



# Kids CAN PLAY!

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

## Physical activity levels of children and youth in Nova Scotia

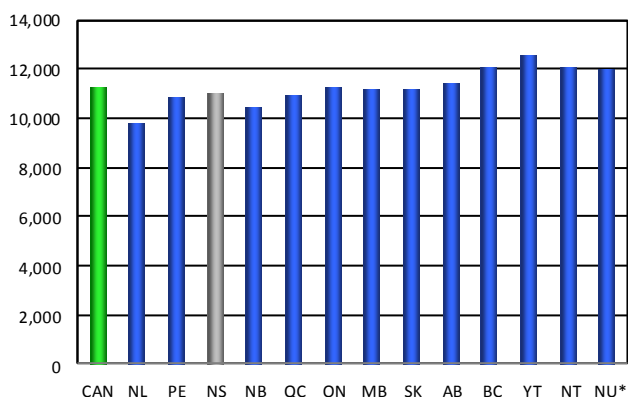
The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY (Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth) study measures physical activity levels of children and youth using pedometers to count daily steps. The study has collected data between 2005 and 2016. Although most of the analyses in this 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 shows that Canadian children (ages 5 to 19) take approximately 11,300 daily steps on average. Children and youth residing in Nova Scotia take a statistically similar number of steps on average when compared to the national average, at roughly 11,000 steps. When compared to other regions in the country during this time period, children and youth residing in Nova Scotia take more steps than children and youth living in Newfoundland and Labrador, but fewer steps than children and youth living in British Columbia and the Yukon.

FIGURE 1

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



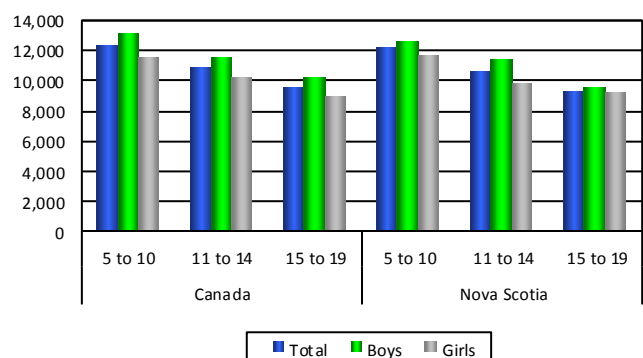
\*Based on 2011-2014 due to sample size in 2014-2016  
CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

### Child and parent characteristics

Based on the latest data, boys take significantly more steps on average than girls in Canada. In Nova Scotia, 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 Nova Scotia, this pattern is generally consistent as 5 to 10 years olds living in the province take more steps on average than youth 11 years and older (years 2014 to 2016).

FIGURE 2

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



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 level or parent's education level at a national level, these relationships are not significant within the province in 2014 to 2016.



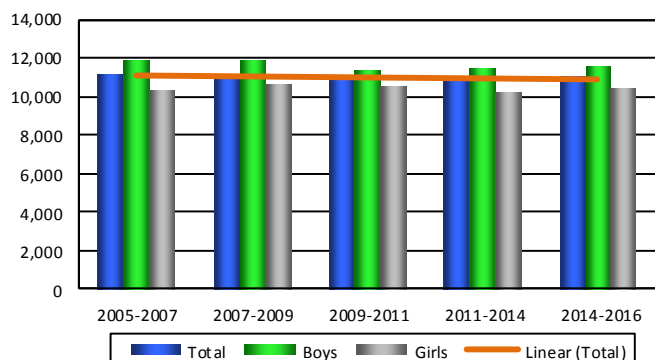
At a national level, children living in the highest income households ( $\geq$ \$100,000 per year) take more steps on average than children and youth living in some lower income households, and this pattern also appears generally in Nova Scotia during 2014 to 2016.

**Trends over time**

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

**FIGURE 3**

Average daily steps taken by children and youth over time, Nova Scotia



CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

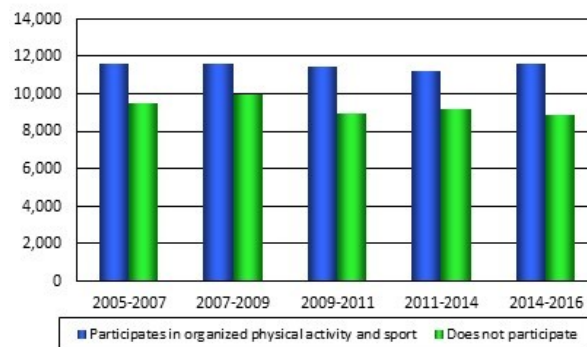
In Canada, the relationship between steps taken and gender is a pattern that has persisted over time. In Nova Scotia, however, boys and girls did not differ significantly in their average number of steps between 2009 and 2016, although previous study years found that boys took more steps than girls in the province. This relationship will have to continue 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 education level and household income level have been less consistent over time in Nova Scotia. The significant relationship nationally between steps and parents’ activity levels that exists over time nationally has generally not been significant in Nova Scotia over the decade.

**FIGURE 4**

Average daily steps taken by participation in organized physical activity and sport over time, Nova Scotia



CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

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