

ParticipACTION's 2021 Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults: a physical inactivity crisis deepened by the pandemic

TORONTO, November 30, 2021 /CNW/ — Today, ParticipACTION released its second Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults, showing that the majority of adults living in Canada are still not meeting daily recommended physical activity levels, furthering Canada's physical inactivity crisis.

Since ParticipACTION's first adult report card in 2019, opportunities and intentions to get active have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health restrictions meant that active commutes to work or school (e.g., university, college), going to the gym, participating in recreational activities and other once accessible ways to stay active either became less of a priority or were no longer available.

Sedentary behaviours remain high among adults in Canada. Less than half of adults take at least 7,500 steps per day,ⁱ and only 12 per cent of adults spend less than eight hours of sedentary time per day, earning Canadians an "F" for sedentary behaviours.ⁱ Canadians also received an "F" on active transportation, with very few using active travel like walking or cycling to get from place to place.

"The evidence is clear that opportunities exist for adults in Canada to adopt more active lifestyles," says Dr. John Spence, Board Vice Chair, Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. "While the pandemic exposed our tendency to gravitate towards sedentary behaviours, the importance of spending time outdoors and embracing physical activity were also highlighted. Engaging in daily movement is one of the best things we can do for our overall health and well-being."

A physically active future is vital for Canadians' mental and physical health, and social well-being. Physical activity not only prevents heart disease, type 2 diabetes and dementia, but it also helps minimize symptoms of depression and anxiety and promote feelings of happiness. Physical inactivity costs our health-care system over \$6.8 billion a year, and COVID-19 has starkly highlighted how fragile the entire system can become. Investments in physical activity can help lessen the blow by minimizing overall costs and supporting the overall health of everyone living in Canada.

"This year's Report Card once again highlights the urgent need to support a well-resourced national physical activity strategy," says Elio Antunes, President & CEO, ParticipACTION. "Regular physical activity is not a 'nice-to-have' for those who can afford it— it is a necessity of life. We are calling on the Government of Canada to commit to prioritizing and tackling our physical inactivity crisis. We urgently need to take collective action to ensure that healthy choices are the easy choices for everyone living in Canada."

ParticipACTION recently [published an open letter](#) urging the need for inclusive, innovative policies, investments, programs and infrastructure that promote, incentivize and celebrate the benefits of physical activity.

Visit [ParticipACTION.com](https://www.participaction.com) to download the Adult Report Card to learn more about the evidence surrounding our national physical inactivity crisis and [sign ParticipACTION's open letter](#) to urge the Government of Canada to make physical activity a necessity of life.

About ParticipACTION

ParticipACTION is a national non-profit organization that inspires and supports Canadians to make physical activity a vital part of their everyday lives. As Canada’s premier physical activity brand, ParticipACTION works with its partners, which include organizations in the sport, physical activity and recreation sectors, alongside government and corporate sponsors, to help Canadians reduce sedentary time and move more through innovative engagement initiatives and thought leadership. ParticipACTION is generously supported by the Government of Canada. Learn how ParticipACTION has been moving Canadians for 50 years at ParticipACTION.com and download the free ParticipACTION app to access a fun, evidence-informed tool that empowers you on your physical activity journey.

About the ParticipACTION Report Card on Adult Physical Activity

Led by a team of Canadian researchers and stakeholders in the field of adult physical activity and sport, the ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults represents a comprehensive synthesis of the literature and related national-level surveys. The Report Card assigns letter grades to 18 different indicators grouped into four categories: Daily Behaviours; Individual Characteristics; Spaces, Places & Cultural Norms; and Strategies & Investments. ParticipACTION relies on its strategic data partner, the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute, and members of our Report Card Research Committee, to research, develop and communicate the Report Card.

The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults and the Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth create a family of Report Cards – together, the most comprehensive assessment of physical activity in Canada. The reports will prompt new research and investments, as well as influence programs and policies.

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ⁱ Statistics Canada, custom tabulation, Canadian Health Measures Survey, Cycle 6 (2018 and 2019)