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Sharing physical activity knowledge

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Are Canadian kids too tired to move?

2016 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth is the most comprehensive assessment of child and youth physical activity in Canada. The Report Card synthesizes data from multiple sources, including the best available peer-reviewed research, to assign evidence-informed grades across a range of physical activity indicators. This year marks the 12th annual release of the Report Card and the second year that it has been managed by ParticipACTION. Over the years, the Report Card has been replicated in numerous cities, provinces and countries, where it has served as a blueprint for collecting and sharing knowledge about the physical activity of young people around the world.

What’s New

This year’s Report Card showed that there are important inter-relationships among physical activity, sedentary behaviour and sleep, and it highlights new research that shows that sedentary lifestyles are contributing to a creeping “sleepidemic” among children and youth. To curb sleep deprivation, and to inform parents, teachers, and health professionals, the Report Card assigned a grade to sleep for the first time, and included the new Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth: An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep.¹

The new 24-hour guidelines take a whole-day approach and recommend that for maximal health benefits, children and youth need to “Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit” in the right amounts.² For example, if a child gets enough physical activity throughout the day, but watches television late into the night, the health benefits will not be optimal. A visual representation of the guidelines is included on the next page (Figure 1). The guidelines were developed by the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, the Conference Board of Canada, the Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group (HALO), ParticipACTION, and the Public Health Agency of Canada. Additional details on specifics of the guidelines, including the rigorous process that informed their development, can be found on the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology website (www.csep.ca/en/guidelines/get-the-guidelines) and in a future WellSpring issue!

S U M M A R Y

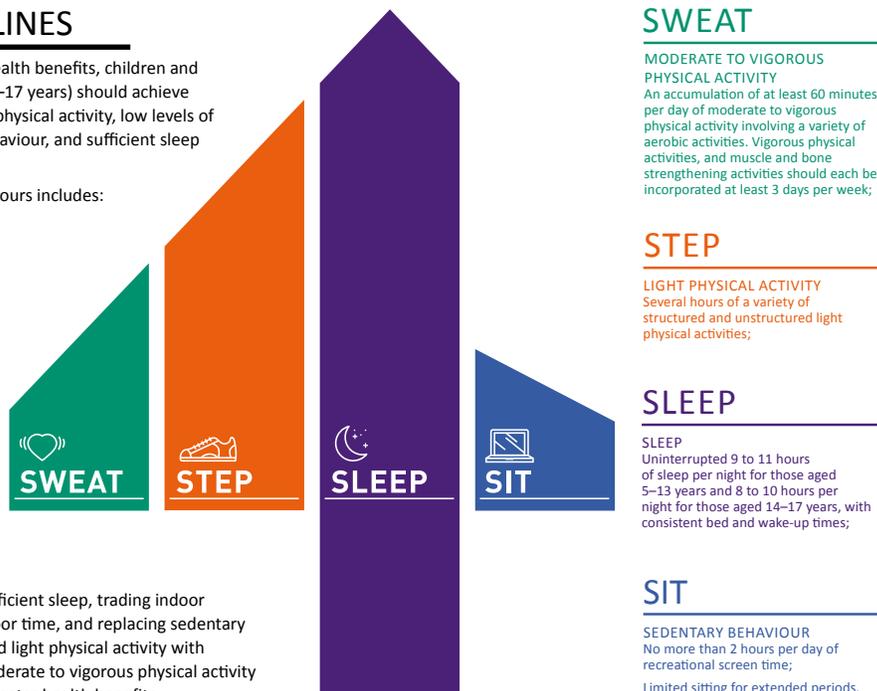
The 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth introduces the important inter-relationships among physical activity, sedentary behaviours and sleep, and for the first time, assigns a grade to sleep. As part of a whole-day approach, the new Canadian 24-hour movement guidelines recommend that children and youth need to “Sweat, Step, Sleep and Sit” in the right amounts.

Key recommendations for parents/families, schools, and governments/policy-makers are provided to help kids sit less, move more, and sleep better.

GUIDELINES

For optimal health benefits, children and youth (aged 5–17 years) should achieve high levels of physical activity, low levels of sedentary behaviour, and sufficient sleep each day.

A healthy 24 hours includes:



Preserving sufficient sleep, trading indoor time for outdoor time, and replacing sedentary behaviours and light physical activity with additional moderate to vigorous physical activity can provide greater health benefits.

Figure 1: The Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth²

Grades for all indicators are as follows¹:

Overall Physical Activity: D-

Organized Sport and Physical Activity Participation: B

Active Play: D+

Active Transportation: D

Physical Literacy: D+

Sleep: B

Sedentary Behaviour: F

Family and Peers: C+

School: B

Community and Environment: A-

Government: B-

Non-Government: A-

Unfortunately, there are very few children meeting current guidelines.^{1,2} For example:

- 9% of children and youth are meeting physical activity guidelines of at least 60 minutes per day of heart pumping activity;
- 79% of children aged 5–13 years are getting the recommended 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night;
- 68% of teens aged 14–17 years are getting 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night; and
- 24% of children and youth meet screen time guidelines of no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time per day.

Results from the 2016 Report Card

In 2016, the majority of the Report Card grades remained the same or decreased from previous years. The grade for Overall Physical Activity remained unchanged at a “D-” for the fourth year in a row due to the fact that there are still very few children and youth meeting physical activity guidelines. The grade for Sedentary Behaviour dropped from a “D-” to an “F” in light of new data that suggest the large majority of children and youth are not meeting screen time guidelines. Although the grade for Sleep is a promising “B”, we know that sleep has decreased by about 30–60 minutes in recent decades.¹

Overall, results are similar to previous years in that there are generally good grades for indicators relating to investment and infrastructure, and poor grades for behavioural indicators. Sedentary Behaviour received the lowest mark. In light of new data, this is the first year that a grade was assigned to Physical Literacy, and a grade was assigned to Active Play for the first time since 2012.

Recommendations

So what can you do to improve the results of the Report Card and help kids sit less, move more and sleep better? ParticipACTION has developed support material to help you use the Report Card now, and in the coming months, to facilitate your efforts to “improve the grades.” Currently, the following tools are available:

- 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card – Highlight Report
- 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card – Full Report
- The Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth
- Links to background research papers for the 24-Hour Movement Guidelines
- Past Report Cards
- PowerPoint presentation
- Media materials
- Social media kit
- Infographics

Throughout the Report Card, and within the support material, ParticipACTION has also tried to put together some tangible recommendations. Some of these include:

▪ Parents/Family

- Ensure kids are getting 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night for those ages 5-13 years, and 8 to 10 hours per night for those aged 14-17 years, with consistent bed and wake-up times.
- Encourage kids to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day (even on weekends).
- Ensure children get an accumulation of at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity involving a variety of aerobic activities.
- Ensure vigorous physical activities and muscle and bone strengthening activities are incorporated at least three days per week.
- Ensure children partake in several hours of a variety of structured and unstructured light physical activities.
- Ensure children receive no more than two hours per day of recreational screen time by developing and adhering to household rules.
- Limit sitting for extended periods.

▪ School

- Gear physical activity opportunities and physical education toward fun and participation, as opposed to competition, to make sure these activities are inclusive.
- All schools in Canada should either employ or be supported by physical education specialists.
- When developing sport and physical activity policies and programs, ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate during school times, in intramural programs, and in recess and lunchtime games, depending on their interest.

▪ Governments/Policy-makers

- Invest in training around understanding the importance of the natural and outdoor environment when it comes to play education.
- Provide leadership development, training and community capacity building for those living in rural or remote communities, for new Canadians and marginalized populations.



- Work with other organizations to understand the investment required to increase physical activity in Canada.
- Enhance capacity and consistency in childcare settings and schools to provide opportunities to develop physical literacy, increase physical activity and decrease sedentary time.

About the 2016 Report Card

ParticipACTION relies on its strategic partner, the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute’s Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group (CHEO-HALO), to research, develop and communicate the Report Card. Production of the ParticipACTION Report Card has been made possible through financial support from RBC, The Lawson Foundation, IA Clarington Investments, and provincial and territorial governments through the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council (ISRC).

To download the 2016 ParticipACTION Report Card Highlight Report, including the Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth, or the full 76-page report, please visit www.participaction.com/reportcard.

You can also reach out to us on social media (@ParticipACTION on both Facebook or Twitter) and via email (info@participaction.com).



References

1. ParticipACTION. Are Canadian kids too tired to move? The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. Toronto 2016.
2. Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology. Canadian 24-hour movement guidelines for children and youth: An integration of physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep. 2016; <http://www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/24hrGlines/Canadian24HourMovementGuidelines2016.pdf>. Accessed 27 June 2016.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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