Children's Physical Activity After COVID-19

How can we help children return to physical activity programs?

50% of parents said their children were **less active** during the COVID-19 pandemic

Parents also reported...

52% of children had higher **screen time** on ***weekdays*** (Monday-Friday)

51% of children had higher **screen time** on ***weekends*** (Saturday & Sunday)

DID YOU KNOW?

The ***Canadian Movement Guidelines*** recommended that **children ages 5-17** get

1 hour of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per day

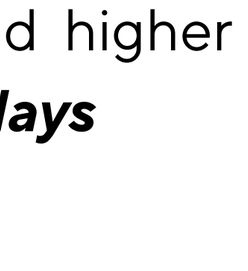
&

2 hours or less of screen time per day, including tv, computers, video games and cell phones.

Parents described four factors that influenced their children's physical activity during the pandemic:

Modifications to everyday life

COVID-19 protocols changed the places, activities and people children could play with on a daily basis



Using outdoor spaces

COVID-19 reconnected families with the outdoors, with some parents viewing outdoor spaces as safe places for play

Access to opportunities

Some factors supported (having trails and parks near home) or limited (expenses) participation in physical activity opportunities

Safety in public spaces

Parents either felt:

1. Comfortable returning to activities since they are important for their children
2. Uncomfortable bringing their children to high-risk places like gyms

How can we help get kids back to their regular physical activity?

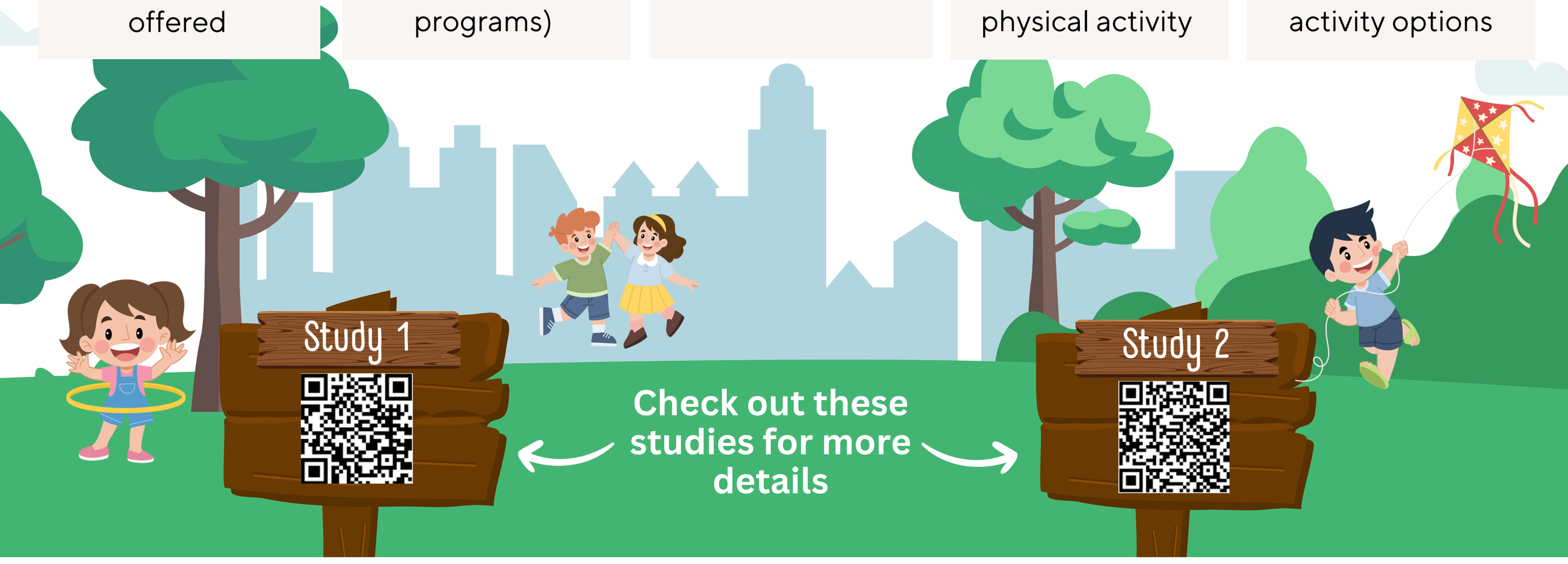
Greater amount and variety of promotions about the programming offered

Encouraging unstructured play (ex. imaginative games, flexible programs)

Adapt activities to meet the needs of children and their families

Offering free and low-cost programs so all children can take part in physical activity

Having programs in a variety of neighbourhoods so children have local activity options



Study 1: Parents' report of Canadian elementary school children's physical activity and screen time during the COVID-19 pandemic: A longitudinal study.

Study 2: Parents' perceptions of their children's physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic

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