



Our Research

Can we modify a tried and tested Irish post-primary physical activity programme, and deliver it in NI schools?

Funded 2021-22. Dr Angela Carlin, Ulster University.

Y-PATH is a physical activity programme delivered in the Republic of Ireland. Research shows it's effective. Would it work in NI schools?

Dr Carlin and her team will use the Y-PATH model to develop Y-PATH NI. They will explore how Y-PATH NI works, and what pupils, parents, and teachers think of it. The next step would be to roll out the programme across more schools to ensure that it is effective.

What difference will this research make? The ultimate aim of this research is to develop an effective post-primary programme. Our young people have the lowest levels of physical activity in the UK, and spend the most time sedentary. Only 1 in 10 young people of post-primary age are getting the recommended amounts of physical activity. Regular physical activity can help these young people

improve their fitness and strength, control weight, and can even reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. Importantly, these sorts of programmes help them set up habits that will see them through adulthood. These habits reduce the risk of future cardiovascular disease, and this in turn benefits us all. Ultimately, if Y-PATH NI is shown to be effective, it would become part of the work we deliver in post-primary schools.

Can a successful Australian primary school programme be adapted to suit Northern Ireland?

Funded 2018-19. (PhD funding - Sarah Nally, Ulster University)

Physical activity levels of our children are the lowest in the UK, and these start to drop off at the age of 8-9. Can we get them to be more active and spend less time sitting?

We funded Sarah Nally, a PhD student from Ulster, to develop and test "Sit Less Move More (C-SLAMM)". The C-SLAMM study aims to get 7-9-year-old pupils to be more active in their classrooms and spend less time sitting. C-SLAMM is based on a successful Australian model called "Transform-us". Sarah will explore how C-SLAMM should be delivered, and what pupils, parents, and teachers think of it.

What difference will this research make? Like Y-PATH NI, increasing our children and young people's physical activity levels - and developing lifelong habits - is, for us, a matter of urgency. Ultimately, if C-SLAMM is shown to be effective, it would become part of the work we deliver in primary schools.