



Results from the Western Australian Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (CAPANS) 2003

Physical Inactivity



In 2003, the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce, Healthway and the Department of Health commissioned the University of Notre Dame Australia to undertake a Statewide survey to collect baseline data on child and adolescent physical activity behaviours, eating patterns and physiques.



SURVEY SAMPLE

Data were collected from 2,275 students across nineteen primary schools (58.9%) and seventeen secondary schools (41.1%). Of the sample 49.8% were males and 50.2% were females. Primary school students ranged from 7–12 years of age (school years 3, 5, 7) and secondary school students from 12–16 years of age (school years 8,10,11).

WHAT IS PHYSICAL INACTIVITY?

A student was considered **physically inactive** if they did not report participation in any of the following activities - *school based activities; active play; sport, exercise and dance; active transport; and household chores.*

LEVEL OF PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

- Approximately 1 in 4 secondary males reported no physical activity.
- Approximately 1 in 3 secondary females reported no physical activity.
- Differences in participation between males and females depended on the type of activity being reported.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT (FIGURE 1)

Active transport included any method of transport that required expenditure of energy e.g. walking, cycling, skateboarding, scootering.

- Approximately 50% of students did not walk or cycle to school.
- Non-participation in active transport was similar across age and gender.
- Non-participation in active transport was similar for metropolitan and non-metropolitan students.

HOUSEHOLD CHORES (FIGURE 1)

Household chores included walking the dog as well as general household chores.

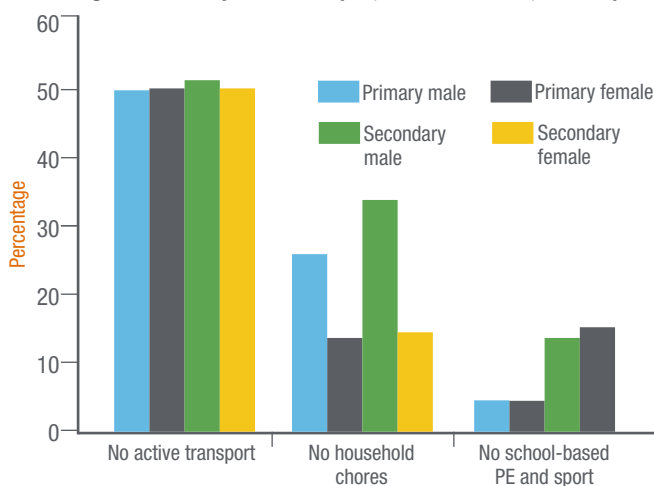
- Non-participation in household chores was similar for primary and secondary school students.
- The percentage of males who did no household chores was almost double that of females at both primary (males: 30.5% females: 19.8%) and secondary (males 41.37%, females: 21.1%) level.
- More males reported not walking the dog compared with females in primary (males: 61.3%, females: 56.4%) and secondary school (males: 78.9%, females: 64%).
- More secondary students did not walk the dog compared with primary students.
- Non-participation in household chores was similar for metropolitan and non-metropolitan students.

SCHOOL BASED PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS (FIGURE 1)

Physical Education / School Sport referred to physical activity sessions performed as part of the school curriculum.

- The percentage of secondary school males and females who did no school-based PE and sport was more than double that of primary students.
- There was little difference between males' and females' non-participation in school-based PE and sport.
- Metropolitan and non-metropolitan students reported similar rates of non-participation in school-based Physical Education (PE) and sport with the exception of secondary school females.
- Metropolitan secondary school females reported a higher rate of non-participation in school-based PE and sport (18.3%) compared with non-metropolitan secondary school females (4.0%).

Figure 1. Inactivity: active transport, household chores, PE and sport



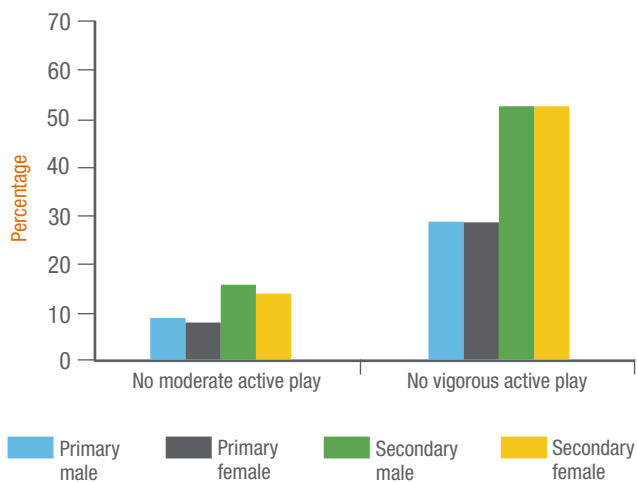


ACTIVE PLAY (FIGURE 2)

Active play included any non-organised activity of *moderate intensity* (e.g. playing with pets, bike riding and skateboarding) or *vigorous intensity* (e.g. jogging or running and playing tag or chasey).

- The percentage of secondary school males and females who reported no active play was double that of primary students.
- Non-participation rates were higher for vigorous intensity active play compared with moderate intensity active play.
- Non-participation in active play was similar for male and female students.
- Non-participation in active play was similar for metropolitan and non-metropolitan students.

Figure 2. Inactivity: active play



SPORT, EXERCISE OR DANCE (FIGURE 3)

Sport, exercise or dance included any organised activity of *moderate intensity* (e.g. baseball, softball, cricket, dance, gymnastics, horse riding and surfing/body boarding) or *vigorous intensity* (e.g. AFL, basketball, netball, soccer, swimming laps, tennis, martial arts or athletics).

- The percentage of secondary school males and females who reported no sports, exercise or dance activity was double that of primary students.
- Less than 1 in 7 primary school students reported no sport, exercise or dance activities compared with approximately 1 in 4 secondary males and 1 in 3 secondary females.



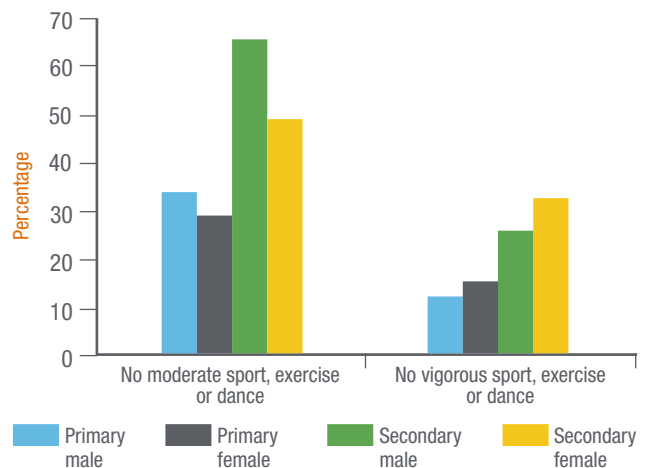
Moderate intensity sport, exercise or dance

- More males reported no moderate intensity sport, exercise or dance compared with females.
- Non-metropolitan female students reported higher non-participation in moderate sport exercise or dance than metropolitan female students.

Vigorous intensity sport exercise or dance

- More females did no vigorous intensity sport, exercise or dance compared with males.

Figure 3. Inactivity: sport, exercise or dance



AUSTRALIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN (5–12 YEARS) AND YOUTH (12–18 YEARS)

1. Children and youth should participate in at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of *moderate to vigorous intensity* physical activity every day.
2. Children and youth should not spend more than 2 hours per day using electronic media such as TV, computer games and the internet for entertainment, particularly during daylight hours.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Recommendations for increasing the levels of physical activity in children as well as other key findings can be found in the CAPANS report¹ at www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au or by contacting the Physical Activity Taskforce Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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