

Children's Physical Activity

North Carolina 2010

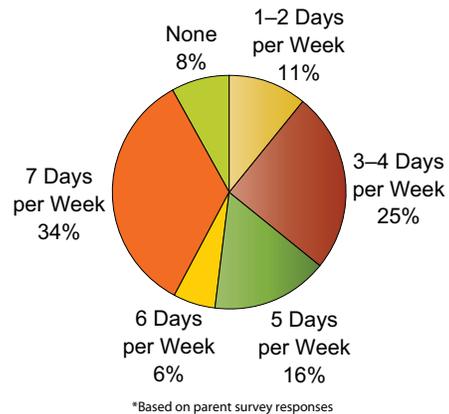


July 2011

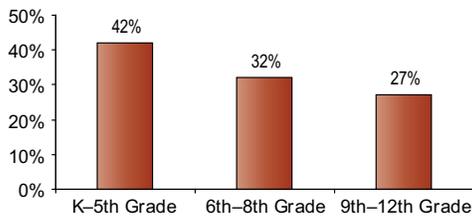
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends children and adolescents ages 6 years and older participate in 60 minutes or more of physical activity every day.¹ However, estimates of activity patterns suggest that many children fall short of these recommendations.

Thirty-four percent of parents surveyed in North Carolina reported that their child exercised, played a sport, or participated in physical activity for at least 60 minutes that made them sweat or breathe hard every day during the past week. Twenty-two percent reported their child participated in 60 minutes of physical activity five or six days a week, 25 percent for three or four days a week, and 11 percent one or two days a week. Eight percent reported that their child did not participate in physical activity for at least 60 minutes for any of the days during the past week. Boys (40% [CI 36–45])² were more likely to participate in 60 minutes of physical activity every day compared to girls (29% [CI 25–34]).

Average Number of Days per Week N.C. Children Participate in Physical Activity for at Least 60 Minutes Ages 6–17 Years*



Percent of Children Physically Active for at Least 60 Minutes Seven Days per Week by Grade Level

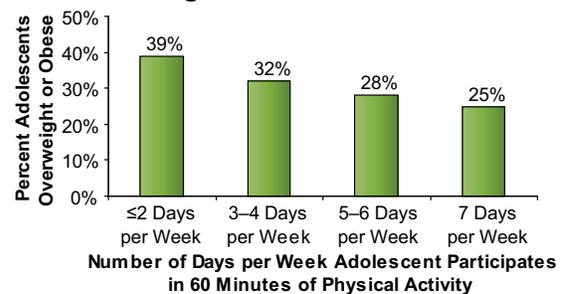


Physical activity levels vary by child's grade. Younger children (K–5th grade) were significantly more likely to participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day compared to older children (9th–12th grade). Forty-two percent [CI 37–47] of children in kindergarten to fifth grade met the recommendation for physical activity. Thirty-two percent [CI 26–38] of middle school children and 27 percent [CI 22–32] of high school children were physically active at least 60 minutes every day.

Physical Activity and Obesity

Adolescents' (ages 10 to 17 years) weight status varies by daily physical activity level. In general, 31 percent [CI 27–34] of adolescents are overweight or obese. Adolescents who are more physically active are less likely to be overweight or obese. Thirty-nine percent [CI 31–48] of adolescents who participated in 60 minutes of physical activity two days a week or less were overweight/obese, compared to 25 percent [CI 19–32] of adolescents who participated in 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

Overweight/Obesity Rate by Physical Activity Level Ages 10–17 Years

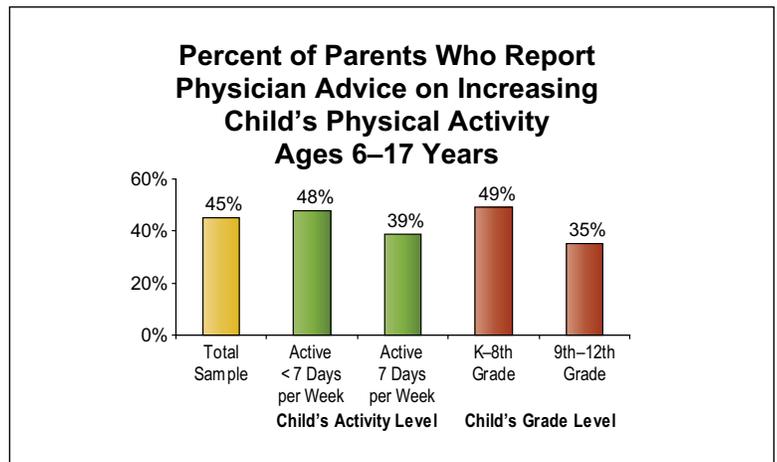


¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans 2008.

² CI = 95% confidence interval; explanation for how to interpret CIs is available at www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/champ/interpreting.html.

Physician Counsel on Increasing Children's Physical Activity

Parents reported whether their child's doctor or other health care provider (HCP) ever talked with them about how they can help their child to be more physically active. In general, 45 percent of parents reported that their child's HCP had talked with them about increasing their child's physical activity. Parents with children who were less physically active were more likely to report being counseled by their child's HCP (48% [CI 44–52]) compared to parents with children who were physically active at least 60 minutes every day (39% [CI 34–44]). Older children were less likely to receive counseling on increasing their physical activity level compared to younger children. Forty-nine percent [CI 44–54] of parents with a child in kindergarten through fifth grade and 50 percent [CI 44–57] of parents with a child in sixth through eighth grade reported that their child's HCP had talked with them about how to help their child be more physically active compared to 35 percent [CI 30–40] of parents with a child in ninth through 12th grade.



Key Findings (Based on Parental Report)

One-third of children met the recommended level of daily physical activity (i.e., 60 minutes or more of physical activity every day).

Boys were more likely to meet the recommended level of physical activity compared to girls, and younger children were more likely to meet the recommended level of physical activity compared to older children.

Adolescents who met the recommended level of physical activity were less likely to be overweight or obese compared to their less physically active peers.

Forty-five percent of parents reported that their child's health care provider had talked with them about how they can help their child to be more physically active. Parents of children who did not meet the recommended level of physical activity were more likely to receive counseling about increasing their child's level of physical activity. Older children were less likely to receive counseling on increasing their physical activity level compared to younger children.

This report includes data collected in 2010 on 1,393 parental surveys on children ages 6 to 17 years from the North Carolina Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program (NC CHAMP). NC CHAMP is a surveillance system that collects information about the health characteristics of children ages 0 to 17 years through a follow-up survey of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) telephone survey of adults (18 years and older). All adult respondents with children living in their household are invited to participate in NC CHAMP. One child is randomly selected from the household and the adult most knowledgeable about the health of the selected child is interviewed. Weight status categories for ages 10–17 are estimated from parent report of child's height and weight and based on Body Mass Index (BMI) percentiles for age and sex: <5 percent = Underweight, 5–84 percent = Recommended Range, 85–94 percent = Overweight, ≥ 95 percent = Obese. Percentages in this publication are weighted to population characteristics. For further information about NC CHAMP, please visit www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/champ or contact CHAMPstaff@dhhs.nc.gov.

