

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Parental Support for Child Health

BACKGROUND

Parents play a major role in supporting health behaviours and providing children opportunities for healthy, active living.¹

In Canada, between 1979 and 2004, rates of obesity in children more than doubled.² Physical activity is important for promoting and maintaining healthy weights.³

This infographic presents results from a telephone survey of 3,206 parents living in Ontario, conducted between February and March, 2015. All results are parent-reported.

CANADIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES⁴

Less than 1 year



Several times per day

1-4 years



At least 180 min/day (any intensity)

5-17 years



At least 60 min/day (moderate to vigorous intensity)

HOW ARE PARENTS DOING?

80% Take part in physical activities with child



82% Enroll child in sports teams, clubs, or community programs

86% Encourage child to walk/cycle to places if reasonably close

87% Watch child play sports or do other activities

91% Encourage child to use resources in community

94% Take child to places where he/she can be active

97% Encourage child to be active outdoors with others

PARENT-REPORTED PROPORTION OF CHILDREN MEETING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES



54%

1-4 yrs



73%

5-8 yrs



68%

9-12 yrs



60%

13-17 yrs

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ADOLESCENCE

13 to 17-year-olds showed significant differences between the proportion of **females (52.5%)** and **males (67.5%)** meeting physical activity guidelines.

Females often experience sharp declines in physical activity as they progress through adolescence.⁶



These rates are higher than the most recent Canadian estimates based on objective measures of child physical activity, which suggest that 9.3% of children aged 5-17 are meeting guidelines.⁵ This highlights the difference between actual rates in Ontario and parents' perceptions.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

GET O.U.T. AND BE ACTIVE!

Outside in nature **U**sing community resources **T**ogether as a family

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO OUTDOOR PLAY

Children who spend more time outdoors are more active and are more likely to have healthy weights.⁷ Potential barriers to outdoor play include:

- **Screen time**
Use of video games, TVs.⁸
- **Parental constraints**
Attempts to keep child safe from harm.⁸
- **Seasonal weather**
Some activities are limited to certain months.⁸