



IS SPORT ENOUGH?

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Active Healthy Kids Australia 2014 *Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Young People* addresses one of the most critical issues facing Australia and much of the world: the epidemic of childhood inactivity. The Report Card is designed to inform public policy; highlight where more research is needed; and encourage all Australians to make positive changes.

METHODS

The Active Healthy Kids Australia 2014 *Physical Activity Report Card for Children and Young People* synthesised national and state-level data since 2008. The Research Working Group of 24 Australian experts evaluated all synthesised data before assigning grades to each of the indicators based on pre-determined benchmarks and metrics.

KEY FINDINGS

Overall Physical Activity Levels was assigned a grade of D-, with only 20% of young Australians meeting national guidelines of 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Other physical activity behaviours were also graded as below average (D to D-), while Organised Sport and Physical Activity Participation was assigned a grade of B-. Australia performed better for settings and sources of influence and Government Strategies and Investments (A- to a C) (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of the grades assigned to each indicator in the Active Healthy Kids Australia 2014 *Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Young People*.

INDICATOR	GRADE
Overall PA Levels	D-
Organised Sport and PA Participation	B-
PE and PA Participation in Schools	INC
Active Play	INC
Active Transportation	D
Sedentary Behaviours	D-
Family and Peers	C
School	B-
Community and the Built Environment	A-
Government Strategies and Investments	C+
Aerobic Fitness	INC
Movement Skills	INC

Note, INC = Incomplete, PA = Physical Activity, PE = Physical Education.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The physical activity levels of Australian children and young people are very low, despite relatively supportive social, environmental and regulatory environments. There are clear gaps in the research that need to be filled and consistent data collection methods need to be established.

Australia as a nation is very passionate about sport, as sport instills a sense of national pride. This is reflected in the relatively 'high' grade assigned to Organised Sport and Physical Activity Participation (B-). While participation in organised sport and physical activity provides numerous benefits beyond increasing physical activity levels, sport is not the only avenue for physical activity. This is the rationale for the question posed with the results for Overall Physical Activity Levels: "Is sport enough?"

