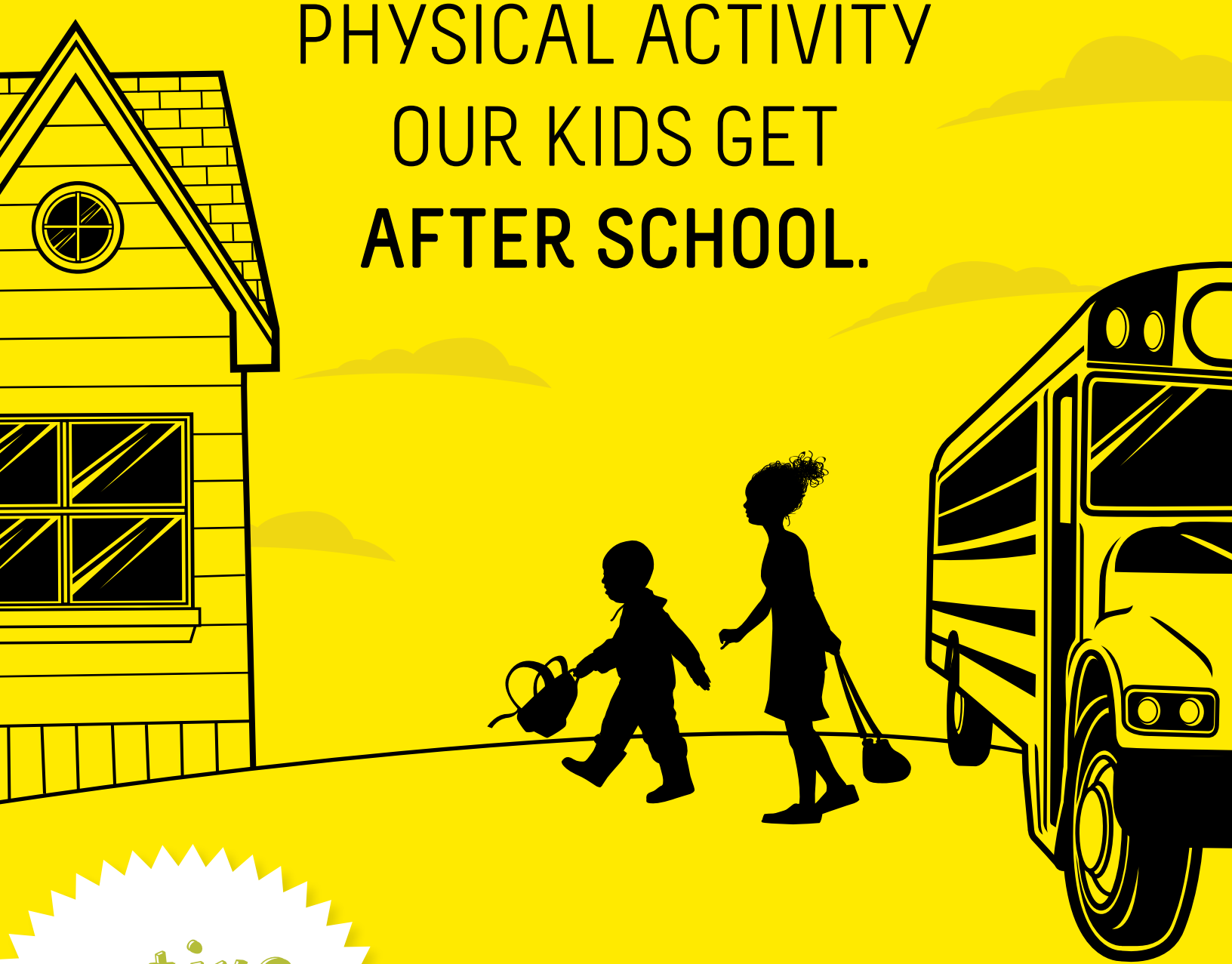
DON'T LET THIS BE THE MOST PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OUR KIDS GET **AFTER SCHOOL.**



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2011

Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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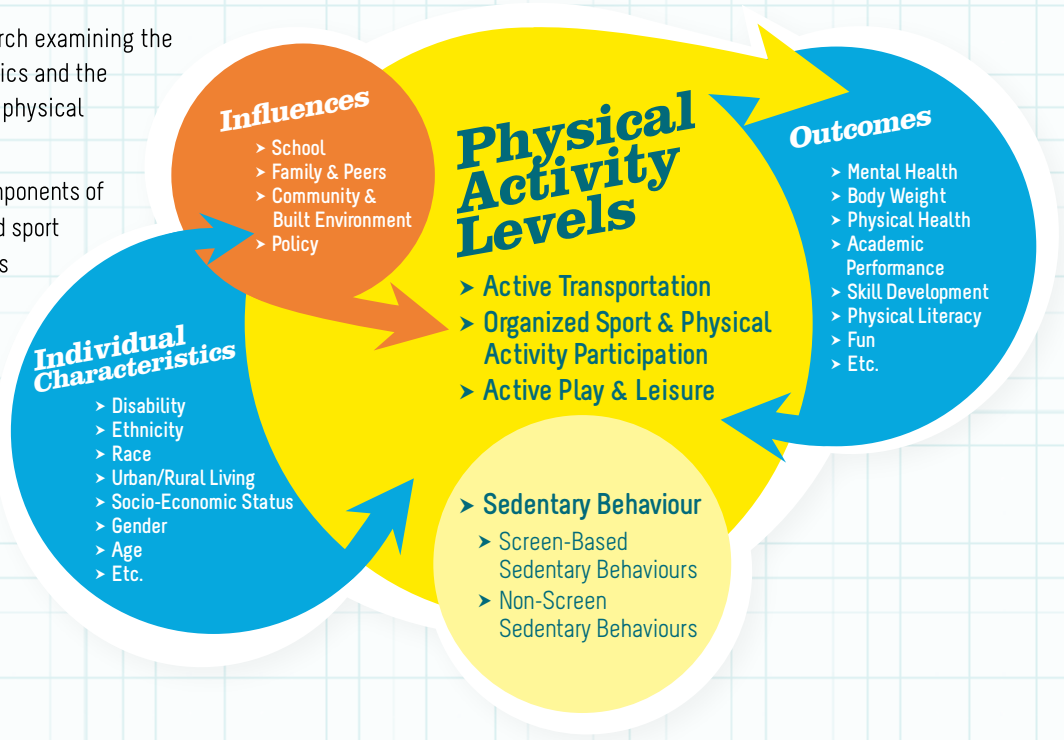
The Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card

offers the most comprehensive annual assessment of child and youth physical activity in Canada.

We also assess and synthesize current research examining the relationships between individual characteristics and the many influences and outcomes connected to physical activity.

Physical activity levels are broken into the components of active play, active transportation, and organized sport and physical activity participation; letter grades are assigned for each. Sedentary behaviour, an important factor to consider in overall daily movement, is also graded. Influences are broken down into indicators grouped under school, family and peers, community and built environment, and policy. They are graded for their effectiveness in facilitating, promoting and encouraging physical activity.

Disparities that exist in relation to income, ability level, region, age and gender are also considered and affect the final grades.



What Are Some of the Solutions?

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PERIOD.

GET OUTSIDE WITH ROOM TO MOVE:

Kids who are outside during the after-school period take about 2,000 more steps per day than kids who are cocooned indoors. This is a substantial amount of activity, roughly equivalent to walking an additional 2 kilometres per day!

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING:

Effective partnerships between school administrators and those who offer sport, recreation and school-aged child care have been demonstrated to facilitate the engagement of students in programming at nearby facilities or delivered in the school itself.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP:

Programs that involve youth in the development of physical activity programs result in higher levels of youth engagement an foster connections with peers.

POLICY AND INVESTMENT SUPPORT:

The after-school period has been identified as a target for physical activity by the Public Health Agency of Canada and all of the provincial and territorial governments. Policy changes by governments and partners are needed to ensure that resources and training for physical activity promotion in the after-school period are available, and sustained.

School's Out...

Do You Know What Your Kids Are Doing?

AFTER SCHOOL. TIME TO GET ACTIVE.

This year, the Report Card is highlighting the critical after-school period, focusing on the influences on physical activity levels that exist in the time between the end of the school day and before the dinner hour –

3pm to 6pm.

Intuitively, it would seem that once school is out for the day, children's activity levels would rise because they are presented with "free time." Anecdotally, we know that most children who grew up a generation or two ago spent this time in active play – running, biking, and playing (usually outside) with their friends. Various data sources suggest that this is not the case today; Canadian children and youth have adopted a modern lifestyle that includes spending a great deal of this after-school time sitting idle indoors.

The low physical activity levels and increasingly sedentary behaviour patterns of Canadian children and youth in the after-school period are startling:

- THE NEWLY RELEASED CANADIAN HEALTH MEASURES SURVEY FINDINGS FROM STATISTICS CANADA INDICATE THAT KIDS ARE SEDENTARY 59% OF THE TIME BETWEEN 3 AND 6 P.M., GETTING ONLY 14 MINUTES OF MODERATE- TO VIGOROUS-INTENSITY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THIS 3-HOUR PERIOD. (2007-09 CHMS)
- 73% OF PARENTS TELL US THEIR KIDS ARE WATCHING TV, READING, OR PLAYING VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES AFTER SCHOOL. THIS NUMBER EXCEEDS THOSE WHO REPORT HOMEWORK, CHORES, OUTDOOR PLAY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY/SPORT IN THIS TIME PERIOD.[9]

Certain groups of Canadian children are at even higher risk than others of being physical inactive in the after-school period.

- BOYS ARE MORE LIKELY THAN GIRLS TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PERIOD.
- CHILDREN IN LOWER-INCOME FAMILIES ARE LESS ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ORGANIZED SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AFTER SCHOOL.

After-school programming that involves physical activity may be inaccessible to some children, making it difficult for them to meet recommended physical activity guideline levels.

- 72% OF PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO A SUPERVISED PROGRAM AFTER SCHOOL.[9]
- FEWER THAN HALF OF THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS REPORTED HAD PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS THE PRIMARY PURPOSE.[9]

A lack of programming for adolescents may be leaving our teens vulnerable to increased sedentary pursuits or even risky behaviours.

- A NATIONAL SCAN OF AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS INDICATES THAT THE VAST MAJORITY, 88%, ARE TARGETED TO CHILDREN AGES 5 TO 12, WITH ONLY 49% OF PROGRAMS EVEN OPEN TO TEENAGERS.[21]
- LACK OF YOUTH PROGRAMMING HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR HEALTH BEHAVIOURS OTHER THAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY; RESEARCH INDICATES THAT AS THE LENGTH OF UNSUPERVISED TIME INCREASES IN THIS AGE GROUP, SO DOES THE RISK FOR EXPERIMENTATION WITH BEHAVIOURS SUCH AS SEXUAL ACTIVITY, AND ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA USE.[14]

Outdoor activity, once a key source of children's after-school physical activity, is on the decline, due in part to parental concerns about supervision and safety.

- 5- TO 19-YEAR-OLDS WHO PLAY OUTDOORS BETWEEN 3 AND 6 P.M. TAKE 2,000 MORE STEPS PER DAY THAN THOSE WHO DON'T PLAY OUTDOORS IN THIS PERIOD.[42]
- WHILE MANY PARENTS OF YOUNGER CHILDREN INDICATE THEIR CHILDREN SPEND SOME TIME PLAYING OUTSIDE AFTER SCHOOL, ONLY 43% OF 13- TO 17-YEAR-OLDS ARE DOING THE SAME.[9]

Complete references are available in the long form Report Card at ***www.activehealthykids.ca***

Physical Activity

F

Physical Activity Levels

According to newly released data from the Canadian Health Measures Survey, only 9% of boys and 4% of girls meet the new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines. The Guidelines state that for health benefits, children and youth should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

- 44% OF CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE GETTING 60 MINUTES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (MVPA) 3 DAYS PER WEEK, AND 78% ARE GETTING 30 MINUTES OF MVPA 3 DAYS PER WEEK.[12]
- CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TAKE ALMOST 2,400 MORE STEPS PER DAY THAN THEIR PEERS IN CANADA.[14]

C

Organized Sport and Physical Activity Participation

- 75% OF PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN PARTICIPATED IN SPORT IN THE PAST YEAR.[9]
- CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE IN ORGANIZED SPORT TAKE 1,600 MORE STEPS PER DAY THAN THOSE WHO DON'T PARTICIPATE IN THESE SPORTS.[42]
- STUDIES INDICATE THAT ORGANIZED SPORT DURING CHILDHOOD IS POSITIVELY RELATED TO FREQUENCY OF LEISURE-TIME PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN EARLY ADULTHOOD.[46]

F

Active Play

- ONE QUEBEC STUDY NOTED THAT ONLY 1 IN 8 CHILDREN ARE ENGAGED IN ACTIVE PLAY 5 DAYS/WEEK IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PERIOD.[47]
- THERE IS A LACK OF DATA AVAILABLE ABOUT THE DEFINITION, FREQUENCY, INTENSITY AND DURATION OF ACTIVE PLAY. MORE RESEARCH IS NEEDED.

D

Active Transportation

- 24% OF CANADIAN PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN USE ONLY ACTIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION IN TRIPS TO AND FROM SCHOOL.[9]
- A REGIONAL STUDY INDICATES THAT 42% OF KIDS ARE DRIVEN TO SCHOOL. THE MAJORITY OF PARENTS WHO CURRENTLY DRIVE INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD ALLOW THEIR CHILDREN TO WALK/CYCLE TO/FROM SCHOOL IF THE KIDS WERE NOT ALONE.[66]

Sedentary Behaviour

F

Screen-Based Sedentary Behaviours

- CHILDREN AND YOUTH ARE GETTING AN AVERAGE OF 6 HOURS PER DAY OF SCREEN TIME OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS, AND OVER 7 HOURS ON WEEKEND DAYS.(2005-06 HBSC)

INC

Non-Screen Sedentary Behaviours

- TOTAL DAILY SEDENTARY TIME FOR CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH AVERAGES 8.6 HOURS, OR 62% OF THEIR WAKING HOURS.[12]
- EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT INCREASED LEVELS OF SEDENTARY BEHAVIOURS, INDEPENDENT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS, ARE ASSOCIATED WITH VARIOUS PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH RISKS.(70-72)

School

C-

Physical Education

- PARENTS REPORT THAT 44% OF CANADIAN CHILDREN GET 1-2 DAYS OF PE CLASSES PER WEEK, 25% GET 3-4 PE CLASSES PER WEEK, AND 22% WHO GET NO DAILY PE.[139]
- ONE STUDY SHOWS THAT DURING PE CLASS, ONLY 2% OF GIRLS AND 3% OF BOYS SPEND AT LEAST HALF OF THE CLASS IN MODERATE TO VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.[78]

B

Sport and Physical Activity Opportunities at School

- PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPORT DECLINES AT THE TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL, AND CONTINUES TO DECLINE THROUGHOUT HIGH SCHOOL.(TTFM)
- 77% OF PARENTS SAY SCHOOLS OFFER OTHER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OR SPORT PROGRAMS OUTSIDE OF REGULAR PE CLASSES.[9]

B

School Infrastructure and Equipment

- MANY SCHOOLS HAVE RENOVATED AND REPLACED PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT. CHILDREN WITH NO PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS ACTIVE, AND USE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER AT SCHOOLS WITH RENOVATED SCHOOLYARDS.[86-87]

C

School Policy

- SCHOOL POLICY, SUPPORTED BY EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION, IS CRITICAL. FOR EXAMPLE, SCHOOLS WITH A WRITTEN POLICY FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SCHOOLS OFFERING ORGANIZED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SEVERAL TIMES/WEEK OUTSIDE OF PE CLASS HAVE HIGHER PROPORTIONS OF STUDENTS WHO REPORTED DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT RECESS.[138]

Family and Peers

D+

Family Physical Activity

- CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED GREATER PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND WHO HAD PARENTS WHO RATED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS HIGHLY ENJOYABLE, WERE MORE LIKELY TO ENGAGE IN 1 OR MORE HOURS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PER DAY. [137]

INC

Peer Influence

- STUDENTS WITH 3 OR MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE FRIENDS WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE MODERATELY ACTIVE THAN STUDENTS WITH FEWER THAN 3 FRIENDS WHO WERE ACTIVE.[100]

Community and the Built Environment

A-

Proximity and Availability

- 93% OF PARENTS SAY PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS ARE AVAILABLE LOCALLY, AND 95% SAY PARKS AND OUTDOORS SPACES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS ARE NEARBY AND AVAILABLE.[9]
- 65% OF PARENTS INDICATE THAT THESE PROGRAMS AND SPACES MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN QUITE WELL.[9]

C

Usage of Facilities, Programs, Parks and Playgrounds

- 61% OF PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN USE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS VERY OFTEN, AND 69% OF PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN USE PARKS AND OUTDOOR SPACES AT LEAST SOMETIMES.[9]

B+

Community Programming

- 93% OF PARENTS SAY PUBLIC PROGRAMS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORTS ARE AVAILABLE LOCALLY,[9] AND 91% OF MUNICIPALITIES REPORT OFFERING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS AND SCHEDULES FOR CHILDREN.[108]

B

Perceptions of Safety and Maintenance

- 66% OF CANADIANS 15 YEARS AND OLDER REPORT THAT THERE ARE MANY SAFE PLACES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES TO WALK, SUCH AS SIDEWALKS AND WALKING TRAILS.[109]
- ONLY 5% OF PARENTS SAY THERE ARE NO SAFE PLACES TO WALK IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.[109]

D-

Municipal Policies and Regulations

- APPROXIMATELY 20% OF SMALL MUNICIPALITIES USE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES IN THEIR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMMING, WHICH SIGNALS A NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT. [109]

INC

Nature and the Outdoors

- 64% OF PARENTS SAY THEIR CHILDREN AND YOUTH PLAY OUTDOORS BETWEEN THE TIME THEY FINISH SCHOOL AND HAVE SUPPER. HOWEVER, THE QUALITY OF THIS INFORMATION IS LIMITED DUE TO OUR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE FREQUENCY, INTENSITY AND DURATION OF THIS OUTDOOR ACTIVITY.[9]
- OUTDOOR PLAY DECLINES AS CHILDREN AND YOUTH AGE. 80% OF 5- TO 12-YEAR-OLDS, VS. 43% OF 13- TO 17-YEAR-OLDS, PLAY OUTDOORS AFTER SCHOOL.[9]

Policy

C

Federal Government Strategies

- WHILE OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE NATIONAL STRATEGIES IN PLACE TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, CANADA REMAINS WITHOUT A COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY, INDICATING A LOW PRIORITY IN THE AREA.

B+

Provincial/Territorial Government Strategies

- THERE IS ENCOURAGING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AT THE PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL LEVEL.

F

Federal Government Investments

- DESPITE AN INCREASINGLY ROBUST BODY OF EVIDENCE THAT PHYSICAL INACTIVITY IS A MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE IN CANADA SIGNIFICANT NEW INVESTMENT HAS NOT BEEN SEEN IN RESPONSE.

C-

Provincial/Territorial Government Investments

- LEADING PROVINCES ARE INVESTING WELL IN HEALTH BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMS (BC: $21.00 PER CAPITA; QC: $16.80 PER CAPITA), BUT THERE IS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN OTHER PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES.[128]

C

Non-Government Strategies and Investments

- FUNDING CONTINUES TO BE LOW DUE TO THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND FRAGILE RECOVERY. SOME ORGANIZATIONS ARE STARTING TO SEE POSITIVE CHANGE IN THIS AREA, WHILE OTHERS CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE FUNDING CHALLENGES.

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Together, We Have the Power to Move Kids.™

THE LONG FORM REPORT CARD, METHODOLOGY, COMPLETE FINDINGS & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Our interdisciplinary research team identifies and assesses Report Card indicators to determine grade assignments based on available data, research and key issue areas, and in consideration of prevalence levels, international comparisons, trends over time, disparities (age, geography, etc.), and newly emerging research and initiatives.

The detailed, or long form version, of this Report Card includes background on our methodology and process, in-depth analysis, summaries of key research, charts and figures, provincial-territorial profile pages, and complete references.

Visit www.activehealthykids.ca to download the long and short versions of the Report Card and access free presentations, articles and media materials that will help you further understand and share the 2011 Report Card findings with others.

Active Healthy Kids Canada relies upon its strategic partners, who play a critical role in the research, content development, and communication of the Report Card:

ParticipACTION

CHEO Research Institute
Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research
Institut de recherche
Recherche sur les saines habitudes de vie et l'obésité

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** The views expressed in the Report Card do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.*