

# Exploring the Feasibility of *Move&Connect*: Experiences of Youth with Prolonged Post-Concussion Symptoms and their Parents with a Virtual Group-based Interdisciplinary Intervention

Al-Hakeem, H.<sup>1,2</sup> Hickling, A.<sup>1,3</sup> Bardikoff, T.<sup>1</sup> Lam, B.<sup>1</sup> Duplessis, D.<sup>1</sup> Mallory, K.<sup>1,4</sup> Provvidenza, C.<sup>1</sup> Lovell, A.<sup>1</sup> Miller, C.<sup>2</sup> Scratch, S.<sup>1,4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bloorview Research Institute, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Toronto, Canada; <sup>2</sup> Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Windsor, Windsor, Canada; <sup>3</sup> Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada; <sup>4</sup> Rehabilitation Sciences Institute, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada; <sup>5</sup> Department of Paediatrics, University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

## BACKGROUND

- Youth with prolonged post-concussion symptoms (PPCS) experience challenges in physical, social, and emotional domains.<sup>1</sup>
- The health of youth and their caregivers are interconnected.<sup>2</sup> Caregivers of youth with PPCS experience distress and report poor family functioning.<sup>3</sup>
- No interventions are available that address the needs of youth with PPCS and their families.



## INTERVENTION

- **Move&Connect** is an interdisciplinary group-based intervention that provides skills training, social support, and psychoeducation to caregivers, and combines these elements with active rehabilitation (AR) for youth with concussion.
- Intervention has two program arms:
  - **Move&Connect-Youth**
  - **Move&Connect-Caregivers**
- Both arms include weekly one-hour sessions for a duration of six weeks.

## OBJECTIVE

To explore the feasibility and acceptability of the virtual **Move&Connect** program.

## PARTICIPANTS

-  10 youth (9 girls, 1 boy) with an age range between 12-18 years (M=14.5 years, SD=1.58) and were 5 months to 4 years post-injury (M=19.2 months, SD=13.08).
-  9 parents (all mothers).

## METHODS

- **Move&Connect** was delivered to : 2 youth groups and 2 parent groups.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and examined through qualitative content analysis.<sup>4</sup>

**Move&Connect** merges the benefits of social support, physical activity and concussion education to support youth with concussion and their caregivers.

## RESULTS

Intervention Engagement

Perceived Benefits

*Move&Connect* Outcomes

I felt like at the first session when we were doing the exercises, it was kind of hard to keep up, but at the end, it was a lot easier, and now like I'm working out on my own time.



Youth

I really liked the group and the opportunity to connect with other people that were going through the same stuff as me.. I'm super happy I ended up doing it.

You don't know a concussion can last this long, it is nice to know you are not alone and to hear other feedbacks., and how they deal with things.



Caregivers

I think the facilitators kind of hit the nail on the head for the topics that they picked...

- Youth and caregivers valued sharing and receiving advice from facilitators and other peers.
- Caregivers benefited from the psychoeducation.
- Youth reported that AR exercises promoted fitness integration into their daily routines.
- Feelings of validation and confidence were reported following participation.
- Groups found the virtual format convenient, accessible, and a safe space for sharing personal experiences.
- Suggestions to improve **Move&Connect** include providing handouts, resources, and adding new topics.

## CONCLUSION

- **Move&Connect** is a feasible and meaningful virtual intervention for youth with PPCS and their caregivers.

- We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our family leaders with intervention development: Mss. Brenda Knapp & Patricia Knapp. We would like to thank the youth and caregiver participants for their time and research involvement.



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