



# Kids CAN PLAY!

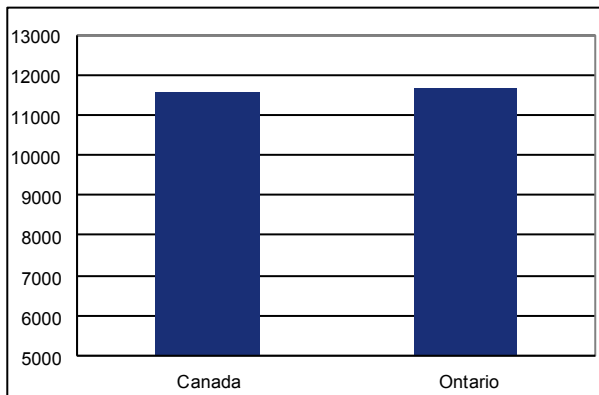
Encouraging children to be active at home, at school, and in their communities

## Physical Activity Levels of Canadian Children and Youth in Ontario

The Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's CANPLAY study (*Canadian Physical activity Levels Among Youth* study) has measured physical activity levels of children and youth using pedometers to measure daily steps. Although the majority of the analyses in this bulletin focus on combined data collected in years five and six of collection (2009-2011), some analyses also reflects trends over time, if otherwise stated. Combining years 5 and 6 of data collection, the CANPLAY study shows that Canadian children, aged 5 to 19, take approximately 11,600 daily steps on average. Children and youth in Ontario take a similar number of steps as the national average, at roughly 11,700 steps.

**FIGURE 1**

Average daily steps of children and youth, Canada and Ontario, 2009-2011



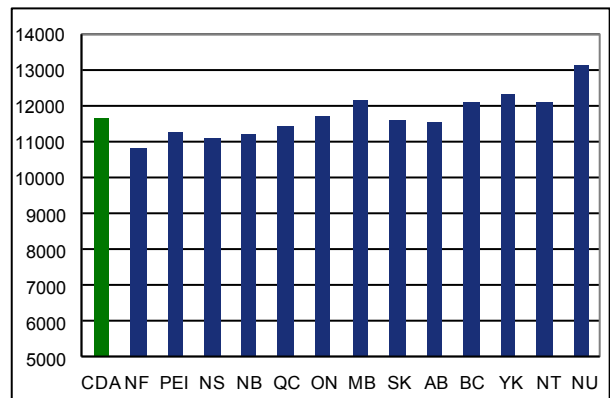
CANPLAY 2009/11, CFLRI

### Province and Territory

Children and youth in Ontario take more steps than children and youth living in Newfoundland and Labrador and fewer steps than those living in Nunavut (however, it should be noted that data in Nunavut was collected using a different methodology).

**FIGURE 2**

Average daily steps of children and youth by province/territory, 2009-2011



CANPLAY 2009/11, CFLRI

### Child characteristics

Boys in Ontario take more daily steps on average than girls do, which is a similar relationship to that found nationally. Daily steps decrease by age group. In Ontario, this is particularly evident when comparing younger children to older teens.

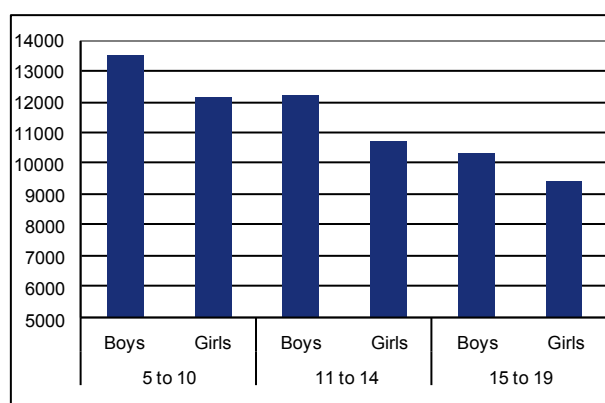


The age-related decrease in steps is a pattern that appears both nationally and at a provincial level. In Ontario, only younger boys (aged 5 to 14 years) take significantly more steps than girls of the same age, however, the age-related decrease in steps appears for both boys and girls.

In Ontario, children who participate in organized physical activities and sport take significantly more daily steps on average compared to children who do not participate in these types of activities (roughly 1,500 more steps). This relationship is similar to that found nationally.

**FIGURE 3**

Average daily steps of children and youth in Ontario by age and sex of child, 2009-2011



CANPLAY 2009/11, CFLRI

### Parent and household characteristics

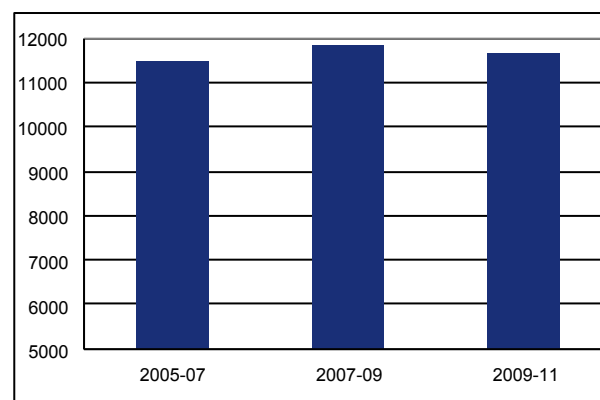
In Ontario, there are no significant associations between children's daily steps and parent's education level, activity level, or household income. This differs from the population as a whole, where nationally: children whose parents have a university education take slightly more steps than those with a college education; children from the highest income household ( $\geq \$100,000$  per year) take more daily steps on average than those from households with incomes between \$40,000 and \$59,999; and, children whose parents consider themselves *substantially less* active than their peers take fewer steps on average than those who parents consider themselves *slightly more* active than their peers.

### Trends in activity level over time

There have been no significant changes over time in the number of steps taken by children and youth in Ontario, and this is illustrated in Figure 4. This section looks at trends over time in this province.

**FIGURE 4**

Average daily steps of children and youth in Ontario, trends, 2005-2011



CANPLAY 2005/11, CFLRI

### Child characteristics

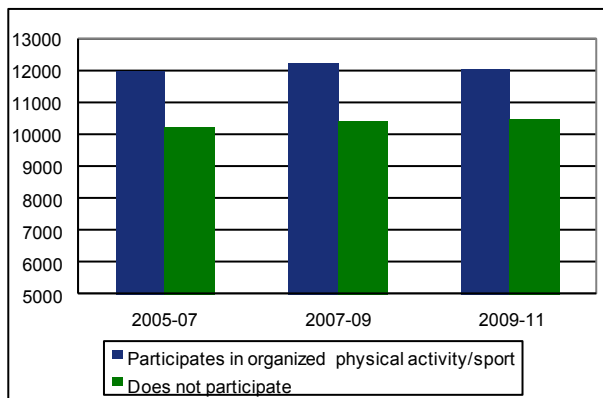
In all years of the CANPLAY study in Ontario, boys took more steps than girls (between 1,300 and 1,500 more steps). The age-related decrease in steps appears within all study years, and also appears for both boys and girls. Similarly, the gender differences within specific age groups are generally consistent over time. Moreover, the relationship between a child's participation in organized sport and physical activity and a greater number of steps appears within all study years in Ontario.

### Parent and household characteristics

Although there previously was a relationship between a child's average daily steps and parent's education level in earlier study years, this relationship is no longer significant in the most recent years of collection (years 5 and 6 combined). Similarly, the relationships between a child's daily steps and parent's activity level or household income that appeared in previous years, are no longer significant in the most recent years (years 5 and 6 combined).

**FIGURE 5**

Average daily steps of children and youth in Ontario by child's participation in organized sport and physical activity, 2005-2011



CANPLAY 2005/11, CFLRI

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