

Study: Parents are the biggest obstacle to letting kids play

By Janice D'Arcy, Washington Post

A report on why children in day care are sedentary suggests that it's not the care providers, but the parents, who are mostly to blame.

The study, "Societal Values and Policies May Curtail Preschool Children's Physical Activity in Child Care Centers," will be published in the February issue of Pediatrics and was published online today.

It focused on childcare centers where, according to previous research, close to three-fourths of pre-school-aged America children are enrolled and where they spend only 2 to 3 percent of their time playing vigorously.

Researchers set out to find out why so little time was spent playing. They studied 34 racially and demographically diverse Cincinnati-area child-care centers and found three consistent obstacles to exercise.

Providers told researchers that they felt pressure from parents to keep children from vigorous play that might lead to injury and also pressure to focus instead on academics.

Read the whole story