

Results from the India 2016 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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Background

The 2016 India Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth is the first comprehensive assessment of physical activity and sedentary behaviour among Indian children and youth. The Report Card is part of Global Matrix 2.0, an international endeavour to evaluate various aspects of active living in 38 countries spread across six continents.

The India Report Card is an independently developed, evidence-based scientific report that assesses physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and multiple contextual factors that impact these behaviours in Indian children and youth. Investigating the contexts in which these behaviours occur is critical for conceptualizing successful policy and program interventions. The Report Card summarizes current evidence on not only key contexts such as family and peers, schools, and neighbourhood environment, but also government strategies, policies and investments that impact these contexts.

In addition to being a source of current evidence on active living in Indian children and youth, the Report Card’s purpose is to raise awareness and advocate action in tackling the pandemic of physical inactivity in India. The primary stakeholders of the India Report Card are policy makers, researchers, parents, teachers, and health professionals. We hope that the Report Card garners their attention to address the current challenges for active living in India. Ultimately, we hope that the India Report Card enables the inception of active living research to address current gaps in evidence, and also serves as a tool to influence child and youth-focused active living programming and policies in India.

Report Card Grading and Methods

An international Research Working Group was established, comprising of nine experts from seven universities and institutions. A total of 10 active living indicators were assessed and standardized grades were assigned based on the benchmarks provided by Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance. Both peer-reviewed data sources and grey literature were appraised. Nationally representative data were given higher weightage, followed by published data, unpublished data, and grey literature.

For the 2016 India Report Card, one national survey, several state and city-level surveys, as well as baseline data from an ongoing longitudinal state-level survey were used as sources. For more detail on the methods and grading scheme, please consult the 2016 India Report Card Long-Form.

Summary of 2016 India Report Card Grades

Indicator	Grade
Overall Physical Activity Levels	C-
Organized Sport Participation	INC
Active Play	INC
Active Transportation	C
Sedentary Behaviours	C
Family and Peers	INC
School – Infrastructure, Policies and Programs	INC
Community and the Built Environment	INC
Government – Strategies, Policies and Investments	D
Physical Fitness	INC

What does physical activity look like for children in India?



It is time for India to step up for it’s children’s physical activity

Recommendations for Action

- Addressing the dearth of active living evidence by resource allocation**
Additional resources need to be allocated to enable the collection and appraisal of nationally representative data in order to understand the big picture of active living in children and youth in India.
- Development of a national strategy for physical activity of children & youth**
While there is indication of some school boards implementing strategies at a local level, national-level strategies focused exclusively on children and youth are lacking.
- Investments at multiple jurisdictional levels**
Targeted investments are required at multiple jurisdictional levels (national, state and local) and at multiple levels of context (schools and neighbourhoods).
- Culturally and geographically appropriate policy interventions**
India is a culturally and geographically diverse nation, hence policy interventions need to take this diversity into account.
- Facilitating active living through urban planning policy**
Evidence-based local urban planning policy is critical to facilitate active living and minimize existing barriers.
- Physical activity education & promotion targeting families and educators**
Strategies to increase physical literacy and physical activity among parents and educators would have a direct impact on child and youth physical activity.



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