

# Pandemic-Related Challenges & Opportunities for Physical Activity

We're only beginning to understand how COVID-19 has impacted the health and movement behaviours of children (5–11 years) and youth (12–17 years) in Canada.

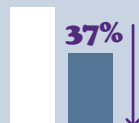
These four key grades from the 2022 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth highlight how many structured opportunities to get active and play were lost during the pandemic, but many families and community leaders still found ways to get kids active.



## Overall Physical Activity

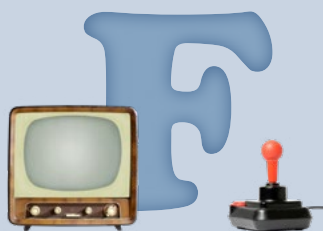


Only **17.5%** of children met the moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) recommendation of 60 mins/day at the height of the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>



The percentage of youth meeting the MVPA recommendation dropped from **51%** pre-pandemic to **37%** during the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

## Sedentary Behaviours



**16.5%** of children met the screen time recommendation of 2 hours/day at the start of the pandemic.<sup>2,3</sup>



Only **3%** of youth met the screen time recommendation of 2 hours/day at the start of the pandemic.<sup>4</sup>

## Active Transportation



**46%** of parents indicated that their children either solely commute actively to school or commute partially in an active way.<sup>5</sup>

## Active Play



**25%** of children and youth achieved >840 mins/week (>2 hours/day on average) of total time engaged in indoor and outdoor unstructured play.<sup>5</sup>



At the height of the pandemic, children's and youth's time spent outdoors and engaged in active play increased compared to the start of the pandemic but was still below pre-pandemic levels.<sup>3</sup>

### References

- 1 Watt & Colley. (2021). Youth – but not adults – reported less physical activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. StatCan COVID-19: Data to Insights for a Better Canada. Catalogue no. 45-28-0001.
- 2 Moore et al. (2020). Impact of the COVID-19 virus outbreak on movement and play behaviours of Canadian children and youth: A national survey. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 17(1):1.
- 3 Moore et al. (2021). Few Canadian children and youth were meeting the 24-hour movement behaviour guidelines 6 months into the COVID-19 pandemic: Follow-up from a national study. *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, 46(10):1225-40.
- 4 2020–21 COMPASS, University of Waterloo. Custom Analysis.
- 5 2021–2022 Parent Survey on Physical Activity and Sport, CFLRI. Custom Analysis.



Read the [ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth](#) to learn more.