

Results from the 2006 Physical Activity Survey

Key Findings for Occupation



The Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce

In 2006 the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce (the Taskforce) undertook a State-wide survey to measure physical activity levels of Western Australian adults. This fact sheet presents major findings from the survey regarding body mass index and levels of physical activity for different occupational categories.

Sample

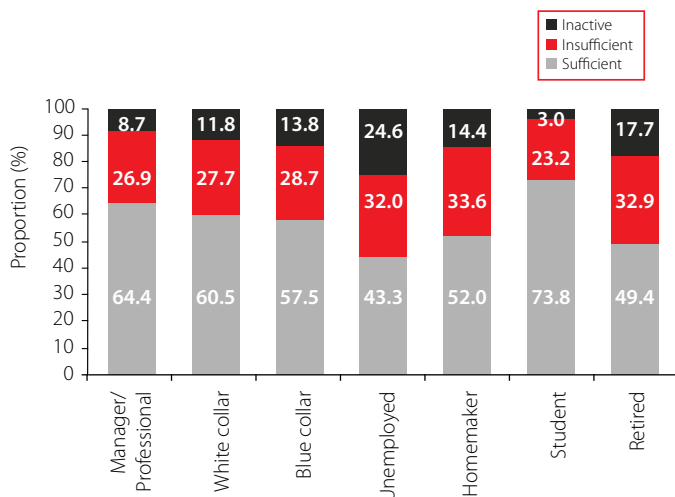
Of the total sample (n = 3,361) completing the physical activity survey, 29.7% were managers/professionals, 13.4% were white collar workers, 18.2% were blue collar workers, 1.8% were unemployed, 9.4% were homemakers, 3% were students, and 24.4% were retired.

Physical Activity Levels

Figure 1 presents the proportion of adults in each occupation category who were:

- **Sufficiently active** (≥ 150 minutes of moderate activity over 5 or more days or ≥ 60 minutes of vigorous activity per week);
- **Insufficiently active** (some physical activity but less than sufficient); and
- **Inactive** (no physical activity).

Figure 1. Levels of Physical Activity by Occupation



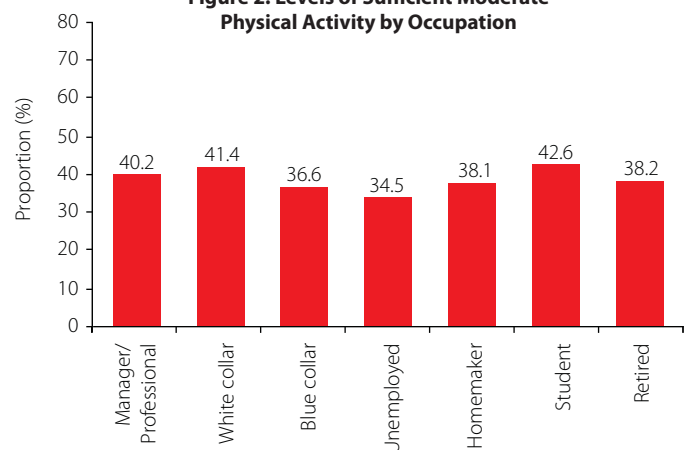
The results show::

- A higher a proportion of students were sufficiently active (74%), and a lower proportion were insufficiently active (23%) and inactive (3%) compared to other occupational categories.
- A higher proportion of the unemployed (25%) and retired (18%) were inactive compared to other occupational categories.

Participation in Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous-Intensity Physical Activity by Education

Figures 2 and 3 respectively present the proportion of adults by occupational category participating in sufficient moderate (≥ 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on over 5 or more days per week) and vigorous (≥ 60 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week) physical activity.

Figure 2. Levels of Sufficient Moderate Physical Activity by Occupation



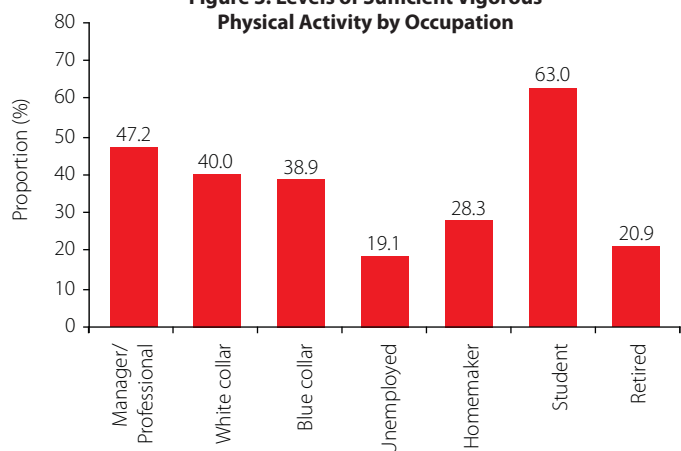
The results show:

- A higher proportion of students participated in sufficient moderate physical activity compared to other occupational categories (42.6%).
- A lower proportion of the unemployed participated in sufficient moderate physical activity compared to other occupational categories (34.5%).



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Figure 3. Levels of Sufficient Vigorous Physical Activity by Occupation



The results show:

- A higher proportion of students participated in sufficient vigorous physical activity compared to other occupational categories (63%).
- A lower proportion of the unemployed (19.1%) and retired (20.9%) participated in sufficient levels of vigorous physical activity compared to other occupational categories.

Overweight and Obesity

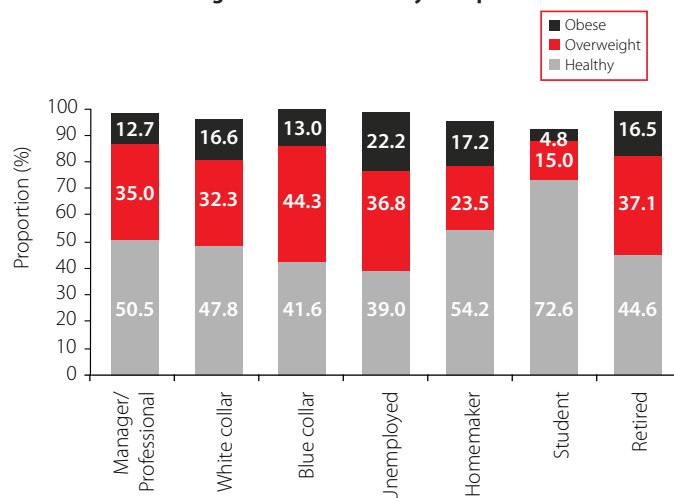
Self-reported height and weight data were used to determine body mass indices (BMI) for each survey participant (weight in kilograms divided by height metres squared). The following categories were used to define weight¹:

- <18.50 underweight
- 18.50-24.99 healthy weight
- 25.00-29.99 overweight
- ≥ 30.00 obese

The prevalence for each of these BMI categories for each level of education is presented in Figure 5 (underweight category not shown).



Figure 4. Level of BMI by Occupation



The results show:

- A higher proportion of students were healthy weight (72%) compared to other occupational categories.
- A lower proportion of students were overweight (14.8%) and obese (4.9%) compared to other occupational categories.
- A higher proportion of blue collar workers were overweight (44%) and a higher proportion of the unemployed were obese (22.4%) compared to other occupational categories.

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing levels of sufficient physical activity in Western Australia as well as other key findings can be found in the report *Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2006*.²

This report and other useful resources can be obtained from www.beactive.wa.gov.au or by contacting the Taskforce on 9492 9630.

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¹ World Health Organisation (2001). Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic. WHO Technical Series: No. 894. Geneva: WHO; 2000.

² Milligan, R., McCormack, G.R., Rosenberg, M. (2007). Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2006. Results from the Adult Physical Activity Study. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.