



VOLUME 2 • DECEMBER 2022

KIDDIE CATS ON THE MOVE NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Winter Newsletter!

We are excited to share new information, updates, and program evaluation findings for the Kiddie CATs project. Thank you to our incredible community partners, teachers, children, and families who make this work possible!

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS IMPORTANT FOR PRESCHOOLERS AND THEIR FAMILIES!

TIPS FROM THE KIDDIE CATS TEAM FOR STAYING ACTIVE THIS WINTER

- Go on a snow hike or walk
- Build a snowman or snow fort
- Have a winter-themed scavenger hunt (find an icicle, evergreen tree, animal track, snowman!)
- Try to limit screen time to one hour or less each day.
- Create a regular schedule for when your family will exercise and HAVE FUN!



CHECK OUT OUR KIDDIE CATS ONLINE VIDEOS FOR MORE FUN WAYS TO MOVE AS A FAMILY THIS WINTER!

Videos include "How To" videos for teaching and practicing motor skills, interactive physical activity story books, and full-length Kiddie CATs program videos. Videos can be accessed for free on our website: <https://www.uvm.edu/catsmove>



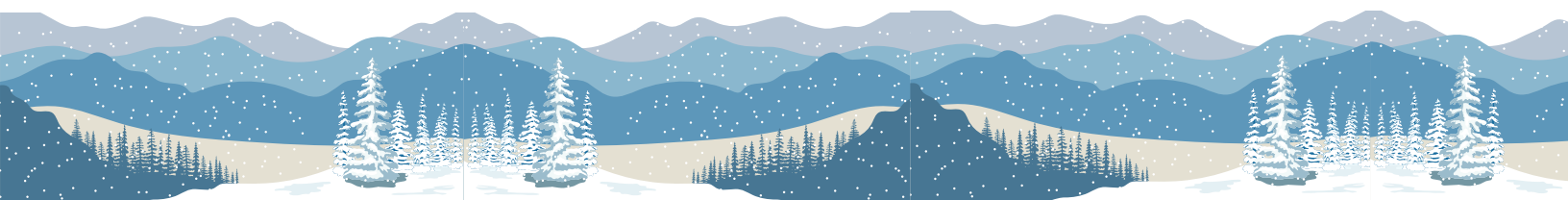
SCAN ME

LOOKING FOR MORE WAYS TO STAY ACTIVE THIS WINTER? CHECK OUT THESE LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES!

- Borrow outdoor equipment (adult and youth snowshoes, molds for building snow castles!) from Fletcher Free Library (Burlington, VT)
- Take a trip to Calahan Park Community Rink (Burlington, VT) or Legion Field (Johnson, VT) for ice skating (including free loaner skates in kid sizes!)

Did you know?

Regular physical activity helps boost your immune system!





LOCAL WINTER ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

- Explore the tunnel of lights at Maple Street Park (Essex, VT)
- Take a hike through the Centennial Woods nature preserve (South Burlington, VT) or the Hard'ack Recreation Area (St. Albans, VT)
- Trek though the Island Line Trail (accessed via Colchester or South Hero, VT)
- Enjoy the playground at Oakledge Park (Burlington, VT)



RECENT FINDINGS FROM OUR WORK (Tompkins et al. 2021)

PRESCHOOLERS' PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ACROSS THE SEASONS

When preschoolers are physically active, they are more likely to experience greater cognitive, psychosocial, and physical health (Carson et al. 2017). The Kiddie CATs intervention was created to help all preschool children participate in higher levels of physical activity to support their development. Past research shows that during the winter, preschoolers are less active as compared to other seasons (e.g., Nilsen et al., 2019; Schuna et al., 2016). UVM researchers wanted to see: Does the Kiddie CATs program help preschoolers to be active across all seasons?

To study this question, researchers put accelerometer belts on children to measure their moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA). MVPA includes activities such as jumping, running, and dancing that make children breathe harder and make their hearts beat faster. MVPA was measured five times during the school year. Three measurements took place during Kiddie CATs intervention times in the fall, winter, and spring. The other two measurements took place in the fall and winter when the Kiddie CATs intervention was not happening.

Results showed that preschoolers' had higher MVPA during the fall, winter, and spring Kiddie CATs intervention times as compared to both the fall and winter non-intervention times. Preschoolers' MVPA levels were lowest during the winter non-intervention time. These findings suggest that programs such as Kiddie CATs are helpful for promoting preschoolers' physical activity, particularly during the winter months when physical activity levels are lower.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN BOYS AND GIRLS

Past research also shows that preschool boys are often more physically active as compared to girls (Nilsen et al., 2019). Findings from the current study revealed that although boys engaged in significantly more MVPA than girls during times of the year when Kiddie CATs was not taking place, there were no significant differences in MVPA between boys and girls during times when they were participating in Kiddie CATs. Thus, it is possible that the Kiddie CATs intervention may help to reduce sex differences in preschoolers' physical activity.

Have questions about what you read or want access to the full research article? Email us at: catsmove@uvm.edu.

Citations

Carson, V., Lee, E. Y., Hewitt, L., Jennings, C., Hunter, S., Kuzik, N., Stearns, J.A., Unrau, S.P., Poltras, V.J., Gray, C., Adamo, K.B., Janssen, I., Okely, A.D., Spence, J.C., Timmons, B.W., Sampson, M., & Tremblay, M. S. (2017). Systematic review of the relationships between physical activity and health indicators in the early years (0-4 years). *BMC public health*, 17(5), 33-63.

Nilsen, A. K. O., Anderssen, S. A., Ylvisaker, E., Johannessen, K., & Aadland, E. (2019). Physical activity among Norwegian preschoolers varies by sex, age, and season. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 29(6), 862-873.

Schuna, J. M., Liguori, G., & Tucker, J. T. J. (2016). Seasonal changes in Preschoolers' sedentary time and physical activity at childcare. *International Journal of Child Health and Nutrition*, 5(1), 17-24.

Tompkins, C. L., Shoulberg, E. K., Meyer, L. E., Martin, C. P., Dennis, M., Krasner, A., Cook, H., & Hoza, B. (2021). Variations in Preschoolers' Physical Activity Across the School Year. *Translational Journal of the American College of Sports Medicine*, 6(3), e000164.

