HEALTHY HABITS START EARLIER THAN YOU THINK.
In a 2008 UNICEF study assessing early childhood education and care in economically advanced countries, Canada ranked at the bottom of 25 countries with a key factor reported to be "lack of substantial public investment in education until children reach the age of five."  

Although work is ongoing to fill the gap, Canada does not have physical activity guidelines for children under six. While international guidelines vary, the consensus is that all children aged 1-5 years should participate in at least two hours of physical activity every day, accumulated over many sessions and as part of play, games, transportation and recreation.  

Complete references are available in the long form Report Card at [www.activehealthykids.ca](http://www.activehealthykids.ca)
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

- Active Play
- Active Transportation
- Organized Sport & Physical Activity Participation
- Screen Time

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

- Objectively measured data indicate only 12% of children and youth are meeting Canada’s guidelines of 90 minutes of physical activity a day. [1]
- The proportion meeting the guidelines has decreased slightly from 13% in 2009, but still registers an increase from 9% in 2007, and 10% in 2008. [1]

While the lack of upward movement in the overall number of children and youth meeting guidelines is discouraging, there is good and bad news when we delve deeper into the numbers. Canadian Ministers of Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation set a target in 2008 to increase the proportion meeting guidelines to 17% by 2015. Currently, 20% of boys aged 5-10 years and 15% of boys aged 11-14 years are meeting the guidelines, but only 5% of adolescent girls are getting enough activity. When we break down the numbers further and assess against international guidelines, we find that the proportion of children and youth achieving 60 minutes of physical activity a day is 31% – still well below half of Canadian kids. [1]
Physical Activity Breakdown By Province & Territory
No provinces or territories are meeting the Canadian physical activity guideline of 90 minutes of daily activity. The long form Report Card includes detailed pages for each province and territory, including step count data and information from representatives on strategies they are each implementing to overcome challenges they face in increasing physical activity in their region.

Organized Sport and Physical Activity Participation
- Children involved in organized sport and physical activity programs have higher overall levels of physical activity.
- Income disparity consistently emerges in relation to organized sport participation. Despite being aimed at lower income families, the Canadian Fitness Tax Credit appears to benefit middle and upper income families more.234

Active Play
- 74% of a group of children in Ontario said they would like to do something active after school if they had the choice.241
- Children in the early years are increasingly spending a large proportion of their time in daycare settings where active play should be commonplace. However, recent research indicates daycare settings are predominantly sedentary.25

Active Transportation
- Children who actively commute to school get more daily physical activity, but regional data show that less than 1/3 of children and youth use active transportation to get to and from school.243
- A Quebec study shows those who actively commute in kindergarten have healthier body weights in grades 1 and 2.247

Screen Time
- Canadian youth are accumulating 6 hours of screen time on weekdays and over 7 hours on weekend days.16,52
- High screen time is associated with reduced academic achievement, as well as high-risk behaviours, such as smoking, drinking and sexual intercourse.98, 99, 100

Physical Education
- There are discrepancies between PE time mandated and PE time implemented in schools.
- A US study showed adolescents who participated in PE every day decreased the odds of being overweight as adults by 28%.156
- Manitoba is the only province/territory with mandated daily PE up to grade 12.

School Policy
- Many schools in Canada have school-based policies relating to physical activity, however evidence of actual implementation is sparse.
Family Physical Activity
- Only 27% of parents say they know what Canada’s physical activity guidelines are. A US study showed 4-year-old children with household routines of regular family meals, adequate sleep and limited screen time had 40% lower risk of obesity.

Peer Influence
- While there is not enough evidence to assign a grade, one study found that friends were the most important factor in young women’s participation in sport and physical activity. Another study found that 35% of kids cited peers as a reason they enjoy physical activity and sport.

Proximity and Accessibility
- Well over half of Canadians have physical activity facilities nearby and accessible to them.

Usage of Facilities, Programs, Parks, and Playgrounds
- Less than half of Canadian children and youth use the community physical activity amenities available to them.

Community Programming
- Well over half of Canadians agree there are a variety of appropriate programs available in their neighbourhood. 49% of parents agree that cost is a barrier to using them.

Perceptions of Safety and Maintenance
- Well over half of Canadians perceive their neighbourhood to be safe enough to walk in and engage in other physical activities with their children.

Municipal Policies and Regulations
- 96% of 24 major municipalities surveyed in Canada have a community-level policy that hinders physical activity participation in children and youth.

Family Physical Activity
- Only 27% of parents say they know what Canada’s physical activity guidelines are. A US study showed 4-year-old children with household routines of regular family meals, adequate sleep and limited screen time had 40% lower risk of obesity.

Peer Influence
- While there is not enough evidence to assign a grade, one study found that friends were the most important factor in young women’s participation in sport and physical activity. Another study found that 35% of kids cited peers as a reason they enjoy physical activity and sport.

Proximity and Accessibility
- Well over half of Canadians have physical activity facilities nearby and accessible to them.

Usage of Facilities, Programs, Parks, and Playgrounds
- Less than half of Canadian children and youth use the community physical activity amenities available to them.

Community Programming
- Well over half of Canadians agree there are a variety of appropriate programs available in their neighbourhood. 49% of parents agree that cost is a barrier to using them.

Perceptions of Safety and Maintenance
- Well over half of Canadians perceive their neighbourhood to be safe enough to walk in and engage in other physical activities with their children.

Municipal Policies and Regulations
- 96% of 24 major municipalities surveyed in Canada have a community-level policy that hinders physical activity participation in children and youth.

Federal Government Strategies
- There is no ‘stand-alone’ strategy focused on physical activity and this is indicative of low priority given to the issue.

Provincial/Territorial Government Strategies
- Nine of the 13 provinces and territories have developed specific physical activity strategies, one has consultations underway to develop a strategy, and one has a physical activity strategic area included as part of its “Wellness Strategy.”

Federal Government Investment
- While federal spending in real dollars per capita has risen since 2005, it is still half the amount that it was in 1986.

Provincial/Territorial Government Investment
- Spending in provinces and territories has been steadily increasing over time and is double what it was in the 1980s in the five provinces where data could be obtained.

Industry, Philanthropic, and Research Investments
- Funding has dropped in many sectors, largely because of the economic downturn.
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 2010 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:

Production of the Report Card has been made possible through financial support from the Public Health Agency of Canada* and the following partners:

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

ACTIVEHEALTHYKIDS.CA

ACTIVE HEALTHY KIDS CANADA . 2 BLOOR STREET EAST, SUITE 1804 . TORONTO, ON M4W 1A8

TOGETHER, WE HAVE THE POWER TO MOVE KIDS.™