



# Lay Summary

July 2021

## **Designing user-centered mHealth initiatives to promote healthy behaviours for children with disabilities: A feasibility/pilot study of the Jooay App**

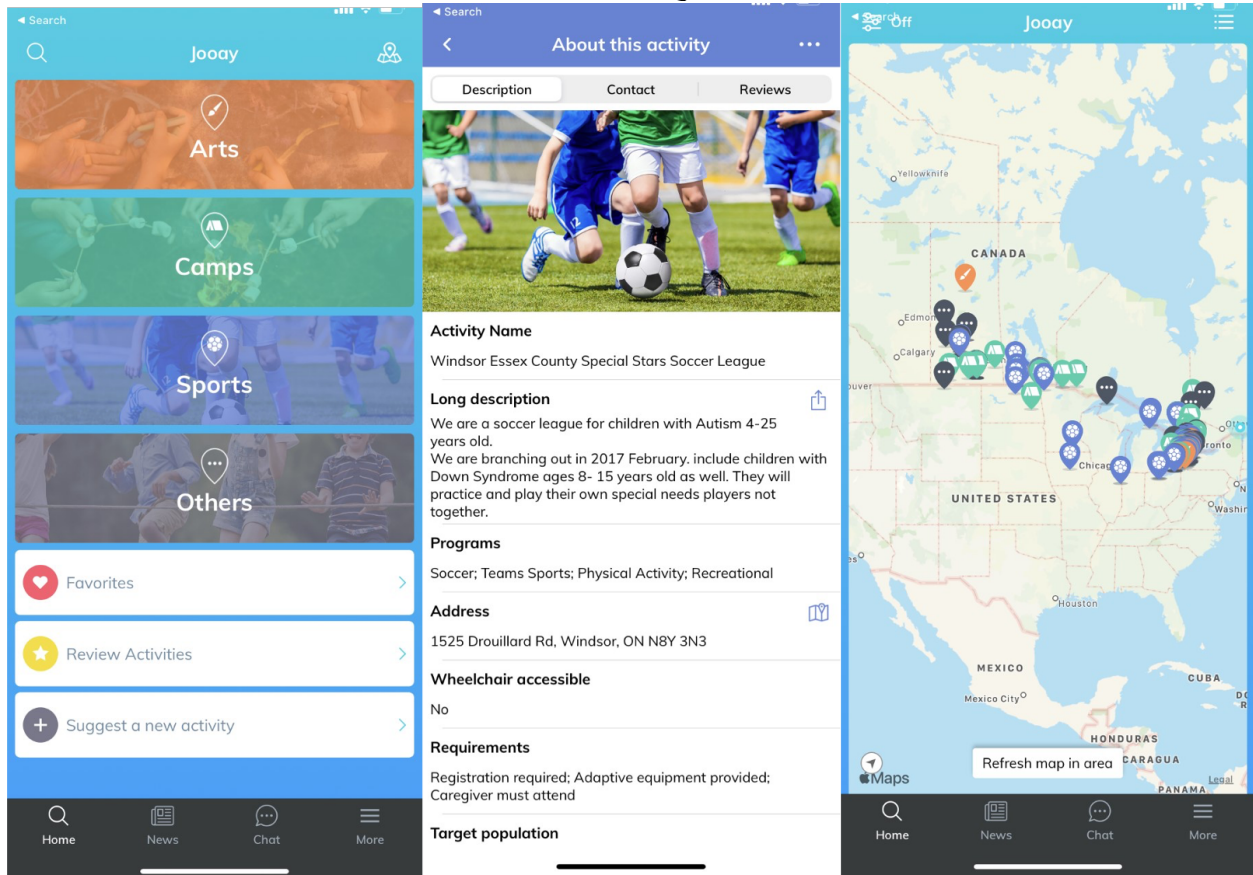
### **Why was the research done?**

There are earlier research studies that tell us participation in leisure activities for children with disabilities is lower compared to children without disabilities. The goal of this study was to try and find a way to make information about inclusive leisure activities easier to access. The hope of spreading awareness of these activities is to increase participation in leisure activities for children with disabilities.

### **How was the research done?**

An app that can be downloaded to your phones was used in this study. The participants were invited to use the app and provide feedback about what they liked about the app or what they would like to see change. Information on the app included: activity description, type of equipment needed, type of disability, cost, and time frame of the activity. Type of disability refers to what kind of disability/impairment the activity is for. This could be physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, or both. Participants were youth with any type of disability, caregivers of children with disabilities, health and education providers, policymakers, and community organization leaders.

Below is an example of a picture of what the Jooay app looks like.



*Figure 1. Images of what the Jooay App looks like. Provided by the original publication.*

### **What were the results of the study?**

When the app was used, there was an increased awareness of different types of leisure activities. The study found that individuals had more knowledge about the activities that exist in the communities in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver. The results of the study also found that it was hard to tell if participation in leisure activities did increase for children with disabilities. The results showed promising results about the app and the authors think it would be helpful to conduct more studies. Future studies should be focused on improving the app and having a way to track participation.

### **What should youth with disabilities and their caregivers know?**

There are lots of benefits of participating in leisure activities within the community. Researchers are trying to find a way to share information about inclusive activities and the app is just one strategy. The app provided a platform that went beyond sharing information about existing activities and resources. The app allowed people with similar life experiences to connect, as well as, increasing awareness about certain medical conditions.

### **Glossary of terms**

1. Feasibility: is the ability for something to be easily carried out successfully.
2. Pilot study: a study done on a smaller scale to prepare for the same study to be done on a larger scale. Typically these studies are done to test the feasibility of the smaller study, so the larger studies will be successful.
3. User-centered design: is where users are included in the designing process and provide their input into, in this case, the app.
4. mHealth: is short for mobile health. Health initiatives are support in the form of an app on your phone.

### **Where can I learn more about this study?**

Shikako, K., Mogo, E. R., Grand-Maison, V., Simpson, R., Pritchard-Wiart, L., Majnemer, A., & Jooay App Research Group. (2021). Designing User-Centered Mobile Health Initiatives to Promote Healthy Behaviors for Children With Disabilities: Development and Usability Study. *JMIR Formative Research*, 5(9), e23877. <https://doi.org/10.2196/23877>