



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Parents' perspective about the availability of after school programs, British Columbia

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), along with other factors that are associated with physical activity. This bulletin summarizes the findings with regards to parents' perspectives about the availability of supervised after school programs and the amount of days that their children attend these types of programs each week.

Access to a supervised after school program

According to a subsample of parents, half of all Canadian children and youth (51%) have *access* to supervised programming during the after school period. A higher percentage (60%) of children and youth living in British Columbia report having *access* to a supervised, after school program compared to the national average. When comparing provinces and territories, a higher proportion of children and youth living in British Columbia cite having *access* to an after school program than those living in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba.

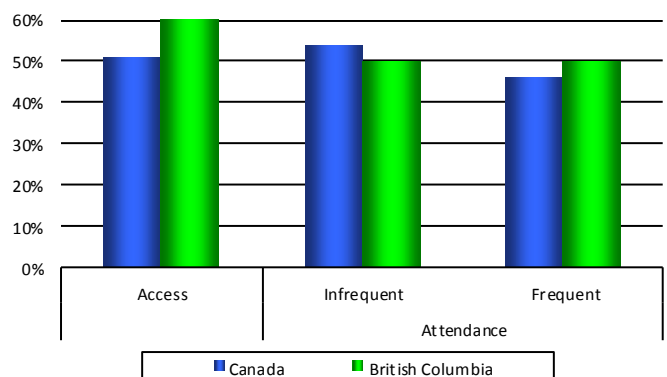
Among the 60% of children and youth living in British Columbia who indicate *access* to supervised programs during the after school period, 50% *attend* this type of programming *infrequently* (2 days or less a week, or never attend) and 50% attend more *frequently* (on 3 days or more per week). These proportions do not differ significantly from the national estimates.

Child characteristics

Nationally, older children are least likely to have *access* to supervised, after school programming compared to younger children. This age-related relationship generally appears among boys and girls. This relationship, however, between *access* to a program and a child's age is not significant among children and youth living in British Columbia.

FIGURE 1

Access to, and attendance in, a supervised after school program, British Columbia and Canada



CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

Similarly, in the province, there are no significant differences in *attendance* in this programming related to a child's gender or age. In Canada and in British Columbia, a higher percentage of children who participate in organized physical activity and sport have *access* to a supervised after school program compared to those who do not participate.

Parent and household characteristics

Compared to parents who are *just as* or who are *slightly less* active than their peers of the same age and gender, a greater proportion of Canadian parents who consider themselves *substantially more* active say that their children have *access* to a supervised after school program. This relationship is similar in British Columbia, where a greater percentage of children and youth whose parents consider themselves *more* active than their peers also indicate that their child attends a supervised after school compared to those who are *just as* or *less* active than their peers.



The relationship between *access* to an after school program and household income that exists nationally, whereby children who live in the highest income households are most likely to report having *access* to this type of programming, is somewhat similar in British Columbia. In British Columbia, a higher percentage of children and youth living in the highest income households (\geq \$100,000 per year) report *access* to an after school program compared to those living in slightly lower income households (\$60,000 to \$99,999 per year).

Access to daily after school programs by daily steps

Nationally, children who have *access* to a supervised, after school program take about 700 more steps/day on average than those who do not have access. Step-related differences between those who have *access* and those who do not, do not differ significantly in British Columbia.

Nationally, the pattern whereby those who have *access* to this type of programming take more steps is significant among the following groups: both boys and girls; children whose parents are *substantially more* active than their peers; children whose parents have a university education; children living in the highest income households; and, children living in the Atlantic and Western regions. In British Columbia, these relationships are not significant.

It is also possible to explore patterns in child, parent and household characteristics by those who have *access* to after school programs and those who do not. Relatively few differences exist between these two groups. Nationally, among children who have *access* to after school programs, those who live in the highest income households take more steps than those living in some lower income households; this relationship is not significant among those who do not have *access*. Nationally, among children who do not have *access* to after school programming, those whose parents indicate they are *slightly more* or *just as* active than their peers take more steps compared to those whose parents are *substantially less* active, whereas this relationship is not significant among those who do have *access*.

On the other hand, among children and youth who reside in British Columbia and who have *access* to an after school program, boys take more steps than girls. This relationship is not significant among those who do not indicate having *access*. In the province, among those who do not have *access* to an after school program, younger children (5 to 12 year olds) take more steps than older youth (13 to 19 year olds); this relationship with age, however, is not significant among those who do have *access*.

CANADIAN FITNESS & LIFESTYLE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

201-185 Somerset Street West • Ottawa, ON K2P 0J2 • (613) 233-5528

<http://www.cflri.ca/>

Production of this bulletin has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of these agencies.