



# Kids CAN PLAY!

Encouraging children to be active at home, at school, and in their communities

## Sedentary pursuits during the after school time period

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY study (Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth study) assesses activity levels of children and youth by using pedometers to measure daily steps. The study has been conducted annually since 2005. This bulletin reports on data collected from 2011 to 2014. In addition to the step data, parents were asked about their children's activity patterns. This bulletin describes some sedentary pursuits that children participate in during the period between the end of school and dinner. Seven out of ten (70%) children and youth do homework and three-quarters (75%) of children and youth participate in other sedentary activities such as watching television, read, play video or computer games.

### Region

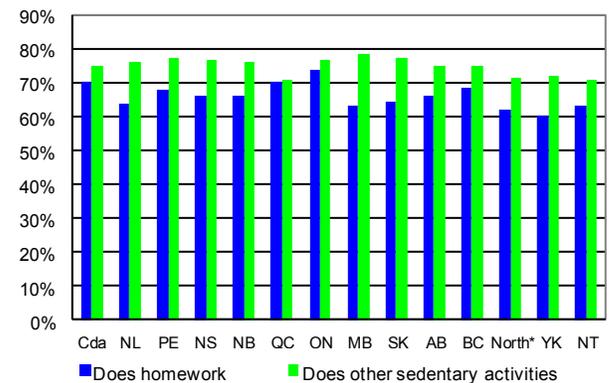
Compared to the national average, a lower proportion of parents living Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories indicate that their children do homework during the period between the end of school and dinner, whereas a higher proportion of children and youth living in Ontario do so. Children and youth living in Quebec are less likely to participate in other sedentary activities after school, whereas those in Manitoba are more likely than the national average to do so.

### Child characteristics

More girls than boys do homework during the after school time period, whereas more boys than girls participate in other types of sedentary activities such as watching television, reading, playing video or computer games. A higher proportion of 11 to 14 year olds do homework and participate in other types of sedentary activities during the after school time period compared to younger children (5 to 10 year olds) and older youth (15 to 19 year olds). This age-related pattern for homework appears for both boys and girls. Indeed, 11 to 14 year old girls are the most likely to do homework during this period compared to all other children. Similarly, a greater proportion of older girls (15 to 19 year olds) do

FIGURE 1

Sedentary pursuits after school by region

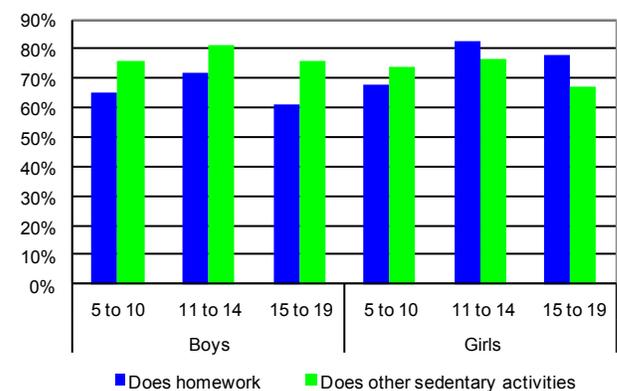


\* The North includes Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon. Data for Nunavut is suppressed in the chart due to cell size.

CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Sedentary pursuits after school by age and sex



CANPLAY studies, 2011-2014, CFLRI



homework compared to boys of the same age. There are no significant gender differences among younger children (5 to 10 year olds) doing homework after school.

The age-related pattern (i.e., 11 to 14 year olds being most likely) also appears for boys for participating in other sedentary activities. Older girls (15 to 19 year olds) are less likely than girls younger than 15 to participate in other types of sedentary activities. Boys aged 11 to 19 are more likely than girls of the same age to participate in these sedentary activities.

### Parent and household characteristics

A greater proportion of children and youth whose parents consider themselves to be *substantially more* active than their peers do homework after school compared to those whose parents consider themselves *slightly more* active or *slightly less* active than their peers. A greater proportion of children and youth whose parents consider themselves *slightly less* active than their peers participate in other types of sedentary activities after school compared to those whose parents consider themselves *more active* (*substantially* or *slightly more* active).

Children whose parents have a university education are more likely to do homework during the after school period compared to those who have less than a secondary education. There are no education-related differences related to children's participation in other sedentary activities after school. There are varied findings related to household income. Children and youth living in the highest income households ( $\geq$ \$100,000 per year) are more likely to do homework during the after school period compared to those living in households with a slightly lower income (\$60,000 to \$79,999 per year). A greater proportion of children and youth living in the lowest income households (less than \$20,000 per year) participate in other types of sedentary activities after school compared to those living in the highest income households ( $\geq$ \$100,000 per year).

### Daily steps taken by participation in sedentary activities after school

Children and youth who do homework during the after school period take slightly fewer steps on average compared to those who do not. These differences are significant among the following groups:

- girls
- both those who participate in organized physical activities and sports and those who do not
- those whose parents have a college education
- certain income levels (those living in households with annual incomes of \$60,000 to \$79,999).

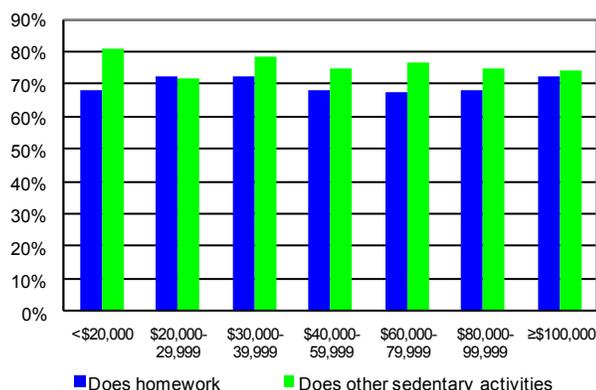
Children and youth who undertake other sedentary activities (watching television, reading, playing video or computer games) after school take fewer steps on average than those who do not participate in these types of activities. This difference is significant among the following groups:

- boys
- 11 to 14 year olds
- those whose parents are substantially more active
- those who participate in organized physical activities and sports
- those whose parents have a university education
- those living in the highest income households
- those living in New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

Table 1 highlights the differences in parental or household characteristics between those who participate in sedentary activities after school and those who do not.

**FIGURE 3**

Sedentary pursuits after school by household income



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**TABLE 1**

Parental and household characteristics in average steps between those who participate in sedentary activities and those who do not

<b>Children and youth who do homework after school</b>	<b>Children and youth who do <u>not</u> do homework after school</b>
Children whose parents are more active take more steps than those who are slightly less active than their peers	No difference by parental activity level
Children whose parents have a university education take more steps than those with a college education	No difference by parental education level
Children living in highest income households take more steps than those living in households with incomes between \$40,000 to \$79,999 annually	No difference by household income level
Children living in Yukon take more steps than the national average	No provincial/territorial differences
<b>Children and youth who do other sedentary activities after school</b>	<b>Children and youth who do <u>not</u> do other sedentary activities after school</b>
No difference by household income level	Children living in highest income households take more steps than those living in households of \$20,000 to \$29,999
Children living in Yukon take more steps than the national average	No provincial/territorial differences

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