

# Let's Get Active!

## Planning Effective Communication Strategies

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT MONITORING PROGRAM



## Importance of, and attitudes towards physical activity

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2014-2015 Physical Activity Monitor asked Canadians (18 years and older) about the degree of importance that they attribute to physical activity and their attitudes towards physical activity and sport. When asked to indicate how important physical activity is to them personally, 58% of Canadian adults indicate that it is very important, whereas 27% indicate that this is quite important and the remaining 15% say that it is less important than this. In addition, adults were also asked about various attitudes towards physical activity.

According to Canadians:

- 87% find physical activity generally pleasant, 7% find it unpleasant, and 5% say that it is neither.
- 78% find physical activity fun, 13% find it boring, and 9% say that it is neither.
- 72% find physical activity generally comfortable, 18% find it generally painful, and 10% say that it is neither.
- 72% find physical activity convenient, 21% say it is generally inconvenient, and 7% say that it is neither.
- 55% find physical activity generally easy, 29% find it difficult, and 16% say that it is neither.

### Region

There were some notable differences in attitudes towards physical activity and sport by region. Compared to the national average, a greater proportion of adults living in:

- Prince Edward Island say that physical activity is fun,
- Northwest Territories indicate that physical activity is easy,
- British Columbia say that they find it comfortable,
- Quebec say that physical activity is convenient.

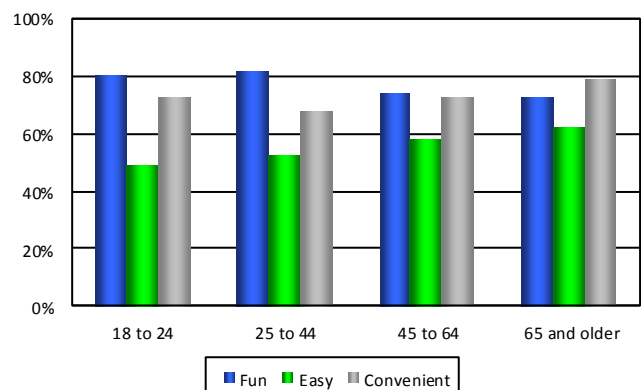
On the contrary, relatively fewer adults living in the Yukon say that they find physical activity painful. A lower proportion of adults living in Ontario and Saskatchewan indicate that it is convenient, whereas a greater proportion of adults in these provinces say it is inconvenient, compared to the average.

### Participant characteristics

Few differences in attitudes towards physical activity appear with gender, with the exception that men are more likely than women to consider physical activity as being fun, whereas more women indicate that they found it neither fun, nor boring. Attitudes towards physical activity are, however, associated with age. For example, older adults (those 45 years and older) are more likely to view physical activity as being boring compared to their younger counterparts (those aged 25 to 44 years) whereas the opposite relationship exists for the proportion indicating that physical activity is fun.

FIGURE 1

Attitudes towards physical activity by age



2014-2015 Physical Activity Monitor, CFLRI

Older adults (those 65 years and older) are also more likely to describe physical activity as being easy compared to those aged 44 and younger, whereas the opposite relationship is true for those finding physical activity difficult. In a similar manner, a greater proportion of older adults (65 years or older) say that say that physical activity is generally convenient compared to those aged 25 to 64 years of age, whereas those aged 25 to 44

years are more likely to say that physical activity is inconvenient compared to adults 45 years and older. Older adults (65 years and older) are more likely to say that physical activity is very important compared to those aged 25 years to 64 years.

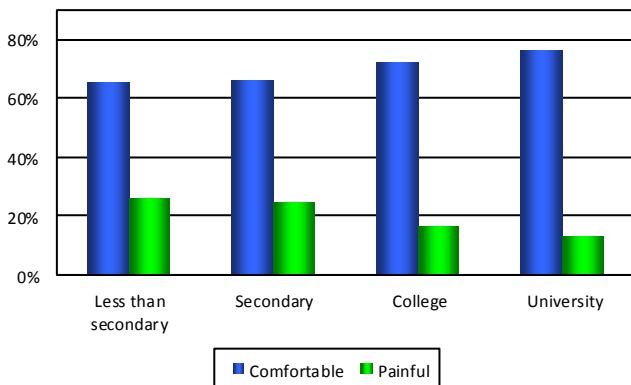
Adults with less than a post-secondary education are more likely to say that they find physical activity painful compared to those who have a university education, whereas the opposite relationship is true for those finding physical activity comfortable. In addition, adults living in the lowest income households are more likely than those in higher income households (\$60,000 or higher per year) to say that they find physical activity painful whereas the opposite is true for those saying that they find physical activity comfortable. Those living in highest income households (\$100,000 or higher per year) are more likely than those in living in lower income households (\$20,000 to \$29,000 per year) to say that physical activity is fun. Compared to those living in the highest income households, adults living in lower income households (\$30,000 to \$39,999 per year) are more likely to say that physical activity is convenient.

Compared to the national average, a lower proportion of adults who are unemployed for a reason say that physical activity is pleasant. A greater proportion of retirees say that physical activity is very important, easy and convenient compared to the national average.

**Community characteristics**

Interestingly, a higher proportion of adults living in small communities (1,000 to 4,999 residents) indicate that physical activity is difficult compared to those living in larger communities (10,000 to 100,000 residents). In addition, adults living in mid-sized communities (with between 10,000 to 29,999 residents) are more likely to say that physical activity is convenient compared to those living in larger communities (100,000 to 500,000 residents). On the contrary, adults living in the largest communities (500,000 or more residents) are more likely than those in these mid-sized communities (10,000 to 29,999 residents) to say that physical activity is inconvenient.

**FIGURE 2**  
Attitudes towards physical activity by education



2014-2015 Physical Activity Monitor, CFLRI

Adults who are widowed, divorced, or separated are more likely to say that physical activity is painful but to say that physical activity is very important compared to those who are married or living with a partner.

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