



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Raise awareness of motor skills and physical activity in university education as a basis for a healthy lifestyle of the population



Sensibilizar sobre las habilidades motrices y la actividad física en la educación universitaria como base para un estilo de vida saludable de la población

To the Editor,

We read with great interest the articles by Azahara Fort-Vanmeerhaeghe et al.¹ and Yury Rosales-Ricardo² which provide an important approach to health promotion by considering physical activity and motor competency awareness as fundamental aspects of a healthy and sustainable lifestyle due not only to a broader follow-up by health professionals (especially by the physical therapist), but most importantly because of its effect on the individual's self-awareness.

We believe in the importance of having common objectives for an effective interprofessional intervention within a community, having as a main goal raising awareness in children and adolescents of healthy lifestyles. Therefore the roles played by psychologists and educators (including physical education teachers) are vital in the aforementioned activity by providing students with a space where they can develop and value motor competency.^{3,4}

The Physical Therapy Program at the Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas-UPC, through a course called "Motricity and play", presents an initiative which aims to fulfill common objectives for students of the Psychology, Medicine, Dentistry, Nutrition, and Education programs with a physical therapist as instructor/professor. The physical therapist is capable of providing strategies for early recognition of motor skills,¹ physical activity and developmental dysfunctions, achieving an early and comprehensive approach of a healthy lifestyle in the medium and long term.^{4,5}

In spite of laws and regulations aimed at improving physical activity levels and health conditions, it's important to create awareness of these objectives in university level students. This way, future professionals will be living proof of its benefits and will be able to identify early fields of action for physical therapists in order to improve motor health and create a positive impact in the community.

References

1. Fort-Vanmeerhaeghe A, Román-Viñas B, Font-Lladó R. ¿Por qué es importante desarrollar la competencia motriz en la infancia y la adolescencia? Base para un estilo de vida saludable. *Apunts Med Esport*. 2017;52:103–12.
2. Rosales-Ricardo Y, Orozco D, Yaualema L, Parreño Á, Caiza V, Baragán V, et al. Actividad física y salud en docentes. Una revisión. *Apunts Med Esport*. 2017;52:159–66.
3. True L, Pfeiffer K, Dowda M, Williams H, Brown W, O'Neill J, et al. Motor competence and characteristics within the preschool environment. *J Sci Med Sport*. 2017;20:751–5.
4. Hands B, Chivers P, Grace T, McIntyre F. Time for change: fitness and strength can be improved and sustained in adolescents with low motor competence. *Res Dev Disabil*. 2019;84:131–8.
5. Haugen T, Johansen B. Difference in physical fitness in children with initially high and low gross motor competence: a ten-year follow-up study. *Hum Mov Sci*. 2018;62:143–9.

Giancarlo Becerra-Bravo^{a,*}, María Pía Urgellés-Batalla^b

^a *Licenciado Tecnólogo Medico de la especialidad de Terapia Física y Rehabilitación, Coordinador Académico de la Carrera de Terapia Física en Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC), Perú*

^b *Licenciado Tecnólogo Medico de la especialidad de Terapia Física y Rehabilitación, Directora de la Carrera de Terapia Física en Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas (UPC), Perú*

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: giancarlo.becerra@upc.pe

(G. Becerra-Bravo).

Available online 13 June 2019