



Let's Get Active!

Planning Effective Communication Strategies

2008 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MONITOR: FACTS & FIGURES



Steps taken towards becoming active

The 2008 Physical Activity Monitor examined the steps Canadians have taken towards becoming more active within the past year, and the extent to which these steps were deemed to be helpful in *actually* increasing activity levels.

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics

The following groups were more likely to have taken steps in the past year towards become more active:

- Women (all steps except seeking advice from health professionals)
- Younger adults, with a general decrease with increasing age (all steps except reading articles and seeking advice from health professionals)
- Those with higher levels of education (reading articles and seeking community information)
- Those from high income households (reading articles, observing or trying an activity and seeking information about community opportunities)
- Unemployed adults (seeking advice from health professionals)
- Students or those working part-time (seeking advice from friends, family, or co-workers, and observing or trying a class or activity)

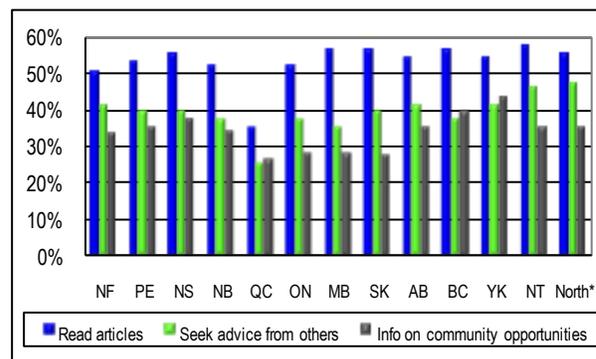
In contrast, two groups were less likely to take particular steps to become more active:

- Retirees (observed or tried an activity, sought community information, and advice from friends, family, or co-workers)
- residents of the smallest communities (observed or tried an activity or made active choices at work)

In addition, certain groups rated the behaviours as very helpful for translating it into actual activity:

- More women than men say that observing or trying an activity was very helpful
- Adults from the lowest income households are more likely than some with higher incomes to find reading articles, advice from others, or making active choices at work very helpful.

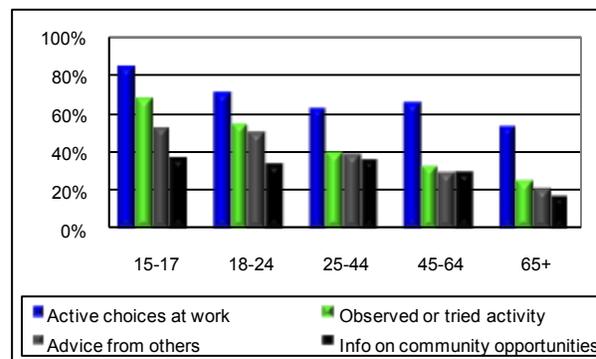
FIGURE 1
Step taken towards becoming more active, by province/territory



* 'North' includes Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut

Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI

FIGURE 2
First steps taken towards becoming more active, by age group



Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI

TABLE 1

Steps taken toward being more active and the helpfulness of these steps among those who have taken them, overall

First step toward being active	step taken in past year	step was <i>very helpful</i> in making them more active
Making active choices at work (walking to work or taking the stairs)	65%	65%
Reading articles about PA in newspapers, books, magazines	49%	40%
Observing a class or tried some kind of physical activity	38%	65%
Seeking advice from friends, family, or co-workers	35%	55%
Seeking information about community opportunities	30%	53%
Seeking advice from health professionals	20%	67%

Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI

In contrast, more men than women felt that making active choices at work was *not helpful at all*.

Table 1 summarizes the proportions that took steps towards becoming more physically active, and of those, the proportions rating the activities very helpful.

Region

Significant provincial and territorial differences in the prevalence of attempts made to increase physical activity are shown in Table 2. There are no regional differences in perceptions about the helpfulness of the steps in *actually* becoming active.

Physical activity and sport participation

In general, taking steps to become more active is associated with higher activity level, with the exception of seeking advice from

health professionals. More active adults reported many of the first steps were *very helpful* towards being more active, while sedentary adults were more likely to find these actions *not helpful at all*.

A higher proportion of sport participants than non-participants say that they have :

- sought advice from others,
- sought information about community opportunities, or
- observed or tried an activity.

Further,

- sport participants are more likely to find advice from health professionals *very helpful* for increasing activity levels.
- those who do not participate in sport are more likely to say that advice from friends, family, and co-workers was *not very helpful*.

TABLE 2

Regional differences* in first steps taken toward being more active

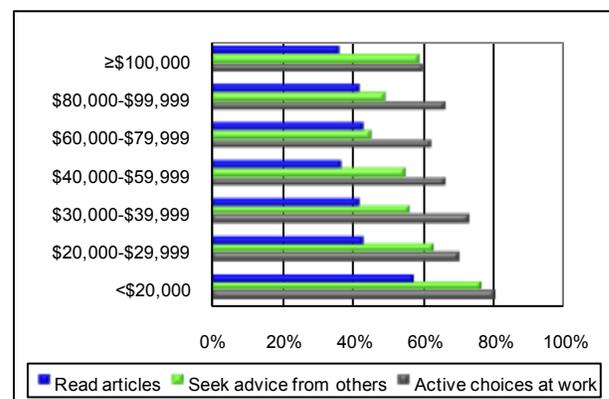
First step	More likely in...	Less likely in...
Making active choices at work (walking to work or taking the stairs)	MB BC NWT	QC
Reading articles about PA in newspapers, books, magazines	NL NWT	QC
Observing a class or tried some kind of physical activity	-	-
Seeking advice from friends, family, or co-workers	-	-
Seeking information about community opportunities	NS BC YK	-
Seeking advice from health professionals	NWT	-

*Compared to national average

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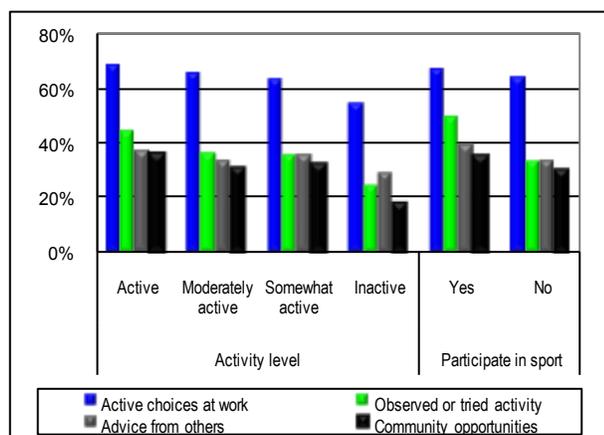
FIGURE 3

Helpfulness of first steps, by household income



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FIGURE 4
 Step taken to become more active, by activity level and sport participation



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