



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical activity levels of children and youth in British Columbia

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 count 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 also 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 British Columbia took approximately the same number of daily steps as the national average, at roughly 11,300 steps.

Canada and regions

There were no significant differences in the average daily steps of children and youth residing in British Columbia and in other provinces and territories in Canada.

Child characteristics

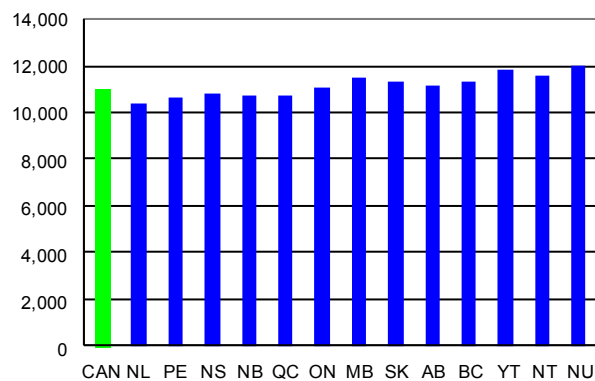
In 2011-2014, boys took a similar number of steps on average than girls did in British Columbia. This is different to the national pattern, where boys took more daily steps on average compared to girls during this period.

Nationally and provincially, daily steps decreased with increasing age. In British Columbia, this was particularly evident when comparing younger children with older teens. When considering both age and gender, gender differences appeared among 5 to 10 year olds, whereby young boys took more steps than young girls.

In British Columbia, 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 general pattern was similar to that found nationally.

FIGURE 1

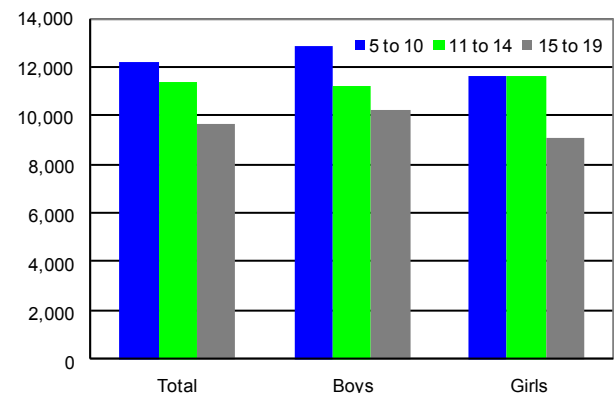
Average steps, Canada and regions



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Average steps by age and gender of child, British Columbia



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI



Parent and household characteristics

In British Columbia, there were differences in average daily steps with parental education but not with household income in 2011-2014. In 2011-2014, children of parents with a university-level education took more steps than children whose parents had a college-level education in British Columbia. This same pattern also appeared nationally. Nationally, a relationship between average steps and household income existed: 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 British Columbia in 2011-2014. Nationally, children whose parents said that they were substantially more active than other parents take 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 has been no change in average steps taken by children and youth living in British Columbia in 2011-2014. There has, however, been a decrease in the average number of steps of children in 2011-2014 compared to 2007-2009. This section looks at trends over time in this province.

Child characteristics

Generally, boys took more daily steps on average than girls did in British Columbia over time, with the exception of 2011-2014 in which there was no overall significant gender difference. Nationally, a gender difference was evident in all study years. The age-related decrease in steps appears for all study years, including the most recent years, both provincially and nationally.

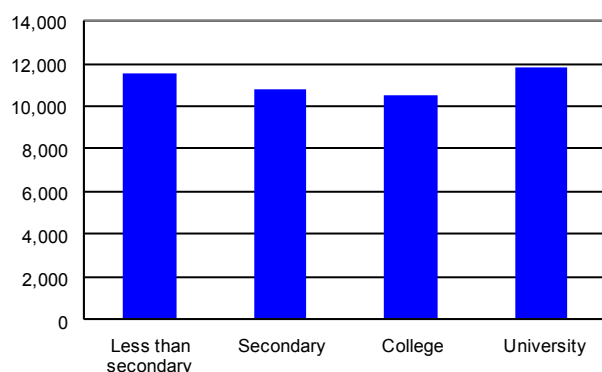
Moreover, in previous years in British Columbia, there was a relationship between a child's participation in organized sport and physical activity and a greater number of steps taken, and this relationship has persisted in 2011-2014 in the province. This pattern is consistent with national findings.

Parent and household characteristics

A relationship between average steps taken and parental education has generally existed in most study years in the province. There were very few relationships between the average number of steps among children living in British Columbia and household income over time. Similarly, there were no significant differences in children's average steps by parent's perceived activity level in most study years with the exception of 2009-2011. Nationally, relationships between average steps, parental education and activity and household income persisted over time.

FIGURE 3

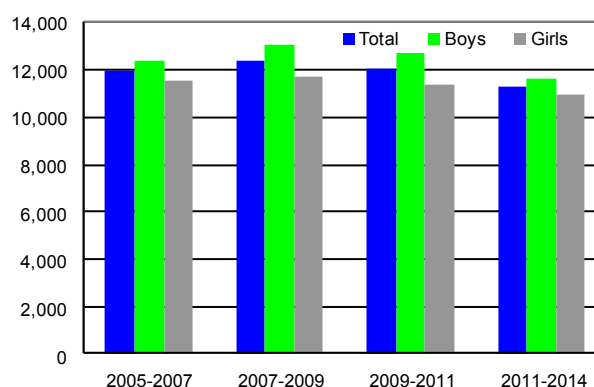
Average steps by parent's education level, British Columbia



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 4

Trends in average steps over time by gender in British Columbia



CANPLAY studies, 2005-2014, CFLRI

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