activity can improve depressive symptoms (Dishman 1995; Lane and Lovejoy 2001; Salmon 2001) or that those with depressive symptoms are more likely not to be active (Allgower, Wardle, and Steptoe 2001). Despite the statistical associations that have been demonstrated in this literature, there has been very little investigation of what it is about physical activity or what kinds of activities might

improve young women's emotional well-being, nor whether the good feelings which might follow immediately upon an enjoyable and rewarding activity are sustainable. The project that we begin to describe in this paper seeks to contribute to this understanding. By way of framing the larger project, we have begun by looking beyond epidemiological and psychological research to literature that seeks to understand the experiences of young people as they engage in physical activity and thereby taking up research questions which take account of embodied identities and the ways these influence social and interpersonal relations.

Empirically the project is intended to document the impact of a community-based physical activity program on young women's emotional well-being as determined by a range of qualitative and quantitative indicators. The first phase which will be reported in the paper, is focused on investigating and designing a workable program of physical activity for young women.

### Literature

In the academic literature, there is now a considerable analysis from a wide range of perspectives which takes as its focus women's or girls' participation in physical activity. The literature comes from a range of different perspectives and is certainly not uniform in its position. Most of the writing from an epidemiological and/or psychological perspective focuses on the 'problem' of girls and women's participation, that is, on their apparent low participation in physical activity particularly in comparison to their male peers and the deleterious effects to their health that are assumed to follow (e.g. Booth, Bauman, Owen, and Gore 1997).

Psychological and some sociological research has also been concerned with understanding the reasons for girls and women's low participation in physical activity and absence from some forms of

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, Wollongong NSW 2515

<sup>2</sup> Department of Sport and Recreation, Homebush NSW

physical activity (Babb, Biddle et al. 1999; Butcher 1985; Tappe, Duda and Ehrnwald 1989; Trew, Scully et al. 1999). Recent writing from a sociological/cultural perspective has been more interested in understanding women's and girls' experiences of physical activity and the ways in which particular social meanings about sport and physical activity have influenced what women do and don't do (e.g. There has also been some work that has sought to understand the embodied experience of physical activity on the ways in which women feel about themselves and the ways they engage with their world. Theoretically this more recent work has drawn on feminist poststructural theory and/or phenomenology (e.g. Chapman 1997; Daley and Buchanan 1999; Garrett 2002; Gilroy 1989, 1997; Guthrie 1997; Taylor and Toohey 1998; Wright and Dewar 1997; Young 1995).

In most cases, the writing and research on the relationship between physical activity and emotional well-being has remained, as does most academic work, firmly within the bounds of explanation, interpretation of phenomena and critique. While writers have often made recommendations or suggestions for practice, this had rarely moved in to the realms of informed practice. The notable exceptions to this are the pedagogical action research carried out as collaborations between teachers and researchers and the phenomenological and ethnographic studies that describe and interpret existing physical activity contexts. These however are few and far between and have primarily been those motivated by the work of Don Hellison with 'underserved' youth (e.g. Cutworth 1997; Martinek and Hellison 1997; Miller, Bredemeier and Shields 1997).

On the practice side, there are many programs designed to engage young women in physical activity. These programs will be described in more detail below. The point to be made here, however, is that while some of these programs build in an evaluation of their effectiveness, they have neither the resources nor the intention to explore the participants' experiences of the program. They do not and

cannot answer the questions posed above. The purpose of this project then is to design a program based on the principles gleaned from other programs and from the literature, policy documents and from those working in the community with your people, to conduct this program over a sustained period of time and to collect data from a range of perspectives to answer the research questions posed above.

### **An innovative model of working with young people on health issues**

Current community based models of working with young people on health issues emphasise a number of key assumptions. The first and fundamental one is that changes in knowledge and behaviour do not occur when adults alone make decisions about what is best for young people. Young people need to be included 'as partners with adults in decision-making' (National Collaboration for Youth, 2002:1). The Commonwealth Youth Program Policy Statement (CYP 1998) promotes the notion of 'empowerment' for young people where 'empowerment results from people being able to make their own decisions, being aware of the implications of their actions, and taking responsibility for the outcomes' (cited in Ausyouth 2001:7). These, and other proponents of a youth development model, argue for programs which have a focus on a broad 'preparation for the challenges of adulthood' (NCY 2002:1), rather than a focus on youth problems (Pittman, Irby and Ferber 2000 cited in Ausyouth 2001).

This project is designed to bring together areas of health that have remained separate: health promotion programs, aimed at increasing participation of young people involved in physical activity, and community health projects, designed to improve young people's health based on a youth development model. It will address the following goals of the NSW Youth Policy 2002-2006, *Working Together Working for Young People*: 'promote the healthy development and functioning of young people'; and 'provide

services and programs that are responsive to the needs of young people' (p.3).

**Research Plan**

The aim of the first phase is to develop an intervention model designed to engage young women in a physical activity-based program which will enhance their emotional well-being and physical competency, in ways which creates a desire to continue to be involved in physical activity in some form or other. This will involve:

1. Canvassing 'good practice' models of working with young people and specifically young women and identifying their key characteristics.
2. Developing a model of the relationship between physical activity and emotional well-being through:
  - The identification of key elements required to make a change in the emotional well-being, physical competency and self-regard of women through the medium of physical activity.
3. As the basis of (1) and (2) developing a model of practice through:
  - Selection of community youth providers who are willing to be involved in the project; and
  - Collaborations with young people identified as part of the target group for the project to develop the intervention and to plan their role in the implementation
4. Developing a research plan to determine the success of the model through:
  - Appropriate measurements of participants' self-efficacy and emotional well-being before and after the intervention; and
  - Planning for qualitative procedures to collect data about participants' affective responses to the intervention; the ways in which they interpret their participation

This paper will report on the outcomes of the first of these tasks: the canvassing of other programs and the identification of key elements of these programs on which to build a model for working with young people. These tasks were completed by comprehensive detective work using contacts made at conferences and searching the web to identify programs, organizations and articles. Leads were followed up and cross-referenced until detailed information about a wide range of programs and research was compiled. The following

Program Name	Age	Participant Numbers	Location (Country)	Location (Facilities)	Program Length	Program Sponsor(s)
Girls On The Move	13 - 18	14 Girls	Canada	Gym at School	6 weeks (1 per week)	Lady Sport and Terra Breads
Project Hahn	15 - 25	62 Dis. Boys/girls	Tasmania	Wilderness / outdoors	5 day program	-----
NRG In Motion	12 - 16	(25 at once) 60 Girls	Canada	School Hallway / Classroom	Term-time (continuous)	School
Newcastle PCYC 'Breakaway'	13 - 16	28 Youth at risk	Australia	Various facilities	14 wks (each program)	PCYC
Girls On The Move	11 - 13	No Data	Canada	Various Facilities	8 Sessions	-----
Sport England	13 - 21	No Data	England	Various Facilities	Continuous	
Go Girl 2003	12 - 17	381 (2002)	Canada	Various Facilities	1 day per year	United Way Castleridge Community Association
Hamilton Program	10 - 18	Max - 300 (one day)	Canada	Various	3 x 1 day Per year	CAAWS Nike Grant
CPRA Model	10 - 24	No Data	Canada	Various	Continuous	
Melpomene Project	12 - 17	2 groups of 16 girls	USA	Various	6 weeks	<u>Melpomene</u>

table provides a summary of the programs identified and some of the general characteristics of each.

### **Characteristics of existing programs: towards a working model**

#### *Their Purpose(s)*

Given the discursive context in which most work with young people and physical activity is framed both in school and community contexts, it was no surprise that the very large majority of programs canvassed, targeted girls and young women and had as their primary purpose the promotion of a 'healthy lifestyle' for their participants through encouraging their participation in physical activity. Different programs realised this more general purpose in different ways. All not surprisingly aimed at providing an enjoyable experience for their participants. Other project aims included: increasing the physical skill level, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-efficacy of the participants; providing opportunities for 'sampling' activities otherwise not readily available to the participants with some programs specifically including more 'risky' adventure type activities to develop trust and confidence; and providing access to community providers of physical activity. Most programs focused on girls and young women ranging from 10 to 24 years of age. Some programs targeted youth 'at risk' (e.g. Project Hahn and Newcastle PCYC, 'Breakaway' project). These tended to be either targeted at only boys or to comprise mostly boys (Pala 2002; Sveen 1994).

There were few programs which targeted both girls and boys and most of these were after school programs with close associations with the school, rather than being community based. The purpose of these programs was more likely to be to address a perceived 'problem' with the target group only tangentially related to physical activity. For example, the 'social responsibility programs for 'underserved' youth conducted by Hellison and Martinek and others inspired by their work (Cutworth 1997; Martinek and Hellison 1997), and PCYC programs. The programs specifically designed for boys have very clearly as their purpose a 'redemptive' aspect – e.g. the

PCYC (Newcastle PCYC 'Breakaway' Youth In Sport) program working with young offenders (Sveen 1994).

For the purposes of this paper and for the project, we are primarily interested in the community-based programs designed specifically for young women (though not discounting what can also be learned from other programs). From these programs we have been able to build a set of characteristics which from their reporting attract young women to the program, help to maintain their interest and attendance and, where it is possible to know, have good outcomes in terms of enjoyment and sustained participation.

#### **So what have we learned from our review of other programs?**

From a survey of the programs timing seems all important. The majority of the most successful programs with the greatest participation rates were conducted immediately after school – that is, between 3.30 and 6.30 in the afternoon. Weekends seem to be given to other priorities – work, other sporting and leisure commitments, socialising with friends; later in the evening raises problems of transport, safety, commitments to family schedules, homework etc. Directly after school was also a time when facilities were more likely to be available (Taggart and Sharp 1997).

Location was also a key factor as to whether participants could, and wanted, to attend the programs. The programs were conducted in a variety of different places, from school corridors to various leisure and sports locations throughout a district. The most successful programs tended to be those which were able to offer participants a variety of locations and facilities for participation. The cost and availability of transport and the time required to travel to facilities impacted on the participation. Some programs used a range of different facilities to ensure a range of choices for participants both in terms of activities and access (see table) – that is, participants could choose activities on the basis of ease of access as well as

attraction to the activity itself. The number of participants that a program could accommodate was also very much linked to the availability of facilities and the quality of access. For example, one program which had around 30 participants (not all at one time) could only use the classroom and hallway at school as the sports clubs (mainly boys) had the primary use of purpose designed facilities (The Notoriously Rowdy Girls in Motion). So they improvised with what they had. For example, on one occasion they were 'weight lifting with soup cans or resistance bands', and on another occasion they only had the hallway and so invented 'Hallway Tag' (Armstrong 2003).

The Hamilton program, on the other hand, had a variety of facilities to use because the local community was involved in supporting the program and they, therefore, were able to offer many more activities, at easier locations and transport provided. This program had up to 300 participants at one time. The only negative aspect mentioned in reports on the program was the times at which it was offered. The program was three individual days throughout the year, which carried out on a Saturday, which was evaluated as not being the best time for participants (Millar 2000).

The social aspects of the programs emerged as a priority for attracting and sustaining young people's participation in the programs. Successful programs offered ways of participating with friends and meeting new ones, they provided safe, welcoming and supportive environments for participation. For example, KCC (Kitsilano Community Centre) Girls On the Move program's main purpose was to 'foster a sense of togetherness' and when dealing with young women with low self-esteem found that 'it is important to create an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding' (O'Doherty 2002). Moreover including social components within the program was critical in dealing with these issues. Most programs included a social component at the beginning and end and as part of each session, if the sessions continued over a long period.

The nature and mode of delivery of the activities in the program depended on the purpose of the program together with the practical constraints on its implementation. Some programs surveyed the participants' interests before. Some programs (e.g. Go Girl 2003) send out questionnaires at the end of the program (day) for evaluation, and the changes were incorporated into planning for the following year (Cowie 2003). Other programs such as the KCC Girls On the Move program began their program with a group decision-making session (the very first week) where 'the participants were given choices in the types of activities and discussions that would be held'. In response to the participants' input, the organisers of the program then planned the consecutive weeks activities in accordance with their choices (O'Doherty 2002). The two main differences in provision were between those which were intensive one or more days of activities per year (Project Hahn, Go Girl 2003, Hamilton Program) compared to those which were ongoing for one or two sessions a week or month over a period ranging from six weeks to a year (Girls on the Move, Notoriously Rowdy Girls In Motion, Newcastle Police Citizens Youth Club, Girls on the Move 2, Canadian Parks Recreation Association Model)

Research (Hadley *et al.* 2002, Taggart and Sharp 1997) and program evaluations (O'Doherty 2002) suggest that the physical activities most popular amongst adolescent girls (especially youth at risk, Melpomene project), were those which stayed away from the sports typically taught in school programs. Part of the argument is that for young people who do not feel very physically competent, these activities may be associated with negative experiences. In addition, on the basis of their research on the Melpomene Project, Hadley and her colleagues found that activities that were different, that participants had possibly never tried before, and that were more risk-taking were more attractive and the female participants were therefore more likely to 'give it a go' (Hadley *et al.* 2002). In addition, they suggest that novel and more risk-taking activities 'can create an environment where everyone starts at the same place and

where participants can support each other' (Hadley *et al.* 2002: 40). As one example of a program based around these kinds of activities, the Melpomene Project included rock climbing because of the assumption that it would offer a variety of different challenges such as, 'facing adversity', 'conquering fears' and 'discovering the inner strength needed to succeed' (Hadley *et al.* 2002: 40) and would help to develop trust between the participants.

Those programs that were the most successful were the ones that were planned well and involved a number of people within all of the planning stages of the program. For example, one program gave assistants two weeks to organise, advertise, and find donations and sponsors (Girls on the Move), whereas another program had a community meeting once per month leading up to the program and then once per week when the commencement time was near (PCYC 'Breakaway' project). For the 'Breakaway' project people from the community, participants and program organisers planned and organised the program together. Another program rested solely on the commitment to the program by one teacher who dedicated volunteering time (by her or others). Not surprisingly with so little the program became too much for her to handle on her own, and so deteriorated (Project Hahn). For the purposes of a community based program, informed by a youth development model of participation, such as we intend, collaboration and ownership of the program by all of those involved - providers, community workers, participants and so on - will be very important.

The last point to be made is about how to attract young people to the project. Peer marketing seems to be the key with youth programs. Where this information is available it seemed that the young people found out about the programs through 'word of mouth'. Taggart and Sharp's (1997) research found that the best methods in which participants found out about the programs were through: parents finding out for them, friends (word of mouth) and through the local recreation centre. Many of the programs mentioned attracted

participants in various ways including: posters throughout leisure centre facilities (KCC Girls On the Move, Hamilton Project, NRG In Motion), letters to high schools (KCC Girls On the Move, Go Girls 2003), radio advertisements (Go Girls 2003), peer marketing and word of mouth (Go Girls 2003).

The Girls On the Move Handbook (Millar 2000) suggested that when recruiting volunteers to help organise and run the programs for young adolescent women, individuals need to be chosen who can promote strong, positive relationships with the young people in the program and who are committed to the emotional well-being and interests of young people. These are likely to be:

females who are: athletes, coaches, officials, and league organisers; enthusiastic about the program; enjoy working and participating with girls; and are reliable, responsible and respectful of themselves and *others*. (Millar 2000: 33)

In the remainder of the paper we will provide more detail on two examples of programs with young women. The two examples of programs have been chosen because they are both very different programs with different strengths and weaknesses, yet similar objectives.

### **KCC GIRLS ON THE MOVE**

The Girls On the Move program is based in Canada, and is:

based on experiences of communities from across Canada who have implemented programs designed to encourage non-active girls and women (ages 9-18) to participate in recreational

sport and physical *activity*. (Millar 2000: 7)

The program relies on collaboration between the service providers and young women in the communities to determine details of the programs such as activities, timing, cost and other variations. The Kitsilano Community Centre (KCC) *Girls On the Move* program was outlined within the handbook. After direct contact with the program organisers, the information below was sent to us to help us with our research.

The Kitsilano Community Centre (KCC) *Girls On The Move* program was a five week physical activity program which met every Wednesday from 3.30 to 5.00 in the afternoon. The program aimed at reaching girls and young women between 13-18 years of age. There were many purposes of the program. Firstly, the program set out to increase the types of recreational sport and physical activity programs offered specifically for girls and women. Secondly, the program aimed to provide an opportunity for girls and women to have an enjoyable and positive recreation experience while increasing their comfort level in physical activity environments. Finally, the program set out to increase the physical activity skill level, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy of girls and women. The program was run in a local school gym and managed to cover yoga, kickboxing, hip hop, ultimate Frisbee, skateboarding, weight training, aerobics, soccer, volleyball, basketball, tennis and salsa dancing.

Women who were knowledgeable about a variety of physical activities were hired to coach and instruct the participants. Participation was also made attractive by providing the activities free of charge and offering food and prizes and part of the social aspects of the program. Funding helped to cover the costs of providing the activities and various community organisations were canvassed to assist with other expenses. Requests for donations were made in letters to businesses and restaurants, and letters requesting

sponsorship were sent to various sporting agencies. The amount of community support for the program was considerable. *Lady Sport* and *Terra Breads* became their sponsors. Lady Sport provided gift certificates, t-shirts, water bottles, and discounts for the store. Terra Breads provided weekly donations of breads and bakery goods. The structure of the program was very loosely planned to allow for the maximum input from participants, who were offered a variety of activities from which they could choose. The program "emphasised fun, non-competitiveness, and the courage to simply attempt the activity" (KCC Girls On the Move 2002). The participants were recruited primarily through advertising in local newspapers, posters and letters to schools.

One of the main success factors reported for the program was the community support from sponsors and donors. As Kitsilano is a small community, everybody wanted to get behind the program to support it. As stated, "one of the most successful aspects of the program was in discovering the amount of community support that exists for such a program" (O'Doherty 2002: 4). Another success factor was that it was free to participants, and so everyone was able to access the program. Finally the timing of the program between 15.30-17.00 was regarded as an eminently suitable time for participants to be able to attend. Feedback from the participants were "they said that the time of the program was perfect being right after school" (O'Doherty 2002: 8).

However, there were some barriers and challenges to the program, which the coordinators of the program considered may have prevented it from being more successful. Firstly sustaining participation was difficult, participants tended to come in and out of the program, for numerous reasons including "homework, babysitting and other jobs, school activities, and beautiful weather" (O'Doherty 2002: 7). One of their recommendations for this was to run the program continuously instead of segments throughout the year. "This will allow the program some consistency and



dependability. This allows the girls to come out on a drop in basis and whenever they are able to" (O'Doherty 2002: 12). Secondly, finding instructors who could donate their time and skills was difficult, as many did not have the time, or could not do it for free. Because the program was not based anywhere all of the time, communication between the participants and the program assistants and community was challenging as there they had no phone number and answering machine and had to rely on a third party to relay messages back and forth. They did have an e-mail address however many participants had no e-mail address. The project was initiated by Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and Kitsilano Community Centre, however the youth programmers were not in one particular place, thus problematic having one particular place to take the contacts, connections and issues. Thus in their evaluation they concluded that "it would be more efficient and professional to have a line specifically for the program so that when people leave messages, they know that it is the Girls on the Move program that will be getting them" (O'Doherty 2002: 12).

Overall by the time it concluded, the program had reached up to 14 girls aged between 13-18 years of age. Although the barriers mentioned above and lack of facilities had a considerable effect on the running of the program, those involved in the program concluded it successful for the participants, covering all of the aims and outcomes (to a certain degree) of the program. At the time the information about the program was accessed, the program organisers were evaluating and making changes so that they could run the program again in the 'not too distant future'.

### **GO GIRL 2003 PROGRAM**

*Go Girl 2003* program was found through the World Wide Web (see Cowie 2003), and through direct contact the following information was sent to us. The program has been running since 1999 and has

since grown stronger and stronger in the number of participants taking part as the years go on.

The *Go Girl 2003* program was conducted as a one day event for each year that it was held. The last of these at the time of writing was on Saturday November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2002. It ran from 9am to 4.30pm. The program was designed to reach girls and young women between the ages of 12-17 years. There were many purposes of the program. Firstly, the program set out to bring 'together individuals, agencies, educators, sport associations, sponsors and teens to enable young women to address the issues, barriers and challenges associated with participation in sport and physical activity' (Go Girl 2003). The program also aimed to promote the benefits of participation in active pursuits, and to allow adolescent girls the opportunity to address and problem-solve the issues, barriers and challenges associated with participation and sport, recreation and active living pursuits (Go Girl 2003). Finally the program aimed to promote increasing participation rates for the support systems ("to develop and implement a session for either parents/mentors/adult friends of adolescent girls on the benefits of participation and how to access the services" (Go Girl 2003) of adolescent girls. The program was run at a leisure centre with full use of all the facilities for the period of the programs. The activities included: indoor floor hockey, dance, weight training, pilates, wrestling, kick boxing, skateboarding, mountain biking, hip hop, lacrosse, rugby, golf, race walking, boot camp, snow boarding and tai chi.

To organise and run the program a committee was formed consisting of organisers (of the program), members of the community from businesses and community organisations (e.g. sports clubs), former participants from previous *Go Girl* programs, and parents. The committee met on a monthly basis throughout the year, and then held weekly meetings within a couple of months of the event. Funding was obtained from various organisations and individuals who donated their time and resources (e.g. the leisure centre which

donated the whole complex for the day). Funding provided by *United Way*, a company in Calgary, was used to pay for marketing, volunteer and program costs (Cowie 2003).

Participants were recruited through posters, which were placed throughout the community, and by advertising in local community newspapers. Peer marketing was also used to recruit participants and those who had attended in 2001 were asked back to help organise and run the 2002 program.

The program was very structured as it was only a one day event and the number of participants was well into the hundreds. The participants "had the option of choosing between 10-12 hour long sessions 4 times throughout the day" (Go Girl 2003). Two activity sessions were done before lunch and then two were done after lunch. Several activities (more popular ones such as wrestling and weight training) were done several times so all could have a chance to participate in their chosen activities at some point.

From the point of view of the program organisers (the committee), one of the main success factors was the minimal cost to participants (\$10) which included lunch, and the financial support (scholarships) to those who could not afford to pay this amount. Other factors included the commitment and enthusiasm of the committee members and community partnerships which it generated/relied on. Following the one day event, each participant was provided with a coupons booklet, giving them a discount in their chosen activities. This was intended to keep them motivated and involved in the activities they may have experienced for the first time as part of the special event. It also provided a way of determining the ongoing effects of the program, that is, the young women's cashing in of the coupons could be taken as some indication of participation in specific activities.

However, there were some barriers and challenges to the program. Firstly, it was only once per year. It was difficult to determine whether there have been any benefits. This becomes an even more

important consideration given the amount of organisation and planning which went into the one day event. On the other hand the program did reach 381 participants (in 2002) between the ages of 12-17 years of age. Results from the use of coupons booklet in 2002 may provide useful information concerning the participants' behaviour following the event. Participation in the program has increased every year and the organisers were expecting participation numbers in excess of 500 for the 2003 event.

### Conclusion

Our review of these programs has provided us with important information for the development of a model program of physical activity that we can use as a starting point for discussions with youth workers and young people. There are, however, a number of limitations to the information we have gathered, at least for our purposes. The primary focus of the programs for girls and young women was with increasing either short term or long term participation in physical activity, based on the assumption that young women were reluctant participators in physical activity. In addition few of the programs were evaluated for more than an enjoyment factor. The only programs that focused on outcomes beyond participation were those aimed at young people deemed to be 'at risk' and in most cases these were programs designed for young men. These programs were evaluated for their capacity to achieve specific outcomes such as fewer rates of 'reoffending'.

One program that we did not include in the original presentation, because we have only recently become aware of it, is the physical activity program run by the Drug and Alcohol Community Youth Team, (DACYT) which is part of Drug, Alcohol and HIV Services, Illawarra Health Service. The Youth Activity Project was developed by DACYT 'in collaboration with other services as a way of engaging young people into treatment services' (*Youth Activity Program Report 2003: 1*). We have since joined with the DACYT

Team and combining their experience and our information from the literature, we have designed a short program of physical activity on a weekly basis for young women and men who use the local health and youth services. This pilot will enable us to trial the quantitative and qualitative components of the research methodology for a longer and more ambitious program if funding is available.

What we have taken from our review of programs and from the experience of the Drug and Alcohol Community Youth Team is the importance of making each gathering a social occasion where the adults who are present are empathetic and respectful of the young people and who as far as possible do set up regulatory relationships with the participants. Food and transport to the venues, particularly when, as will be the case with the pilot, the young people are not attending mainstream schools were also identified as essential elements. Lastly we concluded that the activities need to be sustained across enough weeks to give participants a chance to become more confident with the activities, whilst not extending for so many weeks that interest began to wain. As far as possible there needed to be choices of activities; and activities that were novel for both female and male participants, so as to help mitigate against the kinds of traditional gender relations and divisions that often characterise mixed sporting activities.

#### References:

- Allgower, A., Wardle, J. and Steptoe, A. (2001) Depressive symptoms, social support, and personal health behaviours in young men and women, *Health Psychology* 20, 3: 223-227.
- Armstrong, D. (2003) *Notoriously Rowdy Girls In Motion*. Unpublished. Calgary.
- Ausyouth (2001) *Youth Development Digest: Annotated bibliography series*, Issue 2, November, Adelaide: Ausyouth.
- Babb, A., Biddle, S., Claxton, C. Gorely, T., Holroyd, R., Kirk, D. and Wang, J. (1999) *The Nike/YST Girls in Partnership Project: Interim Report*, Loughborough: Institute of Youth Sport.

- Biddle, S (1995) Exercise and Psychosocial Health, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 66: 292-305.
- Booth et al (1997) *NSW Physical Activity and Fitness Project*, Sydney: NSW Department of Education Training.
- Booth, M. Bauman, A. Owen, N. and Gore, C. (1997) Physical activity preferences, preferred sources of assistance, and perceived barriers to increased activity among physically inactive Australians, *Preventive Medicine* 26: 131-37.
- Brehm, B. and Iannotta, J. (1998) Women and physical activity: Active lifestyles enhance health and well-being, *Journal of Health Education* 29, 2: 89-92
- Butcher, J. (1985) Longitudinal analysis of adolescent girls' participation in physical activity', *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12: 130-143.
- Butler, N. and Steptoe, A. (1996) Sports participation and emotional well-being in adolescents, *The Lancet* 347: 1789.
- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (2002) *CPRA National Youth At Risk Pilot Project Initiative*. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.cpra.ca/cpra-new/youth/youth.htm>
- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (2003) *Impact and Benefits of Physical Activity and Recreation on Canadian Youth-At-Risk*, Unpublished, Canadian Parks and Recreation Association.
- Chapman, G.E. (1997) Making weight: Lightweight rowing, technologies of power, and technologies of the self, *Sociology of Sport Journal* 14, 3: 205-23.
- Cherlet, J. (2002) *Increasing Participation: Getting Inactive Girls and Women Active*, Unpublished, Manitoba.
- Cowie, H. (2003) *Go Girl 2003 Program*. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/asrpwf/programs/sports/gogirl/index.asp> (accessed 10/02/04)
- Cutworth, N.J. (1997) What's worth doing? Reflections on an after-school program in a Denver elementary school, *Quest* 49, 1: 130-9.
- Daley, A.J. and J. Buchanan (1999) Aerobic dance and physical perception in female adolescents: some implications for physical education, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 70, 2: 196-201
- Dishman, R.K. (1995) Physical activity and public health: Mental health, *Quest* 47: 362-85.
- Douglas, C. (2003) *Girls on the Move Winter 2003*. Unpublished, Regional District of Nanaimo.
- Garrett, R. (2002) *How young women move: Gender construction and physical activity*. PhD thesis, The Flinders University, South Australia.

- Gilroy, S. (1989) The emBody-ment of power: gender and physical activity, *Leisure Studies* 8: 163-71.
- Gilroy, S. (1997) Working on the body: Links between physical activity and social power, in G. Clarke and B. Humberstone (eds) *Researching Women and Sport*, London: Macmillan.
- Guthrie, S.R. (1997) Defending the self: Martial arts and women's self-esteem, *Women Sport and Physical Activity Journal* 6, 1: 1-28.
- Hadley, S. Ginther-Wang, M. and Scharck, J. (2002) Adolescent girls, abuse and physical activity: Using physical activity to build self-esteem, *Melpomene Journal* 2, 1: 36-50.
- Hellison, D. and Walsh, D. (2002) Responsibility-based youth programs evaluation: investigating the investigations, *Quest* 54, 292-307.
- Kroll, K. (2002) TAAG (Trial of Activity for Adolescent Girls) Not a game: A study to increase activity by adolescent girls, *Melpomene Journal* 21, 13: 12-15.
- Lane, A. and Lovejoy, D. (2001) The effects of exercise on mood changes: the moderating effect of depressed mood, *Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness* 41, 4: 539-43.
- Martinek, T.J. and Hellison, D.R. (1997) Fostering resiliency in underserved youth through physical activity, *Quest* 49, 1: 33-49.
- Martinek, T. and Hellison, D. (1998) Values and goal-setting with underserved youth. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance* 69, 7: 47-52.
- Millar, S. (2000) *On The Move: Increasing Participation of Girls and Women in Recreational Sport and Physical Activity*, Ottawa: Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS).
- Miller, S.C., Bredemeier, B. and Shields, D. (1997) Socio-moral education through physical education with at-risk children, *Quest* 49, 1: 114-129.
- National Collaboration for Youth (2002) Positive Youth Development. Online. Available HTTP: <http://nydic.org/nydic/policypositions/youthdevelopment.htm> (accessed 18/06/02)
- NSW Department of Youth Affairs (2002) *Working Together, Working for Young People, NSW Youth Policy 2002-2006*.
- O'Doherty, T. (2002) *Girls on The Move: Final Report*. Unpublished. Vancouver.
- Pala, P. (2002) *Newcastle PCYC "Breakaway" Youth in Sport Programme: Final Report*. Unpublished.
- Peterson, C. (2002) *Benefits of Recreation: Model Projects Final Report*, Unpublished: Prepared for Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.
- Salmon, P. (2001) Effects of physical exercise on anxiety, depression and sensitivity to stress: A unifying theory, *Clinical Psychology Review* 21, 1: 33-61
- Sport and Recreation New Zealand (2003) *Top Sports and Physical Activities*. Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.sparc.org.nz/research/sports/>
- Sveen, R. (1994) *Project Hahn: Adolescent Participants in a Wilderness-Based Challenge: An Evaluation of a Primary and Secondary Prevention Program* Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.projecthahn.tas.gov.au> (accessed 10/02/04)
- Taggart, A. and Sharp, S. (1997) *Adolescents and Sport (Determinants of current and future participation)*, Perth: Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre.
- Tappe, M.K., Duda, J.L. and Ehrnwald, P.M. (1989) Perceived barriers to exercise among adolescents, *Journal of School Health* 59, 4: 153-5.
- Taylor, T. and Toohey, K. (1998) Perspectives on sport: Voices of women from non-English speaking backgrounds, *ACHPER Healthy Lifestyles Journal* 45, 1: 5-9.
- Trew, K., Scully, D., Kremer, J. and Ogle, S. (1999) Sport, leisure and perceived self-competence among male and female adolescents, *European Physical Education Review* 5, 1: 53-71.
- Wright, J. and A. Dewar (1997) On pleasure and pain: women speak out about physical activity, in G. Clarke and B. Humberstone (eds) *Researching Women, Sport and Physical Education*, London: Macmillan.
- Yarcheski, A. (2001) Outcomes of depression in early adolescents, *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 23,4: 360-375.
- Young, I.M. (1995) The exclusion of women from sport: Conceptual and existential dimensions, in J.W. Morgan and K.V. Meier (eds) *Philosophical Inquiry in Sport*. Champaign, Ill., Human Kinetics: 335-341.