

Results from Aotearoa New Zealand's 2022 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

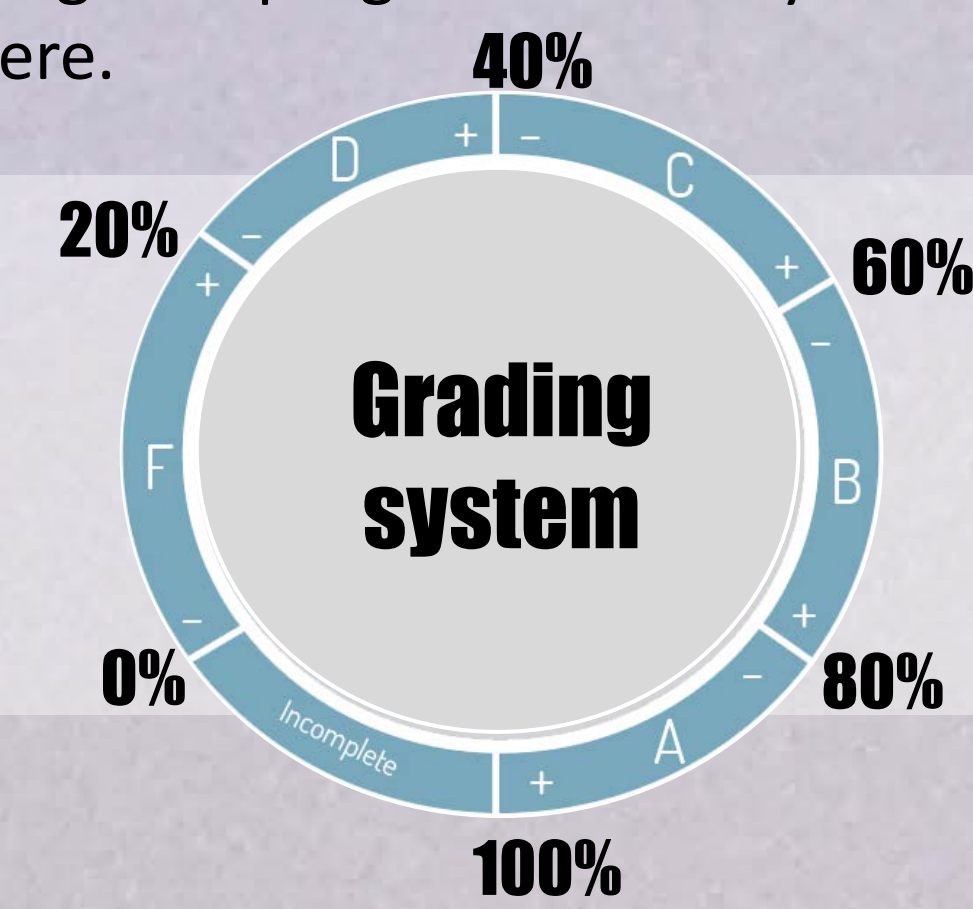
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Background

Globally, and in Aotearoa - New Zealand (NZ), many children and youth are not sufficiently active for optimal health and wellbeing outcomes. Physical activity report cards are useful to explore trends in meeting activity criteria over time, examine differences between countries, and to highlight areas for change. NZ has developed country-specific report cards in line with the global programme led by Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance (AHKGA) since 2014. Methods presented here are from the 2022 NZ report card process, and results from 2014 to 2022 are presented here.

Methods

Where possible, AHKGA benchmarking criteria were used to grade the ten core report card indicators. In addition, the 2022 NZ report card includes two new indicators - physical literacy and sleep. Data sources from 2019 to March 2020 (signalling the arrival of COVID-19 to NZ) were identified through previous report cards, networks, and academic and grey literature. Nationally representative datasets were prioritised. Where possible, we explored differences in the proportion of children and young people meeting thresholds by gender, age group, ethnicity, geography (urban, rural), disability status, and area-level socio-economic status.



Results

Data availability was fragmentary and insufficient data were available to develop grades for the active play, physical fitness, and community and environment indicators. Grades for other indicators were: overall physical activity C+, organised sport participation B-, active transportation D, sedentary behaviour C-, school C+, government A, family and peers D, physical literacy B, and sleep B+.



Conclusions and Recommendations

- Regular nationally representative surveys that enable the consistent and regular measurement of key report card indicators are essential.
- All dimensions of physical activity need to be promoted (and screen time reduced) through policy and supportive physical and social environments.
- Supporting active transportation is urgently needed, including investment in multi-sectoral approaches, urban planning, school and community-led initiatives and social marketing campaigns.
- Targeted, comprehensive, and population-specific approaches are essential to reduce inequities in health-promoting activity behaviours for children and youth in NZ.

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