

# Getting Kids Active!

2010 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MONITOR: FACTS & FIGURES



## Availability, use, and suitability of parks and outdoor spaces

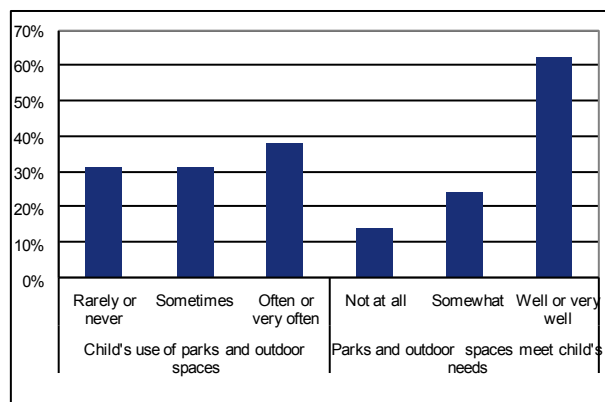
The 2010 Physical Activity Monitor asked parents' about the availability of parks and outdoor spaces in their community where children can be active. Parents were also asked about their child's use of these parks and outdoor spaces and how well these types of places meet their child's needs. The majority of parents (94%) report having local parks and outdoor spaces in their communities. Roughly two out of five parents (39%) say that their child uses these local parks and outdoor spaces often or very often, 31% sometimes use them, and 30% rarely or never do. Approximately three out of five parents (62%) indicate that these places meet their children's needs quite or very well, and 14% say that they do not meet their needs very well or at all. Parents residing in the Atlantic region are less likely than parents nationally to report the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces, that their children use these types of places often or very often, and that they meet their needs quite or very well.

### Parent's age and sex

There are no significant differences between mothers and fathers in reporting the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces. While parental age is not a significant factor in reporting the

FIGURE 1

Child's use and suitability of parks and outdoor spaces, overall, 2010

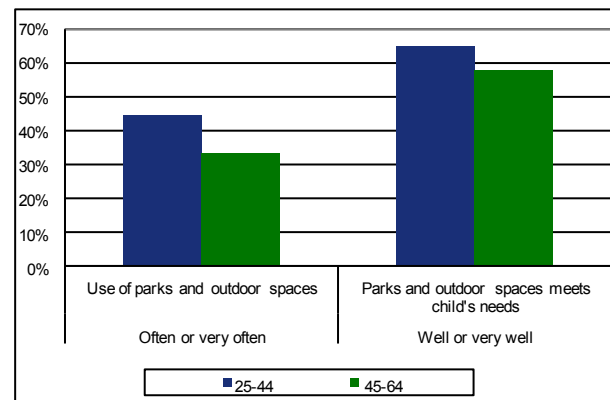


Physical Activity Monitor 2010, CFLRI

availability of parks and outdoor spaces, a greater proportion of younger parents (aged 25 to 44 years) indicate that these places meet their children's needs quite or very well and that their child uses them often or very often. Conversely, a greater proportion of older parents (45 to 64 years old) say that these types of places do not meet their child's needs well or at all and that their child rarely or never use them.

FIGURE 2

Child's use and suitability of parks and outdoor spaces, by parent's age, 2010



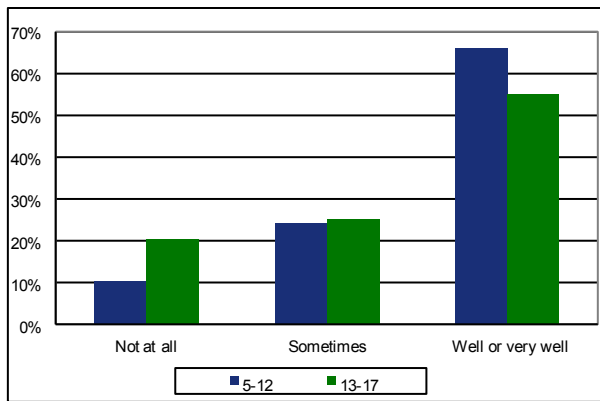
Physical Activity Monitor 2010, CFLRI

### Child's age and sex

There were no gender- or age-related differences in the reported availability of local parks and outdoor spaces. A greater proportion of parents of younger children (aged 5 to 12 years) indicate that the parks and outdoor spaces meet their child's needs quite or very well and that their children use them often or very often. Conversely, parents of teens (aged 13 to 17 years) are more likely to say that their child rarely or never use these types of places, and do not meet needs very well or at all.



**FIGURE 3**  
Suitability of parks and outdoor spaces, by child's age, 2010

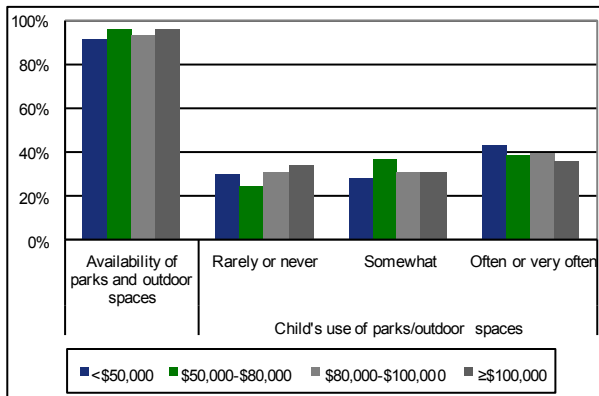


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**Socio-economic and demographic characteristics**

Parents from the highest income households ( $\geq$ \$100,000 per year) are more likely than those from the lowest income households ( $<$ \$50,000 per year) to report the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces, and are also more likely than those from lower income households (2nd quartile, \$50,000 to \$80,000) to indicate that their child rarely or never uses them. A greater proportion of parents with a university education indicate that there are local parks and outdoor spaces available where their children can be active compared to those with a high school education or less. Those parents who live in the smallest communities ( $<$ 1,000 residents) are least likely to report the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces, and parents living in the largest communities ( $\geq$ 250,000 residents) are generally more likely than smaller ( $<$ 10,000 residents) to say that the parks and outdoor spaces meet their child's needs quite or very well.

**FIGURE 4**  
Availability and child's use of parks and outdoor spaces, by household income, 2010

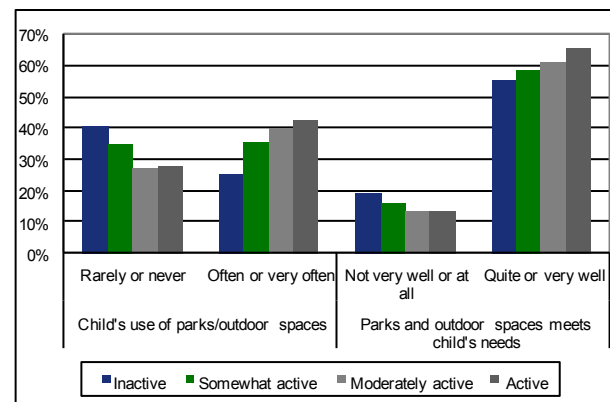


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**Activity level and sport participation**

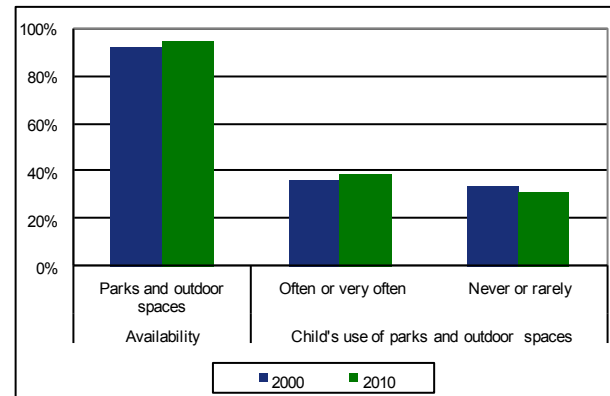
Inactive parents are least likely to report the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces, are less likely than active parents to say that these places meet their child's needs quite or very well, or that their child uses these places often or very often. Conversely, inactive parents are more likely than parents who are active or moderately active to say their children never or rarely use local parks and outdoor spaces. Parents of children who participate in sport are more likely than parents whose children do not to indicate that that their child uses these types of places often or very often.

**FIGURE 5**  
Childs' use and suitability of parks and outdoor spaces, by parent's activity level, 2010



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**FIGURE 6**  
Availability and child's use of parks and outdoor spaces, trends, 2000-2010



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## Trends

The proportion of parents reporting that there are parks and outdoor spaces in their community where children can be active has remained very high over time. Although there have been no changes in the overall proportion citing the frequency with which children use these types of places over time, there has been a very slight decrease over the past decade in the proportion of parents who say these places do not meet their child's needs well or at all.

There were some very slight increases in reporting the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces among specific groups over time: among parents of girls, young children (aged 5 to 12), and young parents (aged 25 to 44).

There were also slight decreases between 2000 and 2010 in the proportion of certain groups indicating that local parks and outdoor spaces do not meet their child's activity needs. Specifically, among: parents of boys; teenagers; younger parents (aged 25 to 44 years); parents with less than a high school education and those with a university education. Conversely, older parents (aged 45 to 64 years) and parents with older children (aged 13 to 17 years) were more likely in 2010 compared to 2000 to indicate that these places were very well suited to their child's needs.

Increases in reported frequent use of local parks and outdoor spaces were evident in 2010 compared to 2000. Specifically, older parents (aged 45 to 64) and parents of teenagers (aged 13 to 17 years) are now more likely to say that their child uses these places often or very often.

Two new relationships in 2010 have emerged, that were not evident previously, namely the relationship between household income and parental education level with the availability of local parks and outdoor spaces.

## Distance to parks and playgrounds

In addition to the availability and use of local parks and outdoor spaces, the 2010 Physical Activity Monitor also asked parents the approximate distance to the nearest park or playground in their community. Among parents,

- 42% said the nearest park or playground was less than 1 or 2 blocks from their home,
- a further 18% said that it was slightly further than this, at less than a ½ a kilometer away,
- an additional 12% reported that it was less than 1 kilometer away,
- 10% said it was approximately 1 to 2 kilometers away from home, and
- 16% indicated that it was 2 or more kilometers away.

Regional location is also associated with reported distance to parks and playgrounds. Compared to the national average, relatively more parents living in the West indicate that they live 1 to 2 blocks away from a park or playground, whereas relatively fewer parents living in Quebec and the Atlantic region report this. Relatively fewer parents living in the North report living less than a kilometer

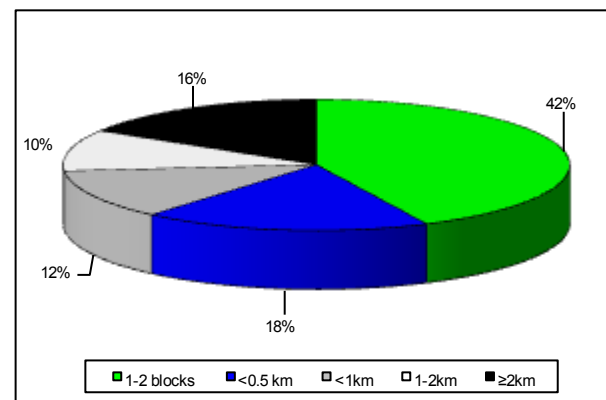
away from a park or playground, whereas relatively more parents in Quebec say this. Compared to the national average, relatively more parents living in the Atlantic and Quebec say that the nearest park or playground is approximately 1 to 2 kilometers from their home, while parents in the Atlantic are more likely to say that the nearest park or playground is 2 or more kilometers from their home.

## Socio-economic and demographic characteristics

Distance to a playground or park is associated with parental education level and household income. Compared to those with a high school education or less, a greater proportion of parents with a university education report living within close proximity to a park or playground (1 to 2 blocks) and are generally the least likely to indicate that they live 2 or more kilometers away from a park or playground. Parents from lower household incomes (<\$50,000 per year) are more likely to indicate that they live 2 or more kilometers from a park or playground compared to those from the highest household incomes (≥\$100,000/year). Reporting of short distances to a playground or park (i.e., 1 to 2 blocks) generally increases among those living in larger communities, whereas those residing great distances (i.e., 2 or more kilometers) away from a park or playground is more prevalent among those living in small communities.

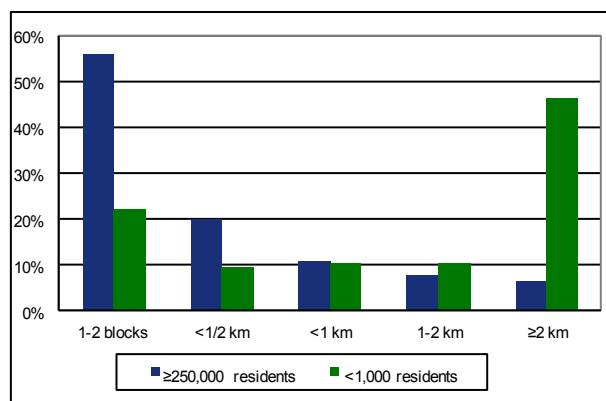
FIGURE 7

Distance to nearest park and playground, overall, 2010



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**FIGURE 8**  
Distance to nearest park and playground, by selected community size, 2010



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