

Encouraging Active Schools

2011 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT SCHOOL SURVEY



Availability of larger scale facilities supporting physical activity and sport

The 2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School survey asked schools about the availability of onsite or nearby facilities for physical activity and sport that can be used by students, and this is the first bulletin out of four that examines this topic. This bulletin specifically looks at the availability of larger-scale facilities, such as gymnasiums, dance studios, tennis courts and so on. These analyses are further broken down by availability of these facilities at specific times, such as during school hours, after school, and during the evenings and weekends.

Bulletin two in this series looks at the availability of smaller-scale facilities, bulletin three explores the availability of community facilities, and bulletin four looks at amenities related physical activity and sport, such as access to showers and change rooms.

Availability during school hours

Almost all schools (95%) have access to a gymnasium during school hours. Also during this time,

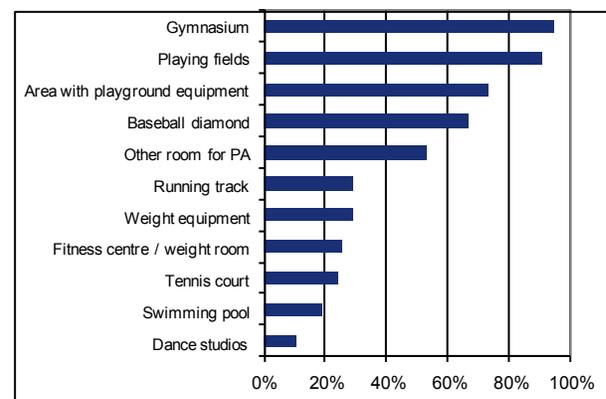
- 91% of schools say that playing fields are available,
- 73% of schools have access to area with playground equipment,
- 67% of schools have access to baseball diamond,
- 53% of schools have other types of rooms that can be used for physical activity or sport available,
- 29% have access to weight equipment,
- 29% say that a running track is available,
- 25% have access to fitness centre and weight room,
- 24% have access to a tennis court,
- 19% have swimming pools available, and
- 10% have access to dance studios.

Schools in Quebec are less likely than the national average to say that other types of rooms that can be used for physical activity and sport, fitness centre or weight rooms, weight equipment, and baseball diamonds are available, whereas schools in the West are more likely to say that other types of rooms and baseball diamonds are available. Compared to the national average, a greater proportion of schools in Western Canada indicate that they have access to swimming pools and playing fields. Schools in Ontario are less likely to indicate access to areas with playground

equipment, whereas schools in the West are more likely to say this.

FIGURE 1

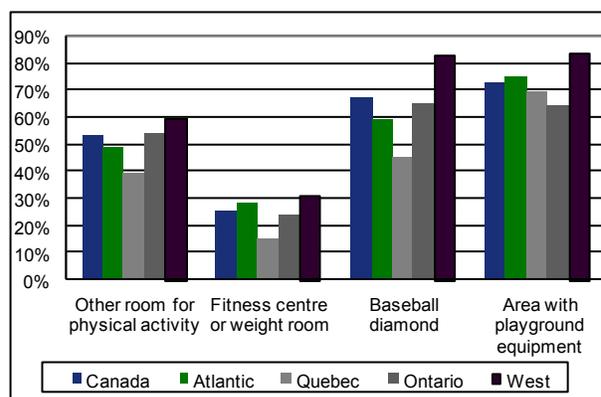
Availability of larger scale facilities *during school*, overall, 2011



2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Availability of select larger scale facilities *during school* by region, 2011

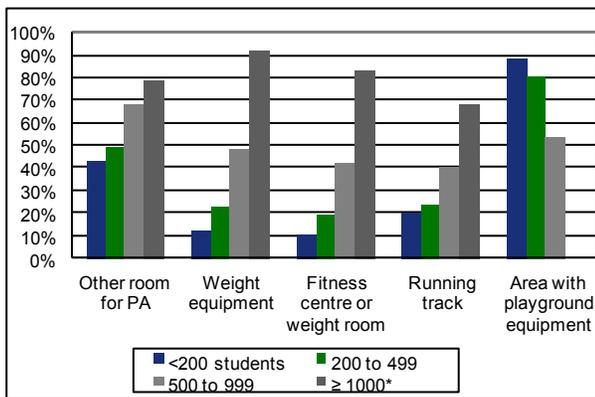


2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

The smallest schools (less than 200 students) are least likely to say that gymnasiums and playing fields are available compared to larger schools (although still 90% of the smallest schools indicate that gymnasiums are available). There is a general increase in the proportion of schools that say that other types of rooms for physical activity and sport, dance studios, swimming pools, and tennis courts are available with increasing student population size. There is a substantial increase in the proportion of schools that say that weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, and running tracks are available among larger schools (based on student population size). On the other hand, there are substantial decreases in the proportion of schools indicating that they have access to areas with playground equipment during school hours among larger schools. Schools in the smallest communities are generally least likely to say that gymnasiums, fitness centres or weight rooms are available, yet are more likely than some larger communities to say that baseball diamonds and areas with playground equipment are available. Compared to schools located in rural areas, a greater proportion of urban schools have access to gymnasiums and other types of rooms that can be used for physical activity and sport. Rural schools are least likely to have access to dance studios during school hours, yet are most likely to have baseball diamonds and areas with playground equipment. Inner city schools are least likely to have running tracks and are generally less likely to have access to tennis courts during this time.

FIGURE 3

Availability of select larger scale facilities during school by student population size, 2011



*some data not releasable due to cell size

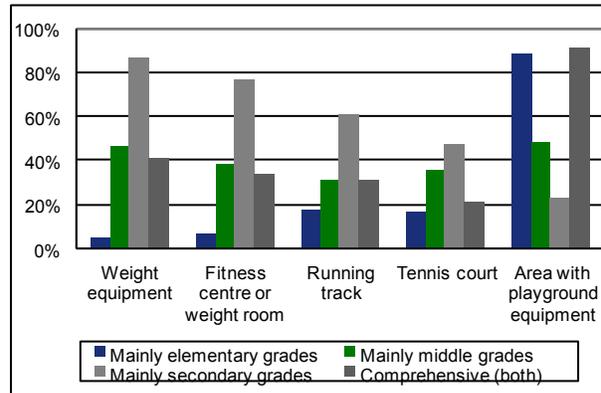
2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

Secondary schools are generally the most likely to indicate that they have access to weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, running tracks, and tennis courts, whereas elementary schools are least likely to have these facilities available during school hours. Similarly, relatively more secondary schools say that they have access to dance studios, swimming pools, and other types of rooms for physical activity compared to elementary schools, whereas secondary schools are less likely to indicate the availability of areas with playground equipment during school hours. In addition, secondary schools are less likely than middle schools to report availability of baseball diamonds, whereas

comprehensives schools are less likely to have access to a gymnasium compared to elementary and secondary schools during school hours. A greater proportion of English and bilingual/immersion schools report that other types of rooms for physical activity and sport, fitness centre or weight rooms, playing fields, and baseball diamonds are available compared to French schools, and moreover, a greater proportion of English schools also say that weight equipment is available during this time.

FIGURE 4

Availability of select larger scale facilities during school by school type (grades), 2011



2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

Relatively more schools with many students from high income households indicate that dance studios, swimming pools, weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, running tracks, and tennis courts are available compared to those with few students from high income households. Relatively more schools with a high proportion of students from minority populations say that they have access to other types of rooms that can be used for physical activity or sport and dance studios during school hours compared to those with a low proportion of students, whereas the opposite pattern is true for areas with playground equipment. A greater proportion of schools with many aboriginal students say baseball diamonds and areas with playground equipment are available compared to those with fewer aboriginal students.

Availability after school

This section examines schools' access to larger-scale facilities supporting physical activity and sport after school. During the after school time period,

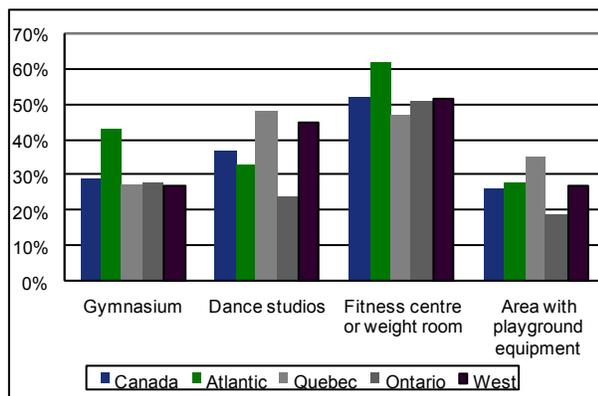
- 80% of schools have access to swimming pools,
- 63% have access to playing fields,
- 61% have access to a tennis court,
- 52% have fitness centres or weight rooms available,
- 37% have access to dance studios,
- 29% have access to a baseball diamond,
- 29% have access to gymnasiums,
- 28% have access to weight equipment,
- 26% have an area with playground equipment available

- 25% have access to a running track, and
- 10% have access to other rooms for physical activity and sport.

Compared to the national average, relatively more schools in the Atlantic say that gymnasiums and fitness centres or weight rooms are available after school. Schools in Quebec and the West are more likely to say that dance studios are available, whereas schools in Ontario are less likely to report this. Relatively fewer schools in Quebec indicate that swimming pools and weight equipment are available compared to the national average, whereas relatively more schools in Quebec say that areas with playground equipment are available. Ontario schools are less likely to report the availability of areas with playground equipment after school. When compared to the national average, relatively fewer schools in the Atlantic say that playing fields are available after school, whereas relatively more schools in the West say this.

FIGURE 5

Availability of select larger scale facilities *after school* by region, 2011

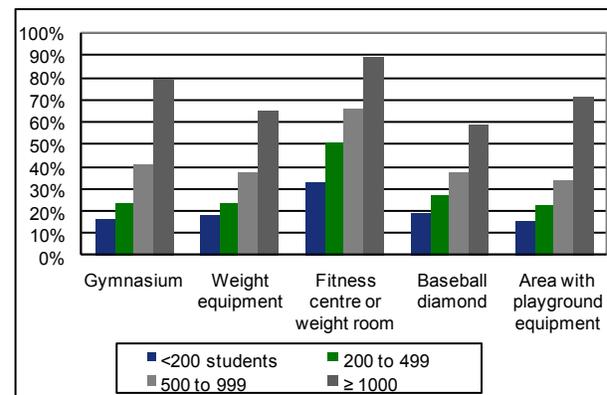


2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

The proportion of schools that indicate access to gymnasiums, other types of rooms for physical activity and sport, swimming pools, weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, playing fields, baseball diamonds, running tracks, areas with playground equipment after school generally increases with increasing student population size. Schools with less than 200 students are least likely to say they have access to tennis courts. Interestingly, a greater proportion of schools in the smallest communities say that they have access to dance studios after school compared to those in communities of 10,000 or more, yet those in the smallest communities are least likely to report the availability of fitness centres or weight rooms and are also less likely than those in the largest communities to say that tennis courts are available. Compared to schools located in rural communities, a greater proportion of schools in urban settings indicate that other types of rooms for physical activity and sport are available. Rural schools, however, are most likely to say that dance studios are available after school. Urban schools are more likely than inner city schools to say that weight equipment is available, whereas suburban schools are more likely than rural schools to say that tennis courts are available. Relatively more urban and suburban schools report

FIGURE 6

Availability of select larger scale facilities *after school* by student population size, 2011



2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

that playing fields are available after school compared to schools located in the inner city or rurally.

A substantially greater proportion of secondary schools say that gymnasiums, other types of rooms for physical activity and sport, weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, and areas with playground equipment are available after school compared to elementary schools. Elementary schools are least likely to indicate that they have access to a baseball diamond, and are generally less likely to say that they have access to a tennis court, swimming pool, and running track. A greater proportion of French schools indicate that dance studios or areas with playground equipment are available after school compared to English school. Bilingual or immersion schools, however, are more likely than French schools to say that weight equipment are available.

Schools with a large proportion of students from high income families are more likely to indicate availability of other types of rooms for physical activity and sport, weight equipment, fitness centre or weight room, or tennis courts after school compared to those with relatively few higher income students. Relatively more schools with smaller proportions of students from a minority population say that they have dance studios available after school compared to those that have many, whereas the opposite is true for baseball diamonds.

Availability evenings and weekends

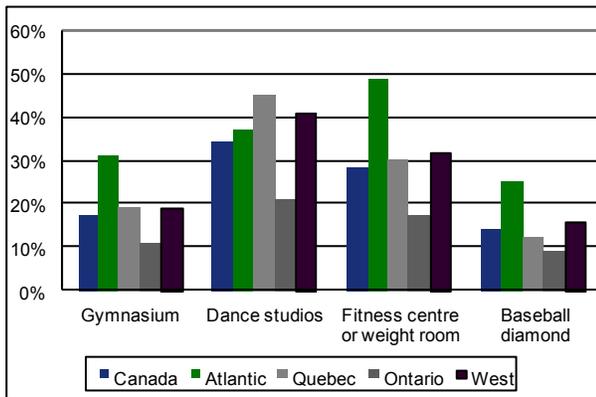
During *evenings and weekends*,

- 65% of schools have access to swimming pools,
- 57% have access to a tennis court,
- 54% have access to playing fields,
- 34% have access to dance studios,
- 28% have fitness centres or weight rooms available,
- 24% have access to weight equipment,
- 23% have access to a running track,
- 17% have gymnasiums available,

- 14% have access to baseball diamonds,
- 14% have access to areas with playground equipment, and,
- 7% have access to other types of rooms for physical activity.

Relatively more schools in the Atlantic say that gymnasiums, fitness centres or weight rooms, and baseball diamonds are available in the evenings and weekends compared to the average school, whereas schools in Ontario are less likely to indicate this. Compared to the national average, schools in Quebec and the West are more likely to say that dance studios are available during this time period, whereas schools in the Ontario are less likely to say dance studios and running tracks are available. Schools in the West are also more likely to say that swimming pools or playing fields are available, whereas a greater proportion of schools in Quebec and the Atlantic have access to areas with playground equipment during evenings and weekends compared to the average school.

FIGURE 7
Availability of select larger scale facilities during evenings and weekends by region, 2011



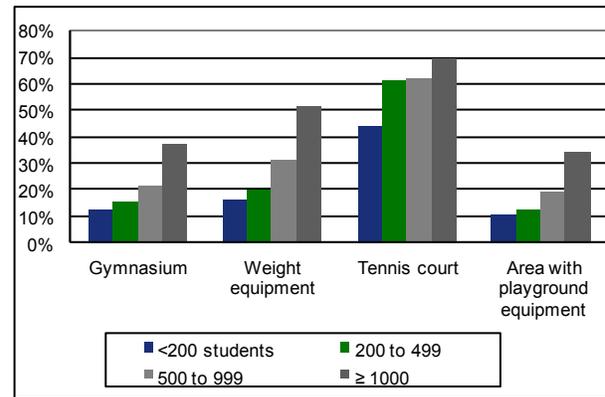
2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

The proportion of schools indicating access to gymnasiums, weight equipment, and areas with playground equipment generally increases with increasing student population size. The smallest schools (less than 200 students) are more likely than large-sized schools (500 to 999 students) to say that they have access to dance studios, whereas larger schools (500 or more students) are more likely than the smallest to say that fitness centres or weight rooms, playing fields, and running tracks are available. The largest schools are more likely than small schools (less than 500 students) to say that baseball diamonds are available. Moreover, the smallest schools are least likely to say that tennis courts are available.

A smaller proportion of schools in the largest communities indicate that gymnasiums and dance studios are available during evenings and weekends compared to schools within communities containing between 1,000 and 74,999 residents. There are also differences related to the availability of swimming pools, weight equipment, fitness centres or weight rooms, baseball diamonds, running tracks, tennis courts, or areas with playground equipment, however, the patterns are not clear. Interestingly, rural schools are

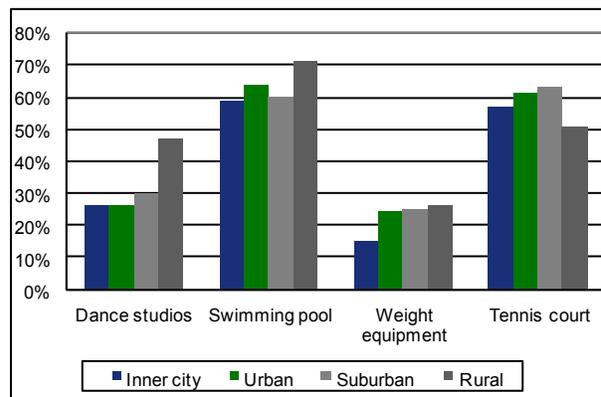
most likely to say that they have access to dance studios on evenings and weekends. Rural schools are also more likely than inner city or suburban schools to say that swimming pools are available. Furthermore, rural schools, along with suburban schools are more likely than inner city schools to report that weight equipment is available during this time. Compared to schools located in rural settings, a greater proportion of urban and suburban schools say that tennis courts are available on evenings and weekends.

FIGURE 8
Availability of select larger scale facilities during evenings and weekends by student population size, 2011



2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

FIGURE 9
Availability of select larger scale facilities during evenings and weekends by school setting, 2011



2011 Opportunities for Physical Activity at School Survey, CFLRI

Elementary schools are the least likely to indicate that they have access to a gymnasium, fitness centre or weight room, or baseball diamond during evenings and weekends, and are also less likely than secondary schools to say that they have access to an area with playground equipment during this time. On the other hand, secondary schools are most likely to have weight equipment, and in addition to middle schools, are more likely to say that a running track is available during evenings and weekends.

A greater proportion of public schools say that swimming pools, playing fields, and tennis courts are available during evenings and weekends compared to non-public schools. Relatively more French schools indicate that dance studios are available compared to English and bilingual/immersion schools, and to say that they have access to areas with playground equipment compared to English schools. A greater proportion of schools with relatively few students from minority populations say that dance studios are available compared to those with many students from this population. Schools with many aboriginal students are more likely to say that they have dance studios and baseball diamonds compared to those with few aboriginal students.

CANADIAN FITNESS & LIFESTYLE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

201-185 Somerset Street West • Ottawa, ON K2P 0J2 • (613) 233-5528 • info@cflri.ca
<http://www.cflri.ca/>



Production of this bulletin has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute, and the support of Physical and Health Education Canada.