



# Physical Activity Behaviors and Barriers among Home Insecure Youth

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## Background

## Activities

## Conclusion

- Almost 19% of 5th grade students were obese in Orange County in 2018.
- Only 24% of U.S. children ages 6-17 meet the national recommendation of 60 minutes of physical activity (PA) a day (Friel, 2020).
- Physical inactivity increases risk of chronic diseases including obesity. (CDC, 2022).
- Childhood obesity can lead to chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, osteoarthritis and gallbladder disease, as well as anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem (CDC, 2022).
- Children diagnosed as obese are more likely to come from economically disadvantaged homes compared to children of normal weight (OC Health Care Agency, 2023).
- Home insecurity decreases the amount of stability an individual has which can prevent them from making healthier choices (OC Health Care Agency, 2023).

Worked with a team to:

- Conduct key informant interviews with Skyview\* staff and teachers.
- Develop and implement student survey on physical activity (PA) behaviors and barriers to PA.
- Develop and implement staff/teacher survey on their observations of students' physical activity (PA) behaviors and barriers to PA.
- Design and implement a PA lesson and numerous fitness activities for K-8th grade Skyview students.
- Consult with Skyview staff/teachers on fitness ideas for students with limited resources.

\* Skyview School in Anaheim, CA, serves home-insecure children of Orange County in grades k-8th who qualify for aid under the McKinney-Vent Homeless Assistance Act to receive the same traditional educational opportunities as non-home-insure students.

- Overall students have a positive attitude toward physical activity & report intentions to become more active.
- Skyview teachers and staff are highly invested in Skyview students' health and wellness.
- Additional resources are needed to provide Skyview students opportunities to be more physically active outside of school.

Lessons Learned:

- Being flexible, patient, and compassionate when working with schools and children is essential.
- Be prepared to make modifications with administration of surveys and/or implementation of curriculum activities as situations can arise that were not planned.

## Outcomes

Behaviors:

- Only 24% of Skyview students (n=27) reported being active 5 or more days per week; the CDC recommends children engage in 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Only 31% of students reported participating in organized sports or activities outside of school.
- Eighty-one percent of students "agree" or "strongly agree" that physical activity is good for their **physical health** and 58% "agree" or "strongly agree" that physical activity is good for their **mental health**.
- Thirty-three percent of students reported they "rarely" or "never" visit a park.



Barriers:

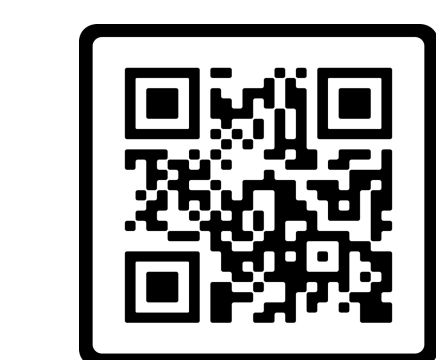
- Twenty-three percent of Skyview students reported they "felt too tired to be active outdoors" and 15% indicated "they had no one to play with outdoors".
- Skyview teachers and staff (n=6) identified the main barriers to students being physically active outside of school as:
  - lack of financial resources,
  - limited off-site, community opportunities (e.g., organized recreational sports),
  - limited space conducive to safe, outdoor play (e.g., parks/green spaces).



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References

## Objective

The purpose of this project is:

- To identify and understand the behaviors and barriers to physical activity among home insecure, low-income youth.
- To consult Skyview School staff on physical fitness activities for student groups of K-2nd graders and 3rd-5th graders.

