



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical activity levels of children and youth in Alberta

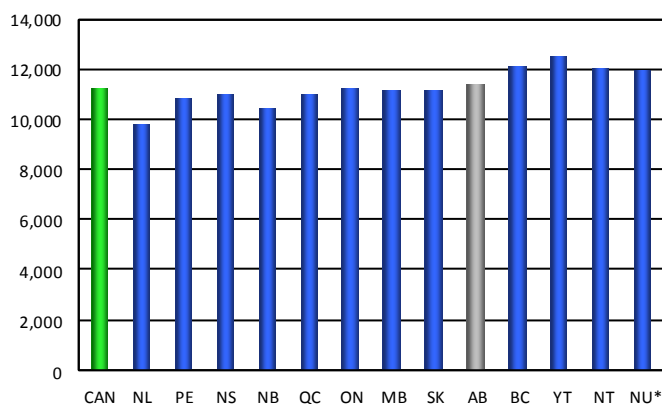
The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY (Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth) study measures physical activity levels of children and youth using pedometers to count daily steps. The study has collected data between 2005 and 2016. Although most of the analyses in this bulletin focuses on combined data collected in years 9 and 10 (2014-2016), some analyses reflect trends over time, where otherwise stated.

Canada and regions

Based on the latest data (years 2014 to 2016), the CANPLAY study showed that Canadian children (ages 5 to 19) take approximately 11,300 daily steps on average. Children and youth residing in Alberta take a similar number of steps on average when compared to the national average, at roughly 11,400 steps. When compared to other regions in the country during this time period, children and youth living in Alberta take more steps than children and youth residing in Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick, but fewer steps than children and youth living in the Yukon.

FIGURE 1

Average daily steps taken by children and youth by province and territory



*Based on 2011-2014 due to sample size in 2014-2016

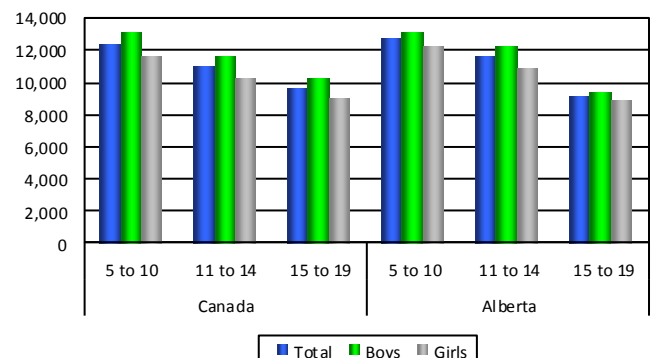
CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

Child and parent characteristics

Based on the latest data, boys take significantly more steps on average than girls in Canada. In Alberta, however, boys and girls did not differ significantly in their average number of steps during this time period. In Canada, average daily steps decrease with increasing age of the child. In Alberta, this pattern is generally consistent as 5 to 14 years olds living in the province take more steps on average than youth 15 years and older in 2014 to 2016.

FIGURE 2

Average daily steps taken by children and youth by child's age and gender, Canada and Alberta



CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

In Canada and in the province, children and youth who participate in organized physical activity and sport take more steps on average than those who do not. Although there are significant relationships between a child's average number of steps and parent's activity, parent's education level and household income at a national level, these relationships are not significant within the province during the data collection period of 2014 to 2016.



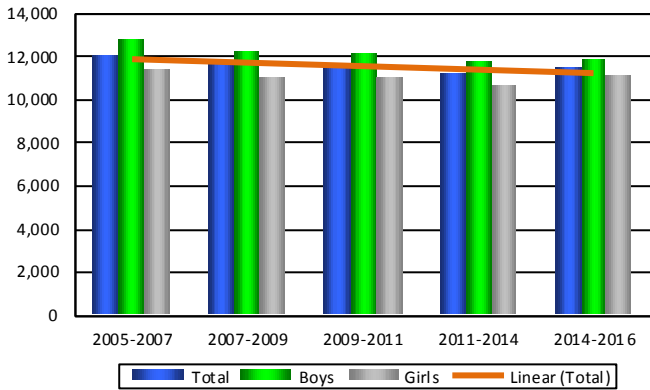
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Trends over time

In Alberta, there have been no significant differences overall in the number of steps taken in 2014-2016 compared to the number of steps taken within each study period over the previous decade.

FIGURE 3
Average daily steps taken by children and youth over time, Alberta

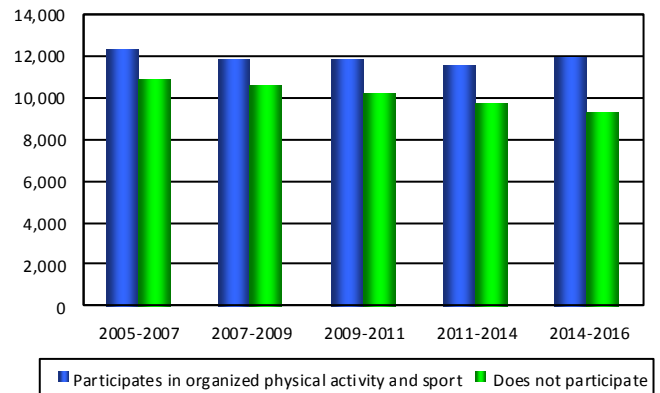


CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

In Canada, the relationship between steps taken and gender is a pattern that has persisted over time. In Alberta, however, boys and girls did not significantly differ in their average number of steps when examining data collected between 2014 and 2016, although previous study years found that boys took more steps than girls in the province. This pattern will have to be assessed in the future to determine if the gender gap has been reduced over time.

The inverse relationship of decreasing steps with increasing age has persisted nationally and also generally speaking, within the province over the previous decade. The association between steps and organized physical activity and sport, whereby those who participate in organized physical activity and sport take more steps on average than those who do not, has persisted over time both nationally and within the province. Significant relationships between the average number of steps taken and parent’s activity level, education level, and household income have been less consistent over time in Alberta.

FIGURE 4
Average daily steps taken by participation in organized physical activity and sport over time, Alberta



CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

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