

ALR 101: An Overview of Leisure Studies and Recreation and Park Research related to Active Living

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Outline

- **Overview of the leisure studies field**
- **How recreation and park management influences active living**
- **Examples of studies funded by ALR**
- **Research needs and future studies**

Leisure studies is an interdisciplinary field.

Major Foci:

- Activity/behavior patterns**
- Experience and benefits of leisure**
- Use of leisure environments**
- Leisure contributions to quality of life (e.g., health)**



Leisure studies is an interdisciplinary field.

Perspectives:

- **Psychology (experiential qualities)**
- **Sociology (structure & organization)**
- **Geography (space, place, & impacts)**
- **Anthropology (culture & meaning)**
- **Economics (valuation & impact)**

Provides social science evidence-base for managing parks and recreation areas.



Parks and recreation areas are viable spaces for promoting physical activity.

- Recreation services exist at national, state, county, and local levels of government and in special park districts (Godbey et al., 2005).**
- 70% of adults live within walking distance of an urban park; 80% use them (Godbey et al. 1992).**



Opportunities for physical activity in parks can be shaped by management and policy tools.

- Land acquisition & location (accessibility)
- Use policies (active vs. passive parks)
- Regulations
- Programming
- Pricing
- Marketing
- Safety/risk management
- Law enforcement
- Maintenance (built & natural environment)
- Hours of operation



Along with other elements of the built environment, parks can help make communities “activity friendly.”



Examples of Recent Contributions

Assessment of capacity of parks to generate physical activity facilitated by:

- Development of objective measures of park and recreation environments (e.g., System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities, or SOPARC) (McKenzie, et al. 2006).
- Development of objective measures of physical activity in parks (Environmental Assessment of Public Recreation Spaces, or EAPRS) (Saelens et al., 2006).

Current Projects

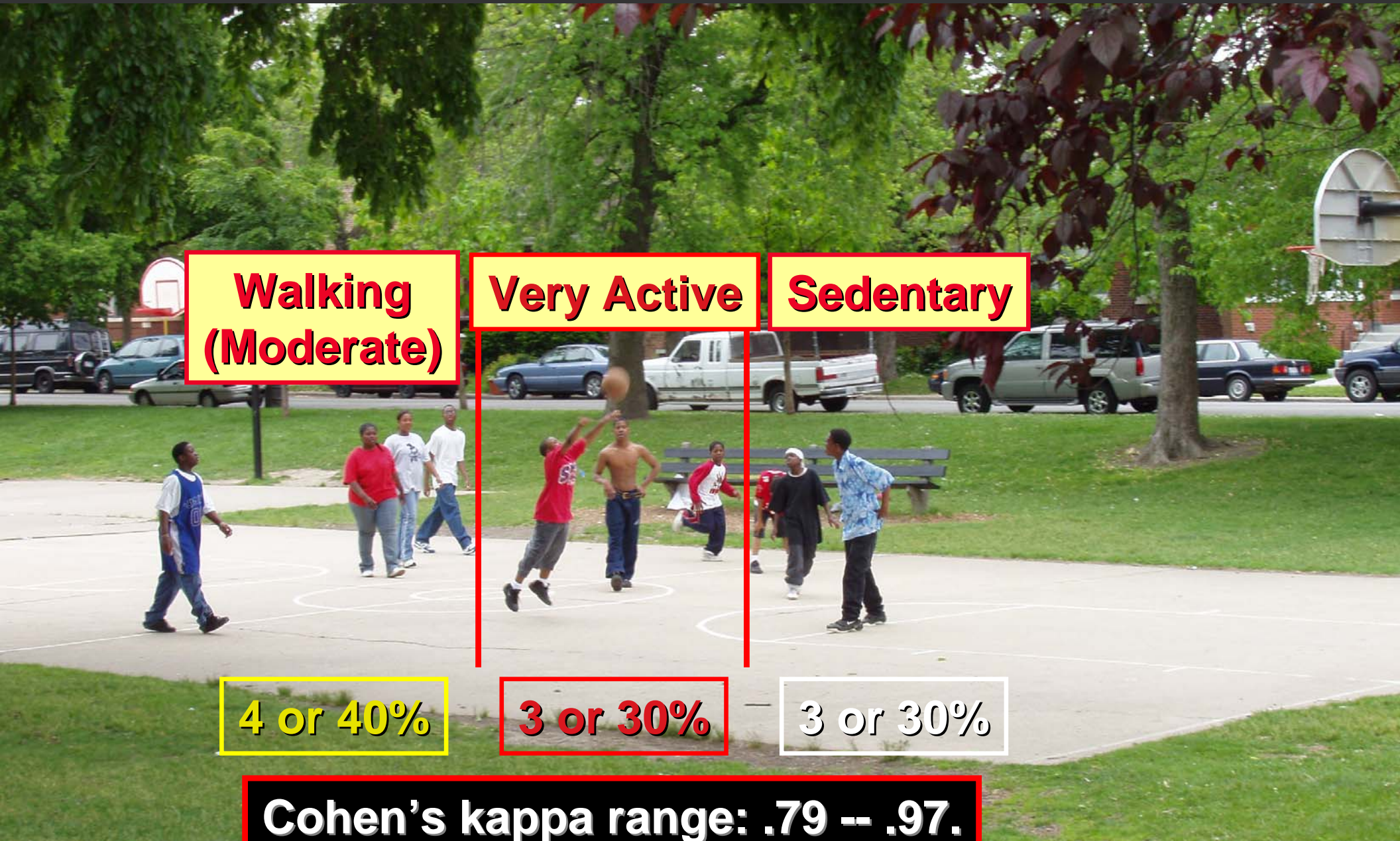
“A Study of Leisure-time Physical Activity in Diverse Communities” (Sponsor: Active Living Research)

- **Project Goal:** Examine neighborhood and environmental influences on physical activity.
- **Disciplines represented:** recreation and parks, public health/epidemiology, landscape and urban planning.

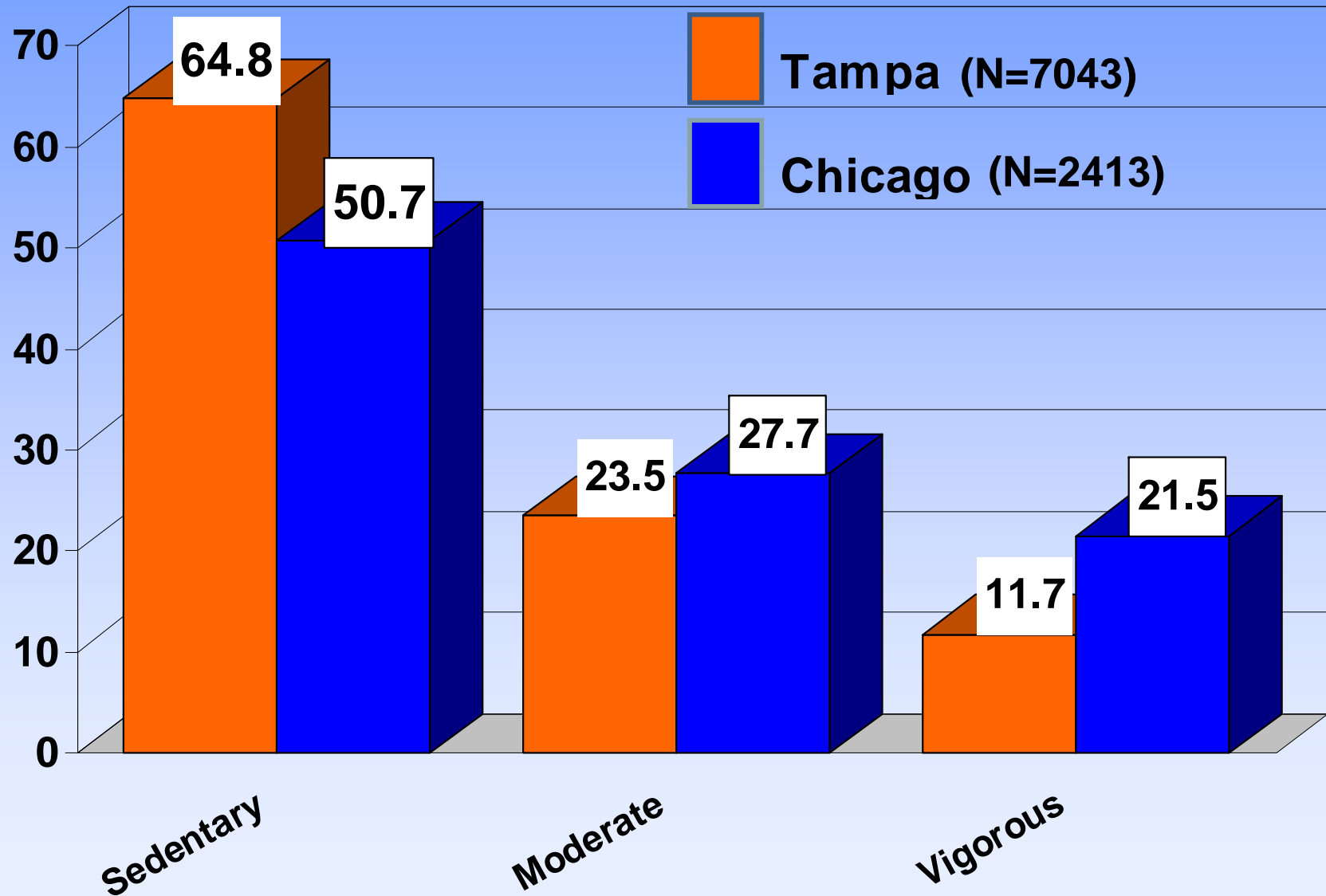
“Investigating Places for Active Recreation for Kids” (Sponsor: Active Living Research)

- **Project Goal:** Examine how park environment influence children’s park use and physical activity.
- **Disciplines represented:** landscape architecture, design, recreation and parks, sociology, GIS

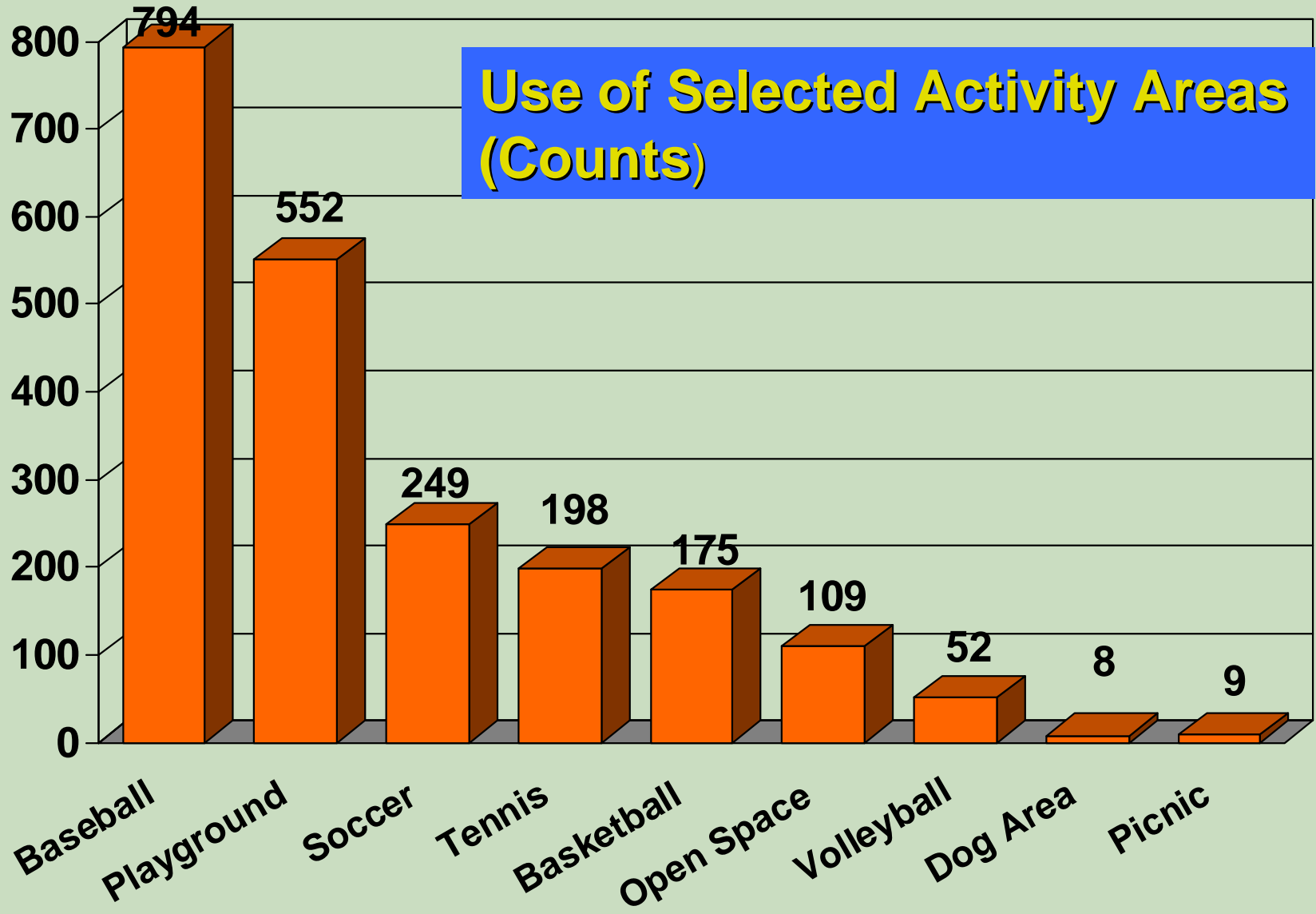
Measuring Physical Activity in Parks using The System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) (McKenzie et al. 2006)



Levels of Physical Activity in Tampa and Chicago Parks

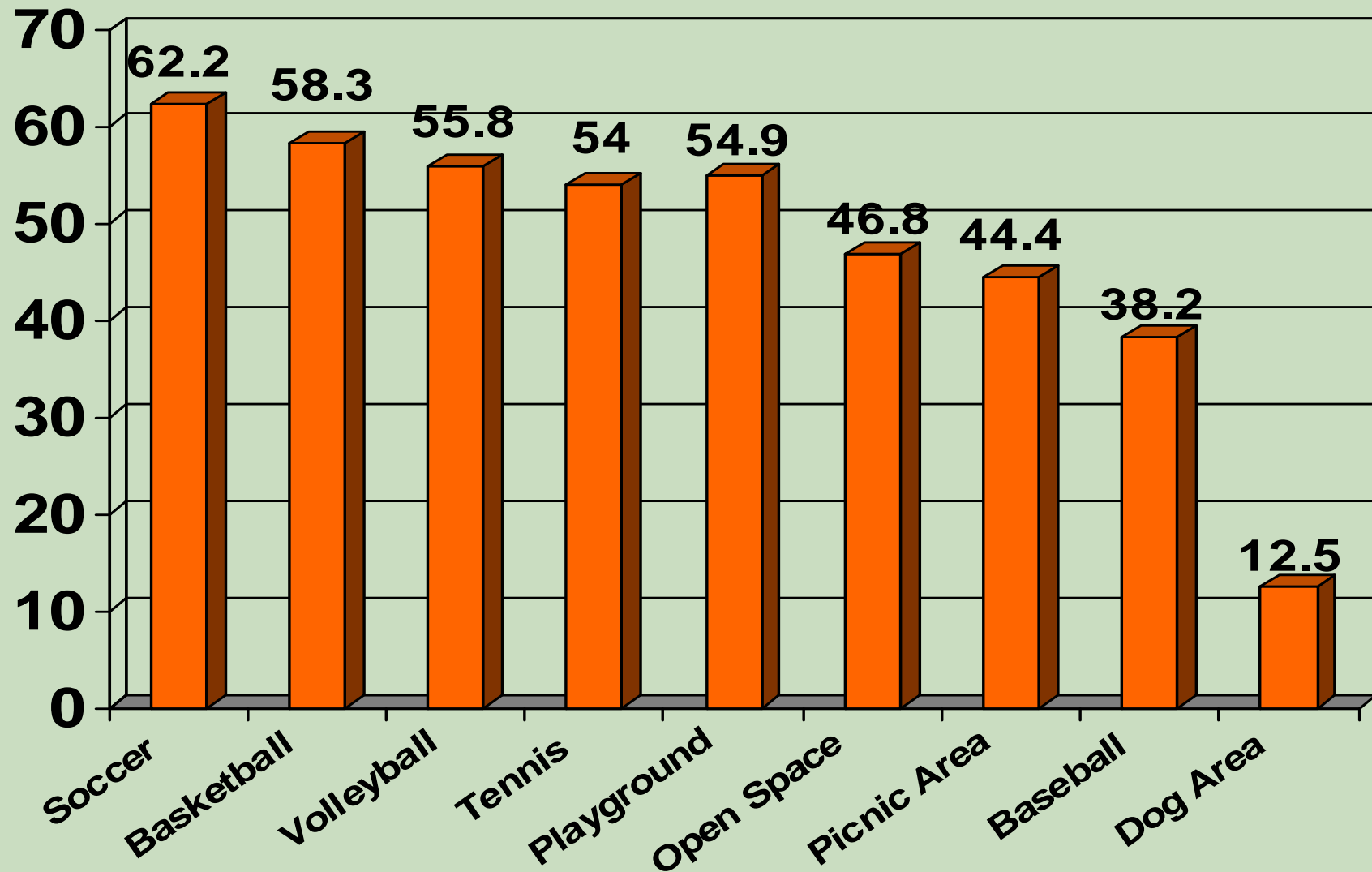


How were Chicago parks used?

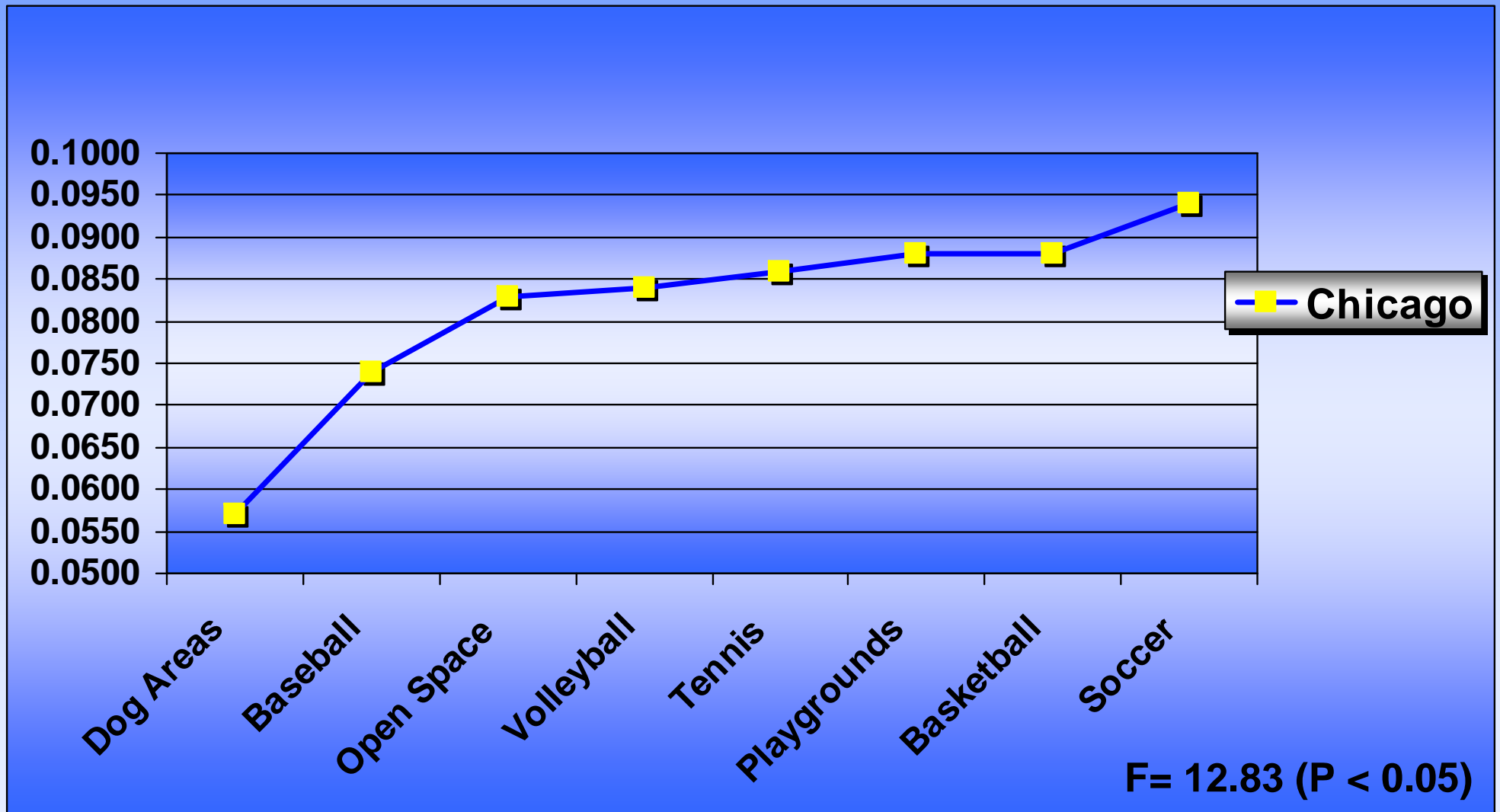


How did Chicago parks contribute to MVPA?

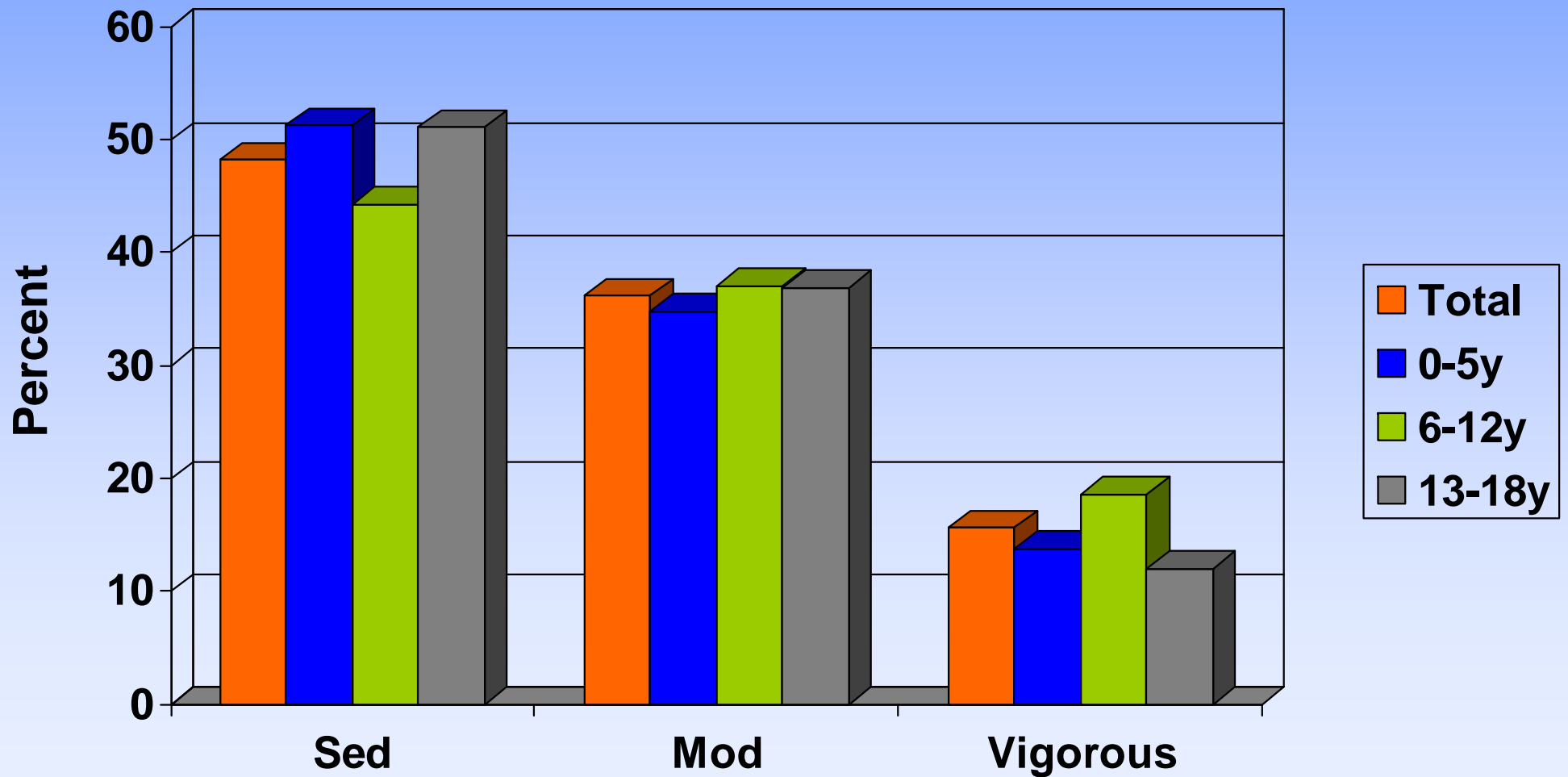
Percent Moderate-to-Vigorous Physical Activity in Selected Activity Zones



Mean Energy Expenditure Per Person in Parks by Activity Zones



Levels of Physical Activity among Children in Durham (NC) Public Parks by Age Group (n=3029).



Examples of EAPRS measures expected to correlate with children's PA.

	Baccaro & Floyd	Norville & Thompson	Average Kappa	
Paved Kappa	0.9908	0.9950	0.9929	
Continuity Kappa	0.9908	0.9900	0.9904	
Dividing Line Stripe Kappa	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
Sinage Presence Kappa	0.9816	1.0000	0.9908	
Singage Trail Map Kappa	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
Sit Rest Place Present Kappa	0.9817	0.9851	0.9834	
Other Loops Kappa	0.9541	0.9900	0.9721	
Other Trash Can	0.8893	0.9103	0.8998	
Open_Space_Condition	1.0000	0.8235	0.9118	
Open_Space_Cleanliness	0.6066	0.6264	0.6165	
Open_Space_Seating_Proxim	0.8750	0.3993	0.6371	
Open_Space_Roadway_Prox	0.5000	0.7622	0.6311	
Water_Area_Pool_Presence	1.0000	0.9950	0.9975	
Water_Area_Operational	1.0000	0.9900	0.9950	
Water_Area_Restrooms	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
Water_Area_Showers	1.0000	0.9900	0.9950	
Water_Area_Water_Play_Fea	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
Water_Area_Trash_Can	0.9722	0.9701	0.9712	
Water_Area_Drinking_Founte	1.0000	0.9751	0.9876	
Water_Area_Sinage	0.9815	0.9751	0.9783	
E_Drinking_Fountains_Prese	0.9907	1.0000	0.9954	
E_Drinking_Water_Operation	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
E_Picnic_Area_Presence	0.9907	0.9850	0.9879	
E_Picnic_Grills	0.8788	0.9499	0.9144	
E_Picnic_Trash_Can	0.8406	0.9046	0.8726	
E_Picnic_Coverage	0.9164	0.9248	0.9206	
F_Restroom_Presence	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	
F_Restroom_Open	1.0000	0.9950	0.9975	
F_Restroom_Ventilation	0.9811	0.9950	0.9881	

Other ALR Funded Studies Related to Parks and Recreation

- ***“Use of Sport Facilities, Trail Systems, and Green Space for Physical Activity among Latinos”***
(PI, Kim Shiness, University of Illinois).
- ***“Analyzing Crime as a Barrier to Physical Activity: Incorporating Crime Measures in Trail Use Models”***
(PI, Robert Brown, Indiana University /Purdue University at Indianapolis)
- ***“School Intramural Sports and Physical Activity: A Policy Intervention”***
(PIs, Michael Kanters & Jason Bocarro, NC State University)

Research Needs & Future Directions

- **Examination of specific park features within activity zones.**
- **Identifying environmental correlates of “physical activity by choice” (freely chosen and intrinsically rewarding).**
- **Experimental designs involving interventions in park environments.**
- **Understanding disparities in access to parks and recreation areas that support active living among youth.**
- **Relative contributions of parks and recreation areas to physical activity.**

Summary

- **How do people use parks?**
- **How does park use translate into physical activity?**
- **How do neighborhood and park environments influence attainment of physical activity during use opportunities?**
- **How can park environments be managed to support active living in communities?**

Questions

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