

2020 ParticipACTION report card on physical activity for children and youth ^[1]

Source: ParticipACTION

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AVAILABILITY

Access full PDF online ^[2]

Excerpts from Spotlight:

A Notable Highlight: The Early Years

Numerous health benefits of physical activity are seen in young children (0- to 4-year-olds). A recent systematic review of nearly 100 research studies from 36 countries found that physical activity – MVPA and total daily physical activity – is associated with improved motor development (e.g., running, jumping, hopping), cognitive development (e.g., language development, executive functioning, attention), psychosocial health (e.g., self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, aggression) and cardiometabolic health (e.g., blood pressure, insulin resistance).³⁰⁵ Additionally, in observational studies, physical activity has been found to be positively associated with favourable motor development, physical fitness (e.g., cardiorespiratory fitness) and bone/skeletal health (e.g., bone mineral density).³⁰⁵ A link also exists between physical activity and more positive body composition indicators (e.g., overweight, obesity, body mass index); however, the relationship is not as consistent in the early years as it is in older age groups.

The Influence of the Childcare Environment

As with the school setting, the childcare setting offers potential for physical activity promotion in the early years, which is an important avenue for increased efforts, given that many young children spend substantial portions of their day in these venues.

Current evidence suggests that in Canadian centre-based childcare settings, children are more physically active outdoors (approximately 40% of the time) compared to indoors (approximately 20% of the time). However, almost 60% of time spent outdoors is sedentary.

The first systematic review of research on physical activity levels among preschoolers in home-based childcare settings found that physical activity appears to be well below the recommended 180 minutes per day, but also varies substantially by study; therefore, further research is warranted.

A recent systematic review (n = 55) that focused on centre-based childcare highlighted wide ranges of physical activity participation among preschoolers, but consistently noted high sedentary time in this group.

No significant differences in habitual daily or hourly rates of physical activity or sedentary time were noted among a nationally representative sample of preschoolers from four childcare environments (centre-based, home-based, stayed at home with parent, school).

When three different early learning environments were compared in Ontario (centre-based childcare, home-based childcare and full-day kindergarten), children in full-day kindergarten accumulated more MVPA than children in the other two environments and also accumulated more daily physical activity at any intensity compared to those in a centre-based childcare environment.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: child development ^[4]

early childhood education and care ^[5]

play ^[6]

Source URL (modified on 21 Jul 2020): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/20/07/2020-participation-report-card-physical-activity-children>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/20/07/2020-participation-report-card-physical-activity-children> ^[2]

https://participation.cdn.prismic.io/participation/f6854240-ef7c-448c-ae5c-5634c41a0170_2020_Report_Card_Children_and_Youth_Full_Report.pdf ^[3]

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