



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical activity levels of children and youth in Alberta

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY study (Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth study) has been used to measure physical activity levels of children and youth using pedometers to measure daily steps. Although the majority of the analyses in this bulletin focus on combined data collected in years 7 and 8 (2011-2014), some analyses reflect trends over time, where otherwise stated. Combining years 7 and 8 of data collection, the CANPLAY study showed that Canadian children, ages 5 to 19, took approximately 11,000 daily steps on average. Children and youth in Alberta took approximately the same number of daily steps as the national average, at roughly 11,100 steps.

Canada and regions

Children and youth residing in Alberta took a similar number of steps as other provinces and territories in 2011-2014.

Child characteristics

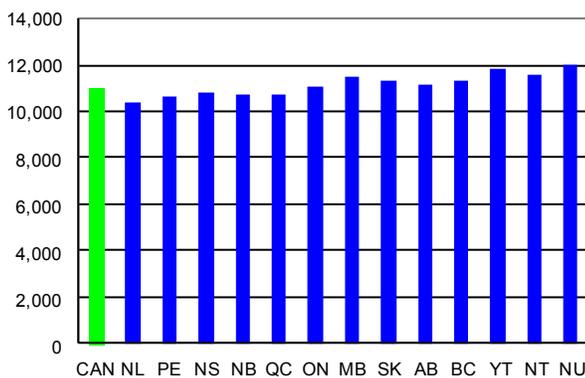
In 2011-2014, boys took a greater number of steps on average than girls did in Alberta and this was similar to the national pattern.

Nationally and provincially, daily steps decreased with increasing age. In Alberta, this is particularly evident when comparing young children to older teens. When considering both age and gender, the gender differences that appear at a provincial level overall were only significant specifically among 11 to 14 year olds. Nationally, gender differences were apparent across all age groups.

In Alberta, children who participated in organized physical activity and sport took more daily steps on average than children who did not participate in these types of activities. This pattern was similar to that found nationally.

FIGURE 1

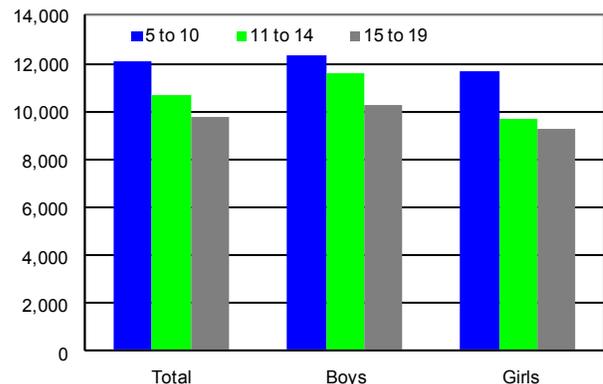
Average steps, Canada and regions



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Average steps by age and gender of child, Alberta



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI



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Physical activity levels of children and youth in Alberta

Parent and household characteristics

In Alberta, there were no differences in average daily steps with parental education and household income. Nationally, children whose parents have a university education took more steps than those with a college education and children living in the highest income households took more steps than those living in lower income households. There were no significant differences between a child’s average daily steps and perceived activity level of parents in Alberta in 2011-2014. Nationally, children whose parents said that they were substantially more active than other parents took more daily steps than children whose parents said that they were slightly less active than other parents.

Trends in activity level over time

Compared to the baseline year (2005-2007), there was a significant decrease in average steps taken by children and youth living in Alberta in 2011-2014. This section looks at trends over time in this province.

Child characteristics

In 2011-2014, boys took more daily steps on average than girls did in Alberta and this pattern has persisted over time. The age-related decrease in steps appeared for all study years,

including the most recent years. These patterns were similar to the national findings.

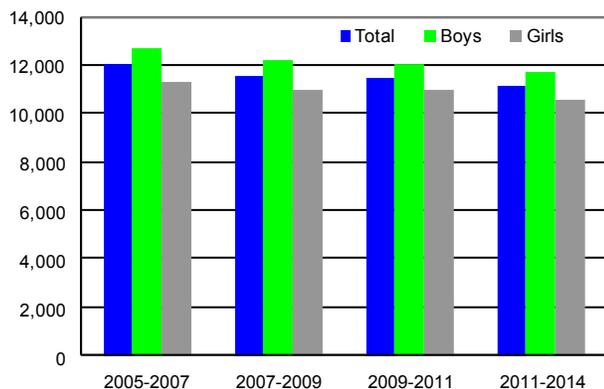
From 2011-2014 in Alberta, a relationship existed between a child’s participation in organized sport and physical activity and a greater number of steps taken, and this relationship has persisted over time both nationally and provincially.

Parent and household characteristics

Generally speaking, the relationship between average steps taken and parental education has not been significant for most years in the province (with the exception of 2005-2007), and this lack of a relationship persists into 2011-2014. The relationship between average steps and household income in the province has varied over time. There was no relationship between average steps and income in Alberta in 2011-2014. In Alberta, the relationship between average steps taken and parental activity level has generally not been significant in most years (with the exception of 2007-2009). Nationally, relationships between average steps and parental education, activity level, and household income were evident in all four time periods.

FIGURE 3

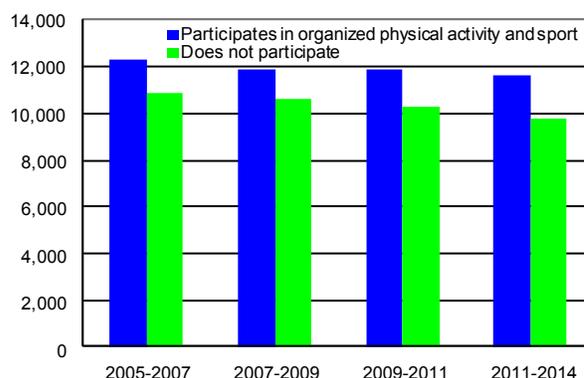
Trends in average steps over time by gender in Alberta



CANPLAY studies, 2005-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 4

Trends in average steps by participation in organized physical activity and sport, Alberta



CANPLAY studies, 2005-2014, CFLRI

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