



# Kids CAN PLAY!

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

## Active pursuits after school

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute studies the physical activity levels of children and youth through a study called CANPLAY (the Canadian Physical Activity Levels Among Youth Study), which uses pedometers to measure daily steps. CANPLAY also examines other factors associated with physical activity levels of children and youth, including time spent in activities during the period that school ends and dinner.

Of Canadian children between the ages of 5 to 19, the 2014-2015 CANPLAY data shows that during the time that school ends and dinner:

- 75% participate in unorganized physical activity or sport
- 63% do chores (the chores question is based on a sub-sample of the CANPLAY study).
- 63% play outdoors.
- 47% participate in organized physical activity or sport during this period.

### Canada and regions

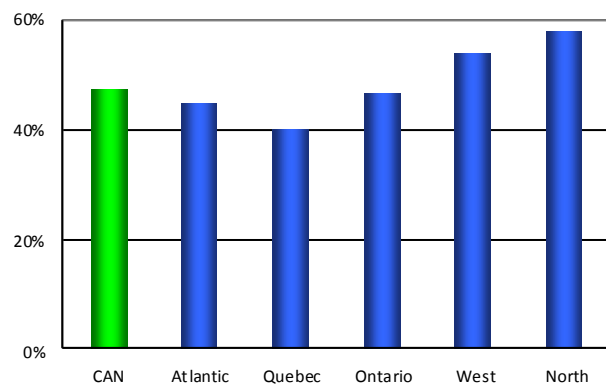
There are no regional differences related to the proportion of children who do chores, play outdoors, or participate in unorganized physical activity and sport during this time period. Compared to the national average, however, children and youth living in the West and North are more likely to indicate that they do organized physical activity or sport during this time.

### Child characteristics

Boys and girls are equally as likely to do chores or do organized physical activity or sport during the after school time period, whereas boys are more likely than girls to play outdoors and participate in unorganized physical activity or sport after school. Moreover, children and youth of all ages are just as likely to do chores after school. There

FIGURE 1

Regional differences in children's active pursuits after school



CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

is a substantial decrease in the proportion of children and youth who play outdoors or participate in unorganized physical activity or sport with increasing age; this general decrease with age appears for both boys and girls.

### Parent and household characteristics

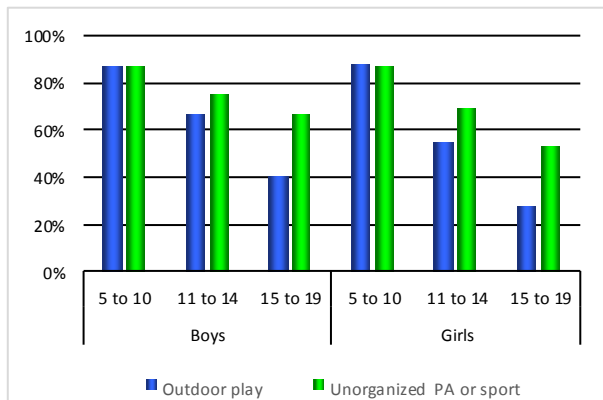
There are no differences in the proportion of children who do chores, who play outside, or participate in unorganized physical activity or sport, with respect to parent's activity level. Children whose parents have a secondary level education are more likely to participate in unorganized physical activity and sport compared to children whose parents have a post-secondary education. Children whose parents consider themselves substantially more active than their peers are more likely to do organized physical activity and sport than children whose parents consider themselves just as or less active.



Children and youth living in higher income households are more likely to participate in organized physical activity or sport after school than some children in lower income households. Children and youth from lower income households are more likely to do chores.

**FIGURE 2**

Time spent in physical activity and sport after school by child's age and gender



CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

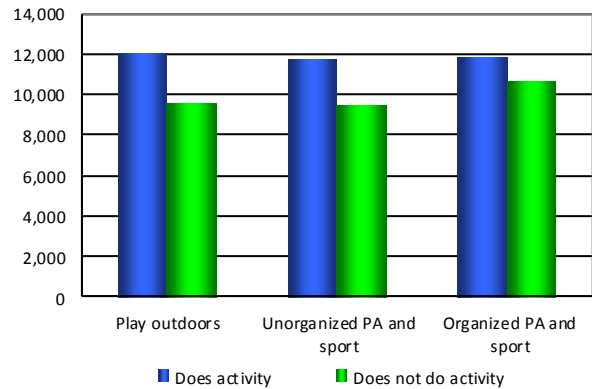
### Participation in active pursuits by steps taken daily

Generally speaking, there are no significant step differences between those who do chores 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 children, parental, and household characteristics.

On the contrary, children and youth who play outdoors or participate in unorganized physical activity or sport between the time school ends and dinner take roughly 2,200 to 2,500 more daily steps on average than those who do not. These general relationships appear for almost all child, parental, and household characteristics studied. There are some differences in the patterns in the steps taken on average between those who play outdoors and those who do not. For example, among those who play outdoors: boys take more steps than girls; steps decline substantially with increasing age; children whose parents consider themselves substantially more active take more steps than those who consider themselves slightly less active, and there are differences related to parent's education level. These differences are not significant among those who do not play outdoors after school.

**FIGURE 3**

Average steps taken for select active pursuits during the after school time period



CANPLAY study, 2014-2015, CFLRI

Among those who participate in unorganized physical activity or sport: boys take more steps than girls, and there are differences related to parent's education level. These differences are not significant among those who do not participate in unorganized physical activity or sport after school.

Children and youth that participate in organized physical activity and sport during the after school time period take more steps on average than those who do not participate. This step difference appears for both genders, 11 years and older, those whose parents' have a post-secondary education, those living in the highest income households, and those living the Atlantic and Western regions.

### Trends over time

Although there are no differences in the overall proportion of children and youth who participate in unorganized physical activities and sports over the past decade of the CANPLAY study, the proportion who participate in outdoor play in 2014-2015 is slightly lower than most of the CANPLAY study years. In addition the proportion who participates in organized physical activities and sports in 2014-2015 is slightly lower than the proportion in 2005-2006. In general and overall, steps data for each of the active pursuits after school have remained relatively consistent over time.

Regarding active pursuits, there are many consistencies in relationships of these pursuits with certain demographic groups over time. The differences, however, over time are summarized in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

Proportion participating in active pursuits by demographic information

Type of active pursuit	Demographic group	Differences in proportions over time
Outdoor play	Parent's activity level	Although no differences appear in most years including the most recent year, parent's activity was associated with outdoor play during 2005-2007, and 2012-2014
	Parent's education level	Although not significantly different in the most recent year, parent's education was associated with outdoor play during 2012-2014
	Household income	Although not significantly different in the most recent year, household income was associated with outdoor play during 2012-2014
Organized physical activity and sport	Region	Regional variations differ over time
Unorganized physical activity and sport	Parent's activity level	Although there are no significant differences in the most recent year, parent's activity was associated with unorganized activities in most previous years
	Parent's education level	Although not significantly different in earlier years, parent's education was associated with unorganized physical activity and sport during 2014-2015
	Region	Regional variations differ over time, and are not significantly different in 2014-2015

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With respect to steps taken by active pursuits, several relationships have persisted over time. Differences, however, are described in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Steps taken daily by active pursuits by demographic information

Type of active pursuit	Participation	Differences in proportions over time
Outdoor play	Participates	Similar patterns exist with respect to gender and age over time Relationship with parent's activity and education levels are variable
	Does not	Gender and age related differences are significant in most years
Organized physical activity and sport	Participates	Similar patterns exist with respect to gender and age over time Relationship with parent's activity and education levels are variable
	Does not	Gender and age related differences are significant in most years Relationship with parent's activity and education levels are variable
Unorganized physical activity and sport	Participates	Similar patterns exist with respect to gender and age over time
	Does not	Relationship with parent's activity and education levels are variable

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