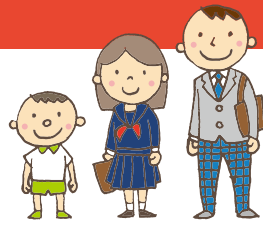


Physical Activity for Children and Youth



The purpose of this report card is to show the current state of and the determinants of physical activity and health in Japanese children and adolescents under 18 years old. Nationally representative Japanese data were used: this is a national report card. Grades were determined using the international method as follows.

The card grades are determined by the percentage of Japanese children and adolescents meeting the benchmark for each indicator.

- A** (81-100%) We are succeeding with a large majority of children and adolescents (81-100%)
- B** (61-80%) We are succeeding with well over half of children and adolescents (61-80%)
- C** (41-60%) We are succeeding with about half of our children and adolescents (41-60%)
- D** (21-40%) We are succeeding with less than half children and adolescents (21-40%)
- F** (0-20%) We are succeeding with very few children and adolescents (0-20%)
- INC** Incomplete data combined with lack of an evidence-based recommendation.

Table 1. Grades According to Physical Activity Indicator in the 2016 Japan Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

Indicator	Grades
1. Overall Physical Activity Levels	INC
2. Organized Sport Participation	C
3. Active Play	INC
4. Active Transportation	B
5. Sedentary Behaviours	C
6. Physical Fitness	C
7. Weight Status	A
8. Family and Peer Influence	D
9. School	B
10. Community and the Built Environment	D
11. Government Strategies and Investments	B

The grades illustrate the state of physical activity in Japanese children and adolescents. The report card can be utilized as information to support policy development in physical activity for children and adolescents, families, schools, local communities and the country as a whole.

Methodology and Detailed Findings

The detailed methodology and detailed findings of this report card (data and references etc.) are available on our website (www.activekids.jp). An academic publication based on the 2016 Japan Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth is published in the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.



Next Steps

This is the first version of the Japan Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth. We are planning to publish it subsequently to monitor changes to each grade, in 2018, and after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. To do so, we need further funding and are seeking partnerships with individuals or organizations who might consider providing financial or other support. Please contact the Active Healthy Kids Japan Group (info@activekids.jp) for further information.

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The Cover of the 2016 Japan Report Card

A stated aim of physical education (PE) of the national educational curriculum guideline is to improve physical fitness and to promote a positive attitude toward exercise as a lifelong physical activity. However, as the cover of the 2016 Japan Report Card suggests, students don't move continuously during PE class, because they have to sit or stand during their teacher's instruction and/or while waiting their turn. It is also worth noting that a recent systematic review of the moderate-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) content of school PE globally suggested that a minority of time in PE classes was spent in MVPA (Hollis et al.2016).



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Physical Activity for Children and Youth



Physical Activity, Health Behaviours and Outcomes

1 Overall Physical Activity Levels



There are no representative Japanese data for physical activity in under 15-year-olds. The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey reported step counts for 15-19 year olds. In males, the data showed a marked decrease for several years. On the other hand, the trend in females generally continues to be flat. However, data haven't been reported since 2012.



2 Organized Sport Participation



Participation in sport was reported for 27-92% of 6- to 17-year-olds by the Report of Survey on Physical Strength and Athletic Performance of Japan Sports Agency (2015). The prevalence at 4-5 years old was reported at 29% in 2015 according to the Sasagawa sports foundation (SSF) National Sports-Life Survey of Children.



3 Active Play



There are no representative Japanese data for active and outdoor play. There are no Japanese government recommendations for active and outdoor play.



4 Active Transportation



The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Children reported that 28% of Japanese preschool children (4-5 years old) regularly commuted actively (walking) to school. The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Young People reported that 93% of Japanese elementary school children (6-11 years old) regularly commuted actively (walking or cycling) to school, and 88% of junior high school students (12-14 years old) and 68% of high school students (15-17 years old) regularly commuted actively.



5 Sedentary Behaviours



The Report of National Survey on Physical Fitness, Athletic Performance and Exercise Habits of the Japan Sports Agency (2015) reported that 71-76% of grade 5 Japanese primary school children and second year in junior high school children spent more than 1 hour per day of watching TV, videos or DVDs viewing (Not playing video games). In addition, 30-60% reported 1 hour per day playing video games (PCs, portable electronic devices having a game function, cellular or smart phones). The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Young People reported that 31% of Japanese preschool children (4-5 years old) spent more than 1 hour per day of screen time (watching TV, PCs etc.).



6 Physical Fitness



The Report of Survey on Physical Strength and Athletic Performance of the Japan Sports Agency (2015) comprehensively evaluated physical fitness by 5 gender- and age-specific ranks (A-E). The percentage of A and B rank among Japanese 6- to 17-year-olds was 42-67%. The physical fitness test data suggest that currently physical fitness levels in children and adolescents are lower than that in the 1980s.



7 Weight Status



The School Health Survey data (2015) by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) reported that 2.24-11.34% of 5-17 year old Japanese boys and girls were obese. Overall, however, the levels are high compared to the 1980s. On the other hand, the percentage of underweight children was 0.40-4.33%.



Settings and Influences on Physical Activity and Health

8 Family and Peer Influence



The National Health and National Survey (2014) reported that daily step counts were 7,860 for males aged 20 to 64 years old, and 6,794 for females, respectively. The prevalence of obesity in Japanese adults was 29% in males and 21% in females which is based on over 25kg/m² of BMI (body mass index).

Participation in sport twice or more a week, 30min or more per time

over 1 year was reported by 31% of males and 25% of females. In grade 5 Japanese primary school students and second year junior high school students, the percentage of participation in sport or exercise with a guardian more than once per week was 7-36% by the Report of Survey on Physical Strength and Athletic Performance of Japan Sports Agency (2015). The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Young People reported that 72% of Japanese preschool children (4-5 years old) participated in exercise or sport with their parent "often" or "sometimes".



9 School



The MEXT sets the educational curriculum guidelines for all primary and secondary schools including the content of physical education, the number of physical education classes, and guidelines for school infrastructure and equipment ministry. The guidelines for nursery schools and centers for early childhood education and care are set by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Cabinet Office. Those guidelines require physical activity during childcare for young children. However, physical education in primary schools or active play in nursery schools or kindergartens isn't carried out by specialist course teachers who have studied physical education. Also, in primary schools, physical education classes are the only classes that don't use textbooks.



10 Community and the Built Environment



Health Japan 21 (second term) by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare reported that the number of local governments which provide an environment where residents can easily access places to exercise stood at 17/47 prefectures (2012). The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Young

People reported that 48% of Japanese parents of 4-9 year old children agreed they lived in neighborhoods that allow children to engage into active outdoor play, exercise, or participate in organized sports.



11 Government Strategies and Investments



There are many relevant laws and ordinances such as The Basic Act on Sport, the Health Promotion Law, the Basic Act on Food Education, and so on. There are also strategies and policies in place like the Sport Basic Plan, Health Japan 21 (second term), and so on. Physical activity guidelines are for preschool children, adults, and the elderly. However, national physical activity guidelines for children and adolescents (6-17 years) are not established.

