

ARE OUR CHILDREN UP TO THE MARK?

ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, GO!

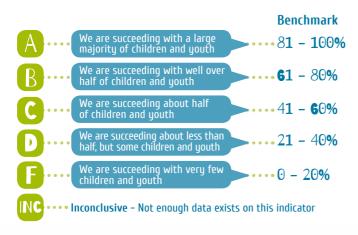


The detailed Long Form of the 2014 Report Card, which contain full details of the methods and data used, can be accessed at www.getirelandactive.ie/get-info/reportcard

Background

- There is a growing concern around children's inactivity levels worldwide and increasing and maintaining the physical activity levels of children on the island of Ireland is a priority.
- The **Report Card on Physical Activity** is a means of collating all data related to children's physical activity levels and 'grading' the evidence using a standardised grading scheme¹
- Nine common indicators that are known to influence children's overall physical activity levels will
 be graded using a grading system just like a school report card i.e. A to F or inconclusive/incomplete
 if there are not enough data available yet.
- These indicators are behaviours and settings that are known to influence children's physical activity.
- This first Report Card will act as a baseline for surveillance of physical activity promotion efforts
 across the island of Ireland and will support efforts to change policy and programming for children's
 physical activity.

International Standardised Grading Scheme



Key Stages of Creating Ireland's Physical Activity Report Card 2014

01.

The research work group (RWG) first met in May 2013 to discuss the Report Card format and to identify key data sources. 02.

Data sources were identified through databases and online searches. 03.

Relevant data were extracted and each indicator was discussed, assessed and a proposed grade for each indicator was established using the standardised, international grading system by the RWG. 04.

Key data were sent to four external researchers with experience of the Report Card grading process to validate the proposed grades for the 2014 Report Card. 05.

A targeted consultation session with practitioners and policy makers from Ireland occurred where the proposed grades were presented.

2014 GRADES

Indicator	Benchmark	Data	Grade
Overall Physical Activity	% of children in Ireland meeting the physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) every day ^{2,3}	 25% of 11 to 15 year olds⁴ 12% of 11 to 16 years year olds⁵ 25% of 9 year olds⁶ 19% of primary and 12% post primary children⁷ 43.4% of 7 to 8 year olds based on accelerometry⁸ A sex difference existed with females being less active than their male counterparts^{4,7} and the sex gap widens with age⁵ 	D-
Sedentary Behaviour (TV viewing)	% of children watching < 2 hours of TV/day	 46% of 11 to 15 year olds⁹ 73% of 11 to 16 year olds spent < 10 hour/week⁵ 23% of 7 to 8 year olds¹⁰ and 21% of 9 year olds watched < 1 hour TV/video⁶ 79% of primary and 71% of post-primary children reported watching < 2 hours of TV/day⁷ TV viewing increases with age^{7,9} 	C-
Active Transportation	% of children reporting walking or cycling to or from school each day	 24% of 11 to 16 year olds⁵ 26% of 9 year olds⁶ Between 25% and 32% of primary and 24% and 43% of post-primary children^{7, 11} Difference by location and distance to school^{12, 13} 	D
Physical Education	% of children receiving the recommended time for PE each week in school	 35% of primary and 10% of post-primary children⁷ 17% reported 2+ hours of PE/week in Northern Ireland¹⁴ Recommended levels of PE are lower than global and European averages^{14,15} 	D
Active Play	No recommendations for active play alone, difficult to define	• 49% of children reported playing games outside with their parent within the last week while 23% said that playing games outside was their most favourite thing to do in their free time - GUI (unpublished)	INC

Indicator	Benchmark	Data	Grade
Sport Participation	% of children participating in sport twice/week	 40% of 7 to 8 year olds¹⁰ 56% of 9 year old males and 33% of 9 year old females⁶ 64% primary and 54% post-primary (sex differences found)⁷ Participation decreases with age and inequalities are evident¹⁶ 	C-
Home (family)	The factors and amount of support (e.g. parental support, modelling and shared activities from the home is not clear	 22% of children undertake physical activities with their family every day/almost every day while 8% of parents play active games with their children every day/almost every day¹⁰ 6% of parents of 9 year old children play sports/cards/games with their child every day while 49% of the children reported playing games outside with their parent within the last week - GUI (unpublished) The typical sport club volunteer is a parent aged 35-54 years old¹⁷ 	INC
School	% of children participating in 2+ hours/week in extra-curricular sport and school based recreation	 42% of primary and 57% of post-primary students reported participating in extracurricular sport 2+ times/week⁷ 49% of adolescents reported 2 hours of PE or games at school while 46% are part of school club or team⁵ Team extra-curricular sport drops when moving from primary to post-primary school¹⁶ 	C-
Community and Built Environment	% of parents perceiving their local area as safe and % of adolescents perceiving their local facilities as good quality	 46.8% of parents say their 7-8 year old child plays on the street/public¹⁰ 52.8% of adolescents say play/leisure facilities locally are very good/fairly good⁵ 68% of parents agree that it is safe to walk alone after dark in their area, 91% agree it is safe to play outside during the day and 58% agree there are safe parks/playgrounds in their area and an urban rural difference was seen⁶ 	В
Government	Difficult to set a benchmark	 There are a number of governmental initiatives that could support and influence children's physical activity participation 	INC

OVERALL GAPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Agreement and implementation of a common framework for the systematic surveillance of indictors related to the physical activity levels of children and youth is necessary to monitor changes over time and ensure the impact of promising work is captured.
- Data on the physical activity workforce nationwide and investment into physical activity is lacking.
- The development, launch and implementation of a National Physical Activity Plan is an urgent necessity.
- Halting the proposed downgrading of PE to a short course in the post-primary curriculum
 by the Department of Education and Skills (in the Republic) and embracing 2 hours/week
 of PE and 2 hours/week of sport and physical activity during and after school (n the North) as
 recommendations in rest of the UK would be key steps to improving the grades.
- Guidelines for sedentary time are needed, they currently exist in the US and Canada.
- Evidence surrounding participation, levels and barriers to being physically active among children from minority groups and children with disabilities is required.
- Establishing an appropriate volunteer:paid workforce ratio for delivering physical activity opportunities is needed.

REFERENCES (BOLD DENOTES DATA USED TO ASSIGN GRADES)

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Research Work Group

Member Chair: Deirdre Harrington, PhD	Institution Leicester Diabetes Centre, University of Leicester, UK	University of Leicester Leicester Leicester
Sarahjane Belton, PhD Catherine Woods, PhD	Dublin City University, Dublin, Ireland	DCU
Tara Coppinger, PhD	Cork Institute of Technology, Cork, Ireland	CORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Muireann Cullen, PhD	Nutrition and Health Foundation, Dublin, Ireland	NHF
Alan Donnelly, PhD Kieran Dowd, PhD	University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland	UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
Teresa Keating, MPH	Institute of Public Health in Ireland, Dublin, Ireland	○ IPH
Richard Layte, PhD	The Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin, Ireland	ESRI
Marie Murphy, PhD	University of Ulster, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland	Usaberra Usaberra
Niamh Murphy, PhD	Waterford Institute of Technology, Waterford, Ireland	Water find frestitute of Technology services reconstruction and to take
Elaine Murtagh, PhD	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Ireland	COLAISTE MMUIRE GAN SMÁL TOTAL TOTAL TOTAL COLLEGE TOTAL TOTAL TOTAL COLLEGE TOTAL TOTAL COLLEGE TOTAL TOTAL COLLEGE TOTA

Consultations

- Department of Children and Youth (Republic of Ireland)
- Department of Education Northern Ireland
- Department of Education (Republic of Ireland)
- Earlu Childhood Ireland
- Get Ireland Active
- Healthy Ireland
- Irish Heart Foundation

- Irish Primary PE Association
- Irish Sports Council
- Local Authority Play and Recreation Network
- Local Phusical Activity Co-ordinators Network
- National Physical Activity Plan Group
- Sport Northern Ireland

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The Report Card can be accessed at http://www.getirelandactive.ie/get-info/reportcard and full details of the grading process and the data used can be found in the journal article Harrington, et al. Results from the Ireland's 2014 Report Card on Physical Activity in Children and Youth. J Phys Act Health 2014;11(suppl.1), which is in the Global Matrix supplement of the Journal of Physical Activity and Health.