

‘Let’s Move It’ – a school-based multilevel intervention to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour among older adolescents in vocational secondary schools: a study protocol for a cluster randomised trial

Globally, adolescents partake in less than the recommended levels of physical activity. In fact, levels of physical activity tend to decline with age and vary by gender. Increasingly, schools are recognised as an ideal intervention setting, as they have the potential to reach the majority of young people as well as represent the place where they spend the majority of their time. ‘Let’s Move It’ is a “complex theory- and evidence-based intervention for vocational schools that includes elements aiming at increasing individuals’ autonomous motivation for physical activity, self-regulation skills for initiating and maintaining regular physical activity and enhancing environment opportunities for reducing sedentary behaviours and increasing physical activity.” Conducted in Helsinki Metropolitan area, Finland, the primary aim of this study was “to determine the effectiveness of the Let’s Move It intervention on changes in students’ physical activity and sedentary behaviours over two months (post-intervention) and 14 months (long-term follow-up)” in specific primary outcome measures.”

Two key outcome measures have been identified:

1. Levels of moderate and vigorous physical activities (MVPA) measured both by accelerometry and self-reported
2. Sedentary behaviours from the perspective of sedentary time and breaks in sedentary time

Let’s Move It was delivered as a universal intervention in order to reduce potential inequalities in access to the intervention as well as potential stigma that might arise. The programme contained three main components:

1. Six intracurricular group sessions, and a later booster session, as well as supporting online and poster materials throughout the study
2. Teacher-led activity breaks and other sedentary behaviour reduction practices in classrooms
3. Increase in other environmental opportunities for physical activity

Given the limited amount of evidence available in this field, to date, “this is the first school-based physical activity intervention specifically targeted at vocational schools and tested in a randomised trial.” Importantly, the study simultaneously addresses individual and environmental characteristics. The recruitment process for Let’s Move It began in January 2015 and is ongoing.

Reference: Hankonen N, Heino MTJ, Araujo-Soares V, et al. ‘Let’s Move It’ – a school-based multilevel intervention to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour among older adolescents in vocational secondary schools: a study protocol for a cluster-randomised trial. *BMC Public Health*. 2016;16(1):451. [doi:10.1186/s12889-016-3094-x](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-016-3094-x)