



Kids CAN PLAY!

Encouraging children to be active at home, at school, and in their communities

Sedentary pursuits during the after school time period

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY study (*Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth* study) has been used to measure the physical activity levels of children and youth via pedometers to measure daily steps since 2005. In addition to the step data, parents were asked about their child's activity patterns. This bulletin summarizes the sedentary pursuits that children participate during the period when school ends and dinner. Just under three-quarters of children do homework (71%) or do other sedentary activities such as watching television, reading, or playing video and computer games (73%).

Region

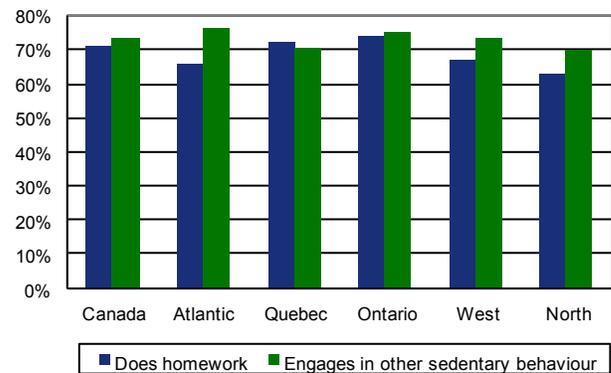
Compared to the national average, relatively fewer parents of children living in the Atlantic, the West, and the North say that they do homework during the time that school ends and dinner. There are no regional differences with respect to other sedentary behaviours, such as watching television, reading, or playing video and computer games.

Child characteristics

Relatively more children between the ages of 11 to 14 do homework during the after school time period compared to their younger or older counterparts. A greater proportion of girls than boys reportedly do homework during the after school time period, however, this is only significant among children between the ages of 11 and 19. Boys aged 5 to 14 are more likely to do homework during this time period

FIGURE 1

Sedentary activities during the after school time period by region



CANPLAY 2011-2012, CFLRI

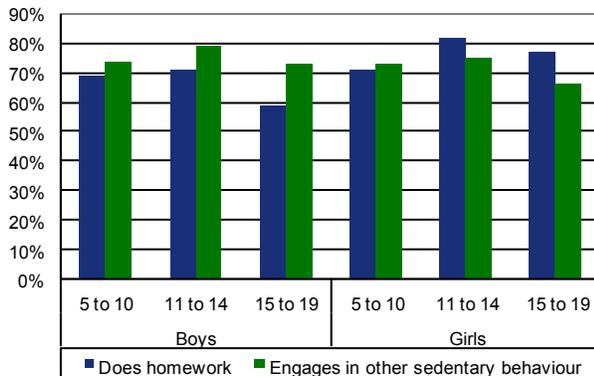
compared to boys 15 years and older. Girls, aged 5 to 10, are less likely than older girls to do homework during this time.

Similarly, a greater proportion of children between the ages of 11 to 14 engage in other types of sedentary behaviours such as watching television, reading, or playing video or computer games during the after school time period compared those 15 to 19 years. Relatively more young girls (5 to 14 years) participate in these types of sedentary behaviours compared to the oldest teen girls (15 to 19 year olds).



FIGURE 2

Sedentary activities during the after school time period by age and gender of child



CANPLAY 2011-2012, CFLRI

Parent characteristics

There are no significant differences between a child's participation in sedentary activities after school and parental characteristics.

Daily steps taken by participation in sedentary activities after school

There are no significant differences in the overall average steps taken daily between those who do homework or participate in other types of sedentary activities after school and those who do not. Moreover, there are no differences by region, child's characteristics, parent's characteristics, or household characteristics in the average steps taken daily by children who do homework during the after school time period or those who do not. Generally speaking, this is also true between those participating in other types of sedentary activities during the after school time period and those who do not, with two notable exceptions: boys in general, and girls aged 11 to 14

who do not participate in other sedentary activities during the after school time period take more steps than those who do partake in these types of activities.

Homework during the after school time period

Certain patterns differ between those who do homework after school and those who do not. For example, among those who do homework:

- boys take more steps than girls;
- children participating in organized physical activity and sport take more steps compared to those who do not; and,
- those from the highest income households take more steps than those from households with incomes between \$40,000 to \$59,999.

These relationships are not significant, however, among those who do not report doing homework during the after school time period.

Other sedentary activities during the after school time period

Patterns also differ slightly between those who do other sedentary activities during the after school time period and those who do not. Among those who do other sedentary activities:

- children participating in organized physical activity and sport take more steps compared to those who do not;
- those whose parents are slightly more active take more steps than those who are just as active or who are slightly less active; and,
- those from the highest income households take more steps than those from households with incomes between \$20,000 to \$29,999.

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 Public Health Agency of Canada and the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of these agencies.