

Physical activity counseling: Creation of a unit for students in physical education

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Introduction

The WHO (2015) estimates to 1 million deaths par year due to physical inactivity in Europe. To be able to fight this growing sedentariness it is essential to mobilize every actors of physical activity trough the society. Among them schools and teachers are essentials determinants to encourage children in the adoption of an active lifestyle (Booth, 2001). It is noteworthy that an active child is more likely to remain active in adulthood than another one (ACSM et al., 2015). Thus the promotion of children physical activity at school seems to be a starting point to reduce level of physical inactivity across the society. The teacher of physical education is the cornerstone in this process between children, school and society. Nowadays the impact of physical education on the promotion of an active lifestyle seems really poor. In our project we want to implement a unit aiming to train physical education students (4th year out of five) to be able to advise children and sedentary people. By this way we hope to multiply the number of graduated competent in physical activity promotion and counselling.

Method

The first step of our project is to do a complete review of literature and to contact some experts from France and Switzerland specilaized in physical activity counselling. At the same time we interviewed 15 field professionals supposed to be involved in physical activity promotion in order to identify the essential factors to point out. After that we compare the emerging elements with the students' cursus to get a unit composed by series of new useful concepts directly relevant with the counselling of sedentary people. Afterward we design a formation plan allowing to fill gaps in students' skills.

Discussion

The first results showed that the competences of a physical activity counselor can be split in two categories. On the one hand the physiology and scientific knowledge and on the other hand the social capacity to understand and to react in ordrer to propose some actions suitable for sedentary people. Indeed it is not enough to give some recommendations to children at school or to inactive people. A comprehensive approach centered on the participant is a required condition to succeed in changing the usual lifestyle of the sedentary people.

The content of our training module focus on this second aspect because the students following a master in sport sciences have already enough scientific knowledge to understand the need of a sedentary child or adult body. So a particular emphasis should be set on the management of the motivation, needs, and expectations of the people.

The next step of our project will be to evaluate the impact of the training module on the students in physical education. Meanwhile we will also have to evaluate the impact of the counselling on the active lifestyle of the people who have been advised.

References

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