

This summary is the first in a series that highlights some of the key findings from the Physical Activity and Dietary Intake of Children and Youth in Nova Scotia (PACY) surveillance studies from 2001 (PACY1) and 2005 (PACY2). These studies are unique, particularly within Canada, because physical activity data was collected using accelerometers (motion detectors).

*For more information visit
www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/pasr/akhk-intro.asp*

Two objectives of the PACY studies:

1. Identify the percentage of participants who met the recommended standard of physical activity for children and youth in Nova Scotia.*
2. Identify the percentage of children and youth classified at a healthy weight, at risk of becoming overweight, or overweight.†

Participants were students in grades 3, 7, and 11 that were randomly selected from schools in six regions of Nova Scotia. Approximately 1600 and 2300 students participated in PACY1 and PACY2 respectively.

* The standard was defined as a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate or greater intensity physical activity five or more days of the week

† Weight status was determined using Body Mass Index [BMI]. BMI is calculated from height and weight, and is a reliable indicator of weight status for most children and youth.

‡ Data has been updated since first presented in 2007.

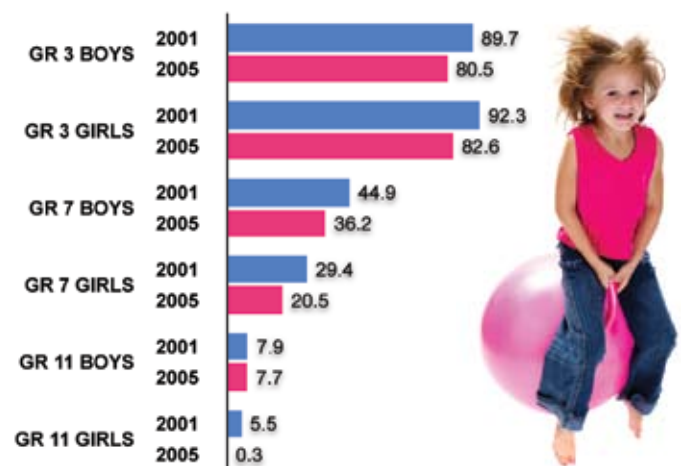
Physical Activity

Fewer students in grades 3, 7 and 11 met the standard in PACY2. In PACY1 and PACY2 almost all of the students in grade 3 met the recommended standard of physical activity. Participants in higher grade levels participated in less physical activity, in both PACY1 and PACY2.

Boys in grades 7 and 11 were more physically active than girls, in both PACY1 and PACY2. Boys and girls in grade 11 accumulated substantial minutes of light-intensity physical activity, and insufficient minutes of moderate or more intense physical activity, which were needed to meet the standard.

In addition to those that met the standard, approximately 35% of grade 7 boys and girls obtained 60 minutes or more of moderate or greater intensity physical activity on three or four days of the week, only one or two days short of meeting the standard.

Below: Percentage of boys and girls in grades 3, 7, and 11 from PACY1 and PACY2 who met the recommended standard of physical activity. ‡





From PACY1 to PACY2, there were no significant increases or decreases in the percentage of participants categorized at a healthy weight, at risk of overweight, or overweight.

Children and youth at risk of overweight and overweight typically obtained as many daily total minutes of physical activity as their healthy weight counterparts.

	GRADE 3		GRADE 7		GRADE 11	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Healthy Weight						
PACY1	60.1%	55.6%	59.6%	59.2%	64.0%	73.0%
PACY2	52.2%	58.1%	58.0%	69.0%	68.1%	69.8%
At Risk of Overweight						
PACY1	13.2%	23.2%	18.5%	20.9%	14.9%	16.0%
PACY2	21.5%	20.6%	21.8%	16.9%	16.3%	20.0%
Overweight						
PACY1	25.3%	19.7%	20.4%	19.1%	18.9%	10.2%
PACY2	25.6%	20.1%	18.5%	13.4%	14.4%	10.2%

Table 1: Percentage of students in PACY1 and PACY2 classified at a healthy weight, at risk of overweight, and overweight

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