

A National Survey of the Effectiveness of the KID-FIT Program in Altering Children's Fitness and Knowledge About Health-Related Behavior and Nutrition: 2246: Board #26 May 30 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM [F-21 Free Communication/Poster - Children and Adolescents 1 MAY 30, 2008 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM ROOM: Hall B]

M.A., Michele Silence

Aerobic Fitness Consultants, Arcadia, CA.

Email: michele@kid-fit.com

(M. Silence M.A., Created KID-FIT program, Intellectual Property; Conducted reserach with CSLA professor, Contracted Research; Own Aerobic Fitness Consultants, Ownership Interest.)

PURPOSE: The present study was conducted to examine the physical fitness and health knowledge benefits for Kindergarten age children participating in KID-FIT, a preschool physical education program.

METHODS: This pre-post study recruited 824 Kindergarten and Grade 1 public school children. Fitness level was determined by a 5-part P.E. assessment recording measures of strength, flexibility, endurance, balance and sports skills. Health knowledge was measured by a 28-item questionnaire using illustrations for identification and recall, and a series of 3 drawings done by each child of their internal organs, and healthy and harmful behavior that also allowed for an examination of their cognitive development. All of the children were given the pre-test at the beginning of the school year, but only the Kindergarten students were exposed to the KID-Fit program and tested again at the end of the school year. The data was analyzed first with ANOVA and then Tukey's tests as appropriate.

RESULTS: A significant improvement in physical fitness and in objective health related knowledge was found in Kindergarten children by the end of the study. These improvements placed them at a level significantly above the Grade 1 controls. The KID-FIT program did not affect the children's cognitive development which showed age appropriate progression during the study.

CONCLUSIONS: The KID-FIT program appears to be an effective intervention for helping small children learn healthy lifestyle habits while increasing their physical fitness abilities. Whether these improvements persist, and any other health benefits occur in the children exposed to the KID-FIT program will require further study.

©2008The American College of Sports Medicine