Towards a Healthier Canada

Important efforts are underway to help make social and physical environments where children live, learn and play more supportive of physical activity and healthy eating. Measuring, monitoring and reporting on key indicators in these areas will assist governments (and other sectors) in gauging progress and informing future efforts.

Healthy Weights

Childhood obesity has both immediate and long-term negative health outcomes, and is strongly linked to various chronic conditions, including type-2 diabetes, heart disease, and certain types of cancer.

Almost 1 in 3 children and youth are overweight or obese

93% are overweight and 11.7% are obese.

Physical Activity

Physical activity plays a fundamental role in healthy weights and healthy living, and helps to prevent chronic diseases.

54.9% of children exceed Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for screen time.

32.5% of children use active travel as their main form of transportation to school.

49% of children get less than 3 hours per week of active play outside of school.

2.3 hours

Average number of hours per week that children take part in physical activity, outside of school, in lessons or league or teams sports.

9.7 min

Average number of minutes of moderate-vigorous physical activity obtained by children between 3 and 5 pm.

Healthy Eating

The availability and accessibility of nutritious foods are necessary for healthy eating, an important factor in promoting healthy weights.

59% of children report eating breakfast on weekdays.

45.5% of children eat fruit or vegetables at least 5 times per day.

Supportive Environments

Actions to support change must reach children where they live, learn and play.

Many sectors at all levels must work in building supportive social and physical environments.

75.3% of youth agree that it is safe for younger children to play outside during the day.

10% of households, with at least one child under the age of 7, are considered food insecure.

18% of parents cite safety concerns as a barrier to physical activity.

93% of parents report that local public facilities and programs for physical activity and sports are available and meet the needs of their children.

2.6 hours

Average number of hours per week of physical activity obtained by children during leisure time.

For further information: www.towardsahealthiercanada.ca

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