



Kids CAN PLAY!

ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO BE ACTIVE AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

Sedentary pursuits after school

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute examines physical activity levels of children and youth through a study called CANPLAY (the Canadian Physical Activity Levels Among Youth Study). In this study, physical activity levels are measured using pedometers to count daily steps. This study also explores other factors associated with physical activity levels of children and youth, including time spent in activities during the period that school ends and dinner. This bulletin explores time spent in sedentary activities such as doing homework, and watching television, reading, and playing computer or video games. The findings in this bulletin reflects data collected during the two year time period from 2014-2016.

According to the most recent CANPLAY data, the majority of Canadian children and youth (ages 5 to 19) spend time after school engaged in sedentary activities such as doing homework (67%) or watching television, reading, playing computer or video games (77%).

Canada and Regions

There are generally no regional differences related to the proportion of children who do homework or who do other non-active pursuits such as watching television, reading, or playing video or computer games; an exception to this being that children and youth who live in Saskatchewan are less likely than the average to report doing homework after school.

Child characteristics

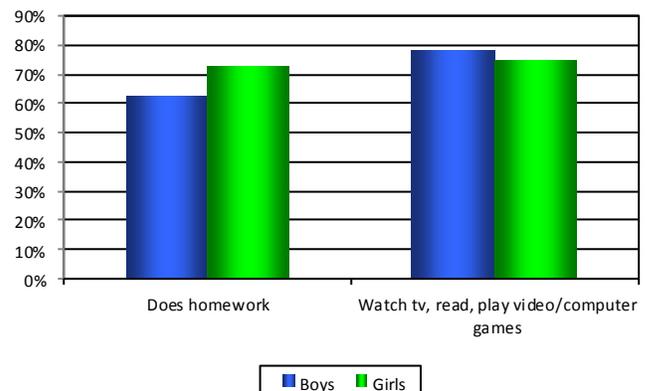
Boys and girls are equally as likely to spend time after school watching television, reading, and playing video or computer games. Girls are, however, more likely than boys to reportedly do homework during this time period. Compared to 11 to 19 year olds, relatively fewer children, aged 5 to 10 years, do homework. This pattern is significant among girls, whereas among boys aged 5 to 10 are less likely to report doing homework compared to boys aged 11 to 14, yet are not significantly different than boys aged 15 to 19.

Parent and household characteristics

There are no significant differences related to parental or household characteristics among children who do homework or watch television, read, or play video or computer games during the after school time period.

FIGURE 1

Children's sedentary pursuits after school by gender



CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

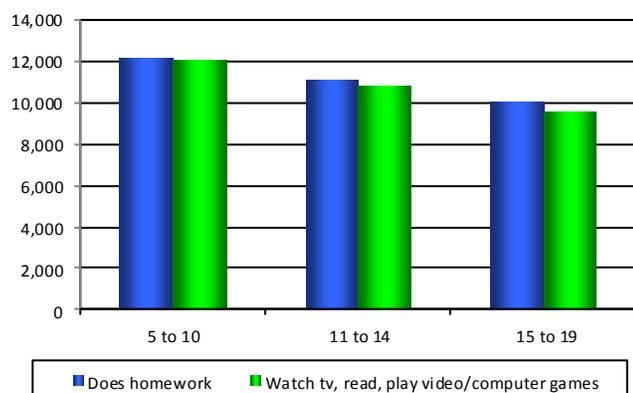
Participation in sedentary pursuits by steps taken daily

There are no significant step differences between those who do homework or those who watch television, read, or play video or computer games during the after school time period and those who do not. In addition, this lack of a difference in steps is consistent regardless of the child, parental, and household characteristics. Data patterns within demographic factors can also be examined to see if their general pattern is the same between those who do homework and those who do not. Among those who do homework after school, boys take more steps than girls. There is, however, no significant difference in steps by gender among those who do not do homework during this time period.



FIGURE 2

Sedentary pursuits after school by steps taken and child's age



CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

A similar pattern is observed for age among children who do homework and those who do not, whereby young children (those aged 5 to 10 years) take more steps than older children. Among children and youth who do homework after school, those whose parents have a university level education or who live in the highest income households (\geq \$100,000 annually) take more steps than children whose parents have a college education or who live in lower income households (\$20,000 to \$29,999 annually), respectively. There are no significant step differences by parental education and household income among children who do not do this type of activity after school.

Among those who watch television, read, or play video or computer games after school, boys and children aged 5 to 10 take more steps than girls and children aged 11 to 14, respectively. There is no step difference by gender among those who do not engage in these types of activities after school. An age-related step difference is observed among children who do not do these activities after school, whereby young children (aged 5 to 10) take more steps than older teens (aged 15 to 19). Among children who do these types of sedentary activities, those who participate in organized physical activity or sport overall (not only during the after school time period) take more steps than children who do not participate. Children living in the Atlantic region and who watch television, read or play computer or video games after school take fewer steps than the national average. In addition, differences also appear by parent's education and household income among children and youth who do these types of activities during the after school time period. There are no significant step differences by parental education, household income and region among children who do not do these types of sedentary activities after school.

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