



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical activity levels of children and youth in Ontario

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 Ontario took approximately the same number of daily steps as the national average, at roughly 11,100 steps.

Canada and regions

Children living in Ontario took a similar number of daily steps to those of children living elsewhere in Canada in 2011-2014.

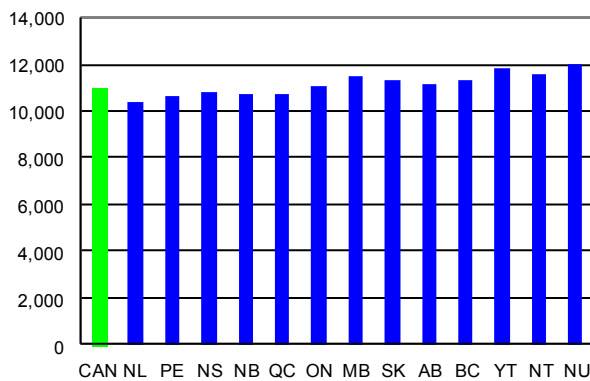
Child characteristics

In 2011-2014, boys took more daily steps on average than girls did in Ontario. This pattern is similar to the national pattern. Nationally and provincially, daily steps decrease with increasing age. In Ontario, gender differences are significant among 5 to 14 year olds. Nationally, gender differences appear at each age group.

In Ontario, children who participate 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 is similar to that found nationally.

FIGURE 1

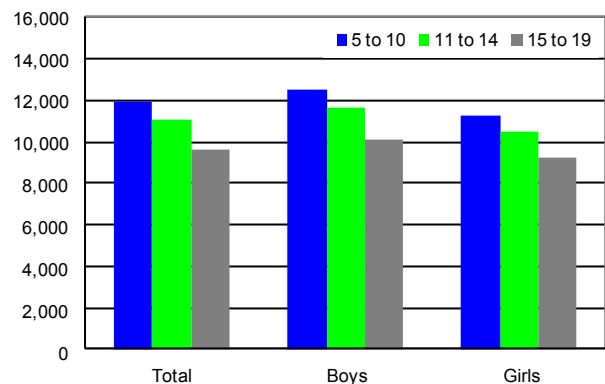
Average steps, Canada and regions



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Average steps by age and gender of child, Ontario



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI



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Physical activity levels of children and youth in Ontario

Parent and household characteristics

In Ontario, there were no significant differences between a child’s average daily steps and parent’s education. This differed from the national pattern where children whose parents had a university education took more steps than those with a college education. Children in Ontario who live in the highest income households (\geq \$100,000 per year) took more daily steps on average than those in lower income households (\$20,000 to \$39,999 per year). A similar relationship was found nationally. In Ontario, there were no significant differences between a child’s average daily steps and activity level of parents in 2011-2014. This pattern also differs from that found nationally where 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

Children in Ontario took fewer daily steps on average in 2011-2014 than they did in 2007-2011. This section looks at trends over time in this province.

Child characteristics

Consistently in the province and nationally, boys took more daily steps on average than girls. The age-related decrease in steps appeared for all study years in Ontario and nationally.

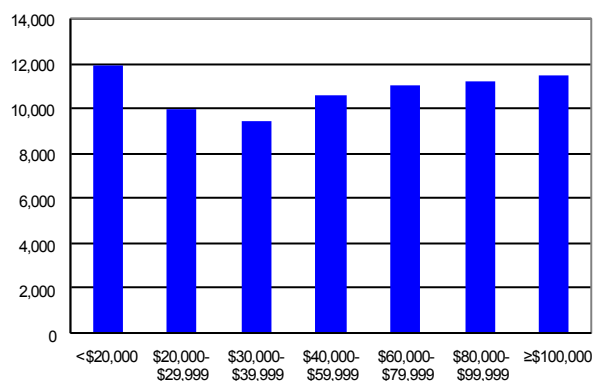
Moreover, the relationship between a child’s participation in organized sport and physical activity and a greater number of steps taken generally appeared over the four data collection cycles in Ontario and nationally.

Parent and household characteristics

Unlike earlier study years, there was no difference between a child’s average daily steps and parent’s education in 2009-2014, whereas a difference by education level still appeared nationally. The association between child’s average daily steps and household income generally persisted over time at a provincial level. At the national level, association between a child’s average daily steps and household income has also appeared over time, although with some inconsistencies over time. The lack of association between child’s average daily steps and activity level of the parent has been evident recently in Ontario, whereas this relationship has generally persisted nationally over time.

FIGURE 3

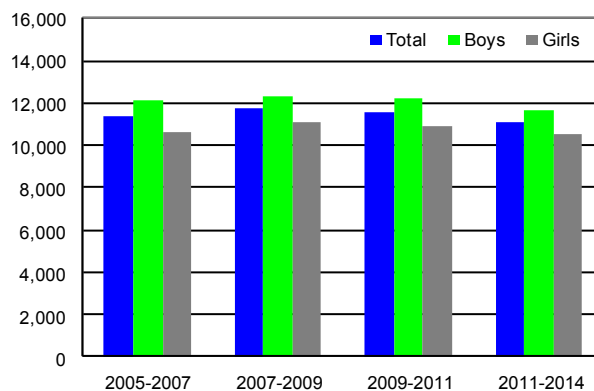
Average steps by household income, Ontario



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 4

Trends in average steps over time by gender in Ontario



CANPLAY studies, 2005-2014, CFLRI

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