



Let's Get Active!

Planning Effective Communication Strategies

2008 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MONITOR: FACTS & FIGURES



Intention to be active

The 2008 Physical Activity Monitor asked Canadians about their intentions to become more active within the next six months. Almost half (49%) of Canadians say that they fully intend to be more active in the next six months, 45% have moderate-to-strong intentions, whereas 6% have little or no intention to become more active.

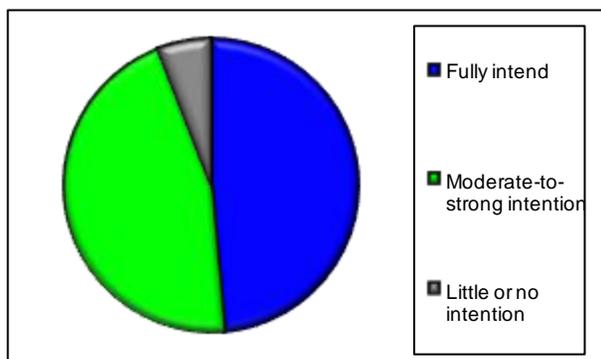
Individuals who had strong intentions to be active were also asked about the reasons for wanting to become active:

- 39% said to stay fit or to maintain health
- 12% to maintain weight
- 10% to lose weight
- 8% find physical activity fun, exciting, or enjoy it
- 7% to maintain functional ability with age
- 7% to reduce disease risk.

There are some regional differences with respect to intention, namely, greater proportions of residents in Newfoundland and Labrador, British Columbia, and the Yukon say that they fully intend to be more active compared to the Canadian average.

FIGURE 1

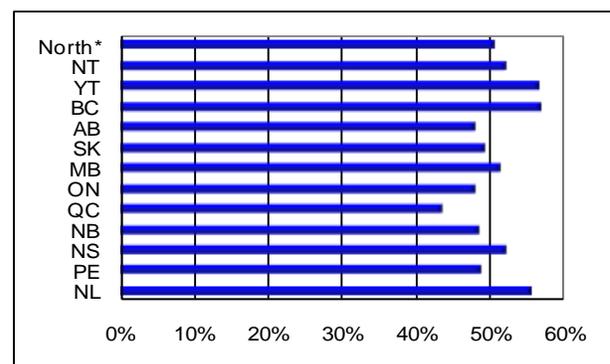
Intention to be active, overall



Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI

FIGURE 2

Fully intend to be active, by province/territory



* 'North' includes Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut

Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI

Compared to the national average,

- Quebec residents are more likely to say that they intend to be active to stay fit and maintain health, yet are less likely to say that they intend to be active to maintain weight.
- Ontario and Alberta residents are less likely to intend to be active to stay fit or maintain health.

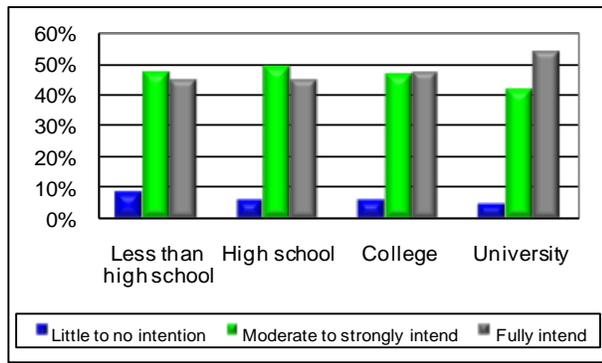
Socio-economic and demographic characteristics

There are no gender- or age-related differences related to intention.

- Adults with a university education or those from the highest income households are most likely to fully intend to be active.
- A greater proportion of residents from large communities (250,000+ residents) fully intend to be active compared to those in small communities (1,000 to 9,999 residents).

FIGURE 3

Intention to be active, by education level

*Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI*

Among those who have strong intention to be active:

- more women than men intend to be active to lose weight;
- more men intend to be active because it is considered fun, exciting, or enjoyable, or as part of work, chores, or school; and
- a higher proportion of older adults intend to be active in order to maintain functional ability with age, whereas fewer older adults cite losing or maintaining weight as reasons.

Reasons differ by employment status. Compared to the national average:

- homemakers are more likely to be active to lose weight;
- students are more likely to say they find activity fun, exciting, and enjoyable; and
- retirees are less likely to cite losing or maintaining weight as a reason, but are more likely to cite staying fit, or maintaining health and functional ability as reasons to be active.

Physical activity and sport participation

There is a substantial increase in the proportion fully intending to be active with increasing activity level. Similarly, a higher proportion of sport participants than non-participants say that they fully intend to be active. Conversely, sedentary adults and those who do not participate in sport tend to report little or no intention to become more active.

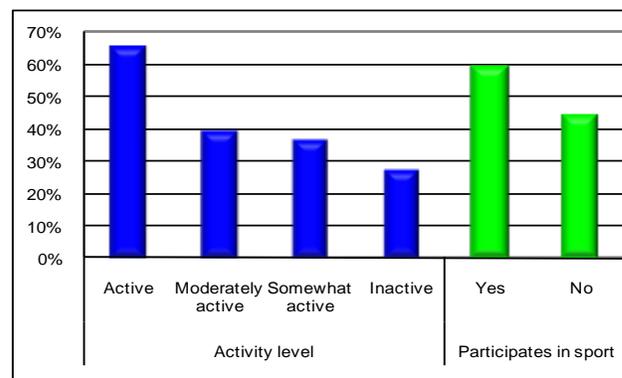
Active individuals and sport participants are generally more likely to say that they intend to be active because they find activity fun, exciting, and enjoyable. In contrast, they are less likely to cite losing weight as a reason. Relatively more sedentary adults cite work, chores, or school as reasons to be active. Those that do not participate in sport are more likely to say that they intend to be active to lose weight or maintain functional ability with age.

Trends over time

Since 1998, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of adults who fully intend to be active from 39% in 1998 to 49% in 2008. Differences related to activity level and education persist over time. Noted differences related to community size and income have newly emerged in 2008.

FIGURE 4

Full intention to be active, by activity level and sport participation

*Physical Activity Monitor 2008, CFLRI*

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