



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical Activity Levels of Children and Youth

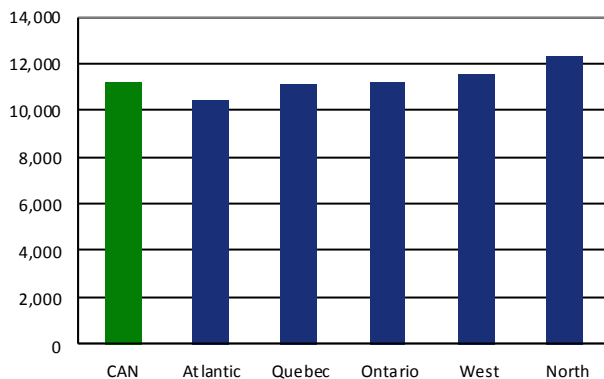
The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute has studied the physical activity levels of children and youth through a study called CANPLAY (the Canadian Physical Activity Levels Among Youth Study). CANPLAY uses pedometers to measure daily steps. Trend information provided in this research bulletin highlight data collected in this study during the decade of 2005 to 2015, however, this bulletin generally represents data collected during 2014-2015 unless specified as trend information.

The CANPLAY data shows that Canadian children, aged 5 to 19, took approximately 11,200 daily steps on average during 2014-2015. Daily steps vary by various population groups, as discussed below.

Canada and regions

Based on 2014-2015 data, children and youth living in the Atlantic took slightly fewer steps than the national average, whereas children living in the North took slightly more steps.

FIGURE 1
Average steps by region

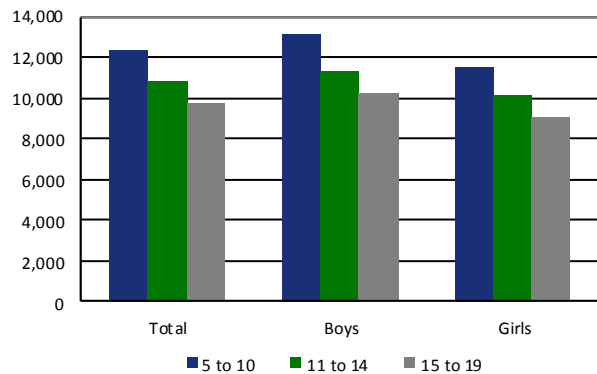


CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

Child characteristics

Boys took more steps on average than girls. Average daily steps decrease with increasing age of children, whereby younger children took more steps than older children. The gender difference was statistically significant among 5 to 10 year olds. Children who participate in organized physical activity and sport take a significantly higher number of daily steps than those who do not participate in these activities.

FIGURE 2
Average steps by age and gender of child



CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

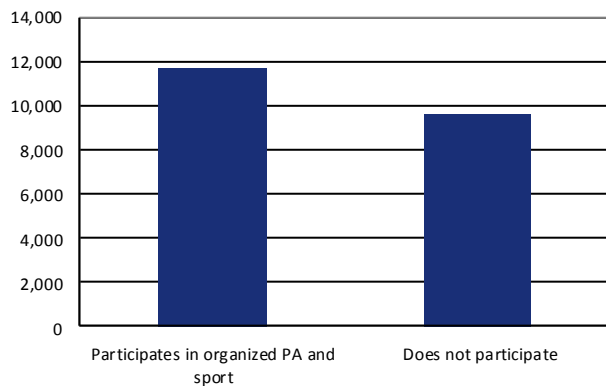
Parent and household characteristics

Although no significant differences in daily steps appear with respect to parent's education level, there is a slight difference with household income. Children living in some lower income households (between \$20,000 to \$29,999 per year) take fewer steps than those living in the lowest income households and higher income households (\$40,000 per year and higher).



FIGURE 3

Average steps by child's participation in organized physical activity and sport



CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

Trends over time

Although CANPLAY data collected in 2014-2015 indicates that children and youth between the ages of 5 and 19 take roughly 11,200 daily steps on average, this average has remained relatively stable over the decade, with a couple of exceptions. The 2014-2015 rate is slightly lower than the rate of steps reported during 2006 to 2008.

The regional differences that are seen in 2014-2015 have been reasonably consistent over the past decade, whereby children and youth living Atlantic took slightly fewer steps than the national average, and those living in the North took slightly more steps.

Several patterns have also remained consistent over time, namely: boys taking more steps on average than girls; average daily steps decrease with increasing age of children; participation in organized physical activity and sport yielding a higher number of daily steps; and, a relationship between daily steps and household income.

On the contrary, the relationships between daily steps and parent's education level and parent's activity level are not significant in 2014-2015, although these relationships have existed in previous study years.

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