



Kids CAN PLAY!

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

Physical activity levels of children and youth in Ontario

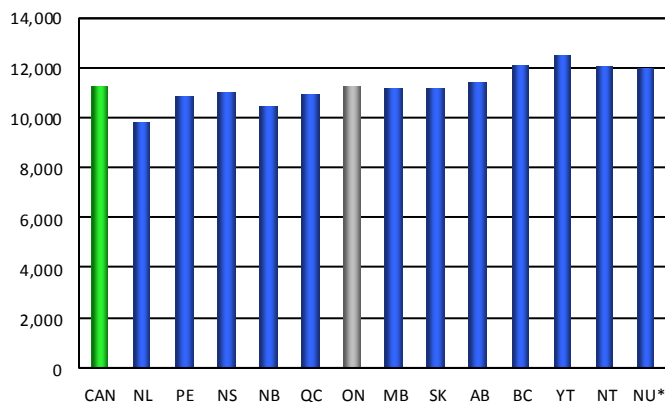
The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY (Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth) study measures physical activity levels of children and youth using pedometers to count daily steps. The study has collected data between 2005 and 2016. Although most of the analyses in this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

FIGURE 1

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



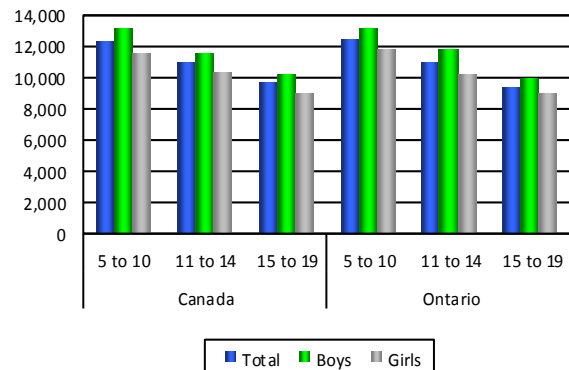
*Based on 2011-2014 due to sample size in 2014-2016
CANPLAY study, 2014-2016, CFLRI

Child and parent characteristics

Based on the latest data, boys take significantly more steps on average than girls in Canada. Similarly, boys take more steps than girls on average in Ontario as well. In Canada, average daily steps decrease with increasing age of the child, and this relationship is similar to the pattern found within the province.

FIGURE 2

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



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. There are significant relationships between average steps taken daily and parent's education level and household income at a national level, and somewhat similar relationships appear in the province between 2014 and 2016.

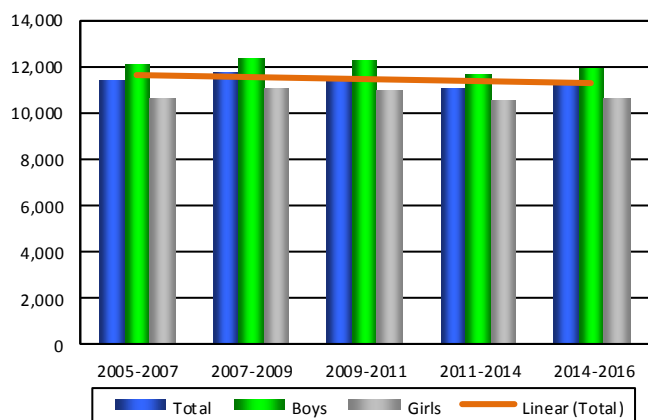


A significant relationship between parent’s activity level and a child’s average number of steps exists nationally and at a provincial level, although it varies slightly. Nationally, children and youth whose parents consider themselves substantially more active than peers of their same age and gender take more steps on average than those who consider themselves less active. In Ontario, children and youth whose parents consider themselves slightly more active or just as active as their peers take more steps on average than those whose parents consider themselves substantially less active.

Trends over time

In Ontario, there have been no significant differences overall in the number of steps taken in 2014 to 2016 compared to each of the study periods in the previous decade. Despite a lack of difference overall, there are some differences within particular groups over time. More specifically, there has been a slight decrease in steps taken between 2014 and 2016 and the study years of 2007 to 2009 among those 11 years and older, children and youth whose parent have a college education, and those living in the highest income households.

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

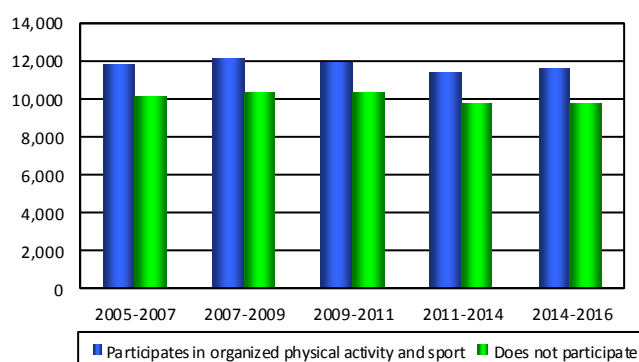


CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

In Canada, the relationship between steps taken and gender has persisted over time, and this same pattern has also remained consistent over time in Ontario as well. The inverse relationship between decreasing steps and increasing age has persisted nationally and also generally speaking within the province over the 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 and education level have been less consistent over time in Ontario. For all study years but one, the relationship between average steps and household income remains somewhat consistent over time; in general terms, children and youth living in the highest income households take more steps on average than those living in lower income households (e.g., \$20,000 to \$29,999 per year).

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



CANPLAY study, 2005-2016, CFLRI

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