

Israel Physical Activity Report Card for Children and Adolescents

2022





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Introduction

Background and Objectives

In the last decade, the Ministry of Health leads Efsharibari - The Israel National Program for Active & Healthy Living, in cooperation with the Ministries of Education and Culture and Sports, and promotes physical activity in Israel.

As part of the effort to promote physical activity and movement among children and adolescents at the national and international level, Israel joined the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance (AHKGA) for the first time in 2020. Within the framework of the Global Matrix 4.0, this organization includes 57 countries around the world who are partners in building a comparative, multinational information base on physical activity among children and teenagers. This effort aims to help countries promote policies, programs and interventions to improve physical activity indicators that benefit wellbeing and health of children and youth. Participation in the international methodology includes identifying data sources, collecting and analyzing data and preparing a report card on the state of physical activity for this population a forum of experts in each country.

Leading health organizations and research studies highlight the importance of physical activity. Physical activity contributes to the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents including:

- Physical and emotional health
- Growth and development
- Balance and coordination
- Social and communication skills
- Improved learning and concentration
- Improved self esteem

The report card provides a national assessment on the state of physical activity among children and adolescents via measures of ten international indicators. The model is based on the ecological concept which takes into account the different spheres of influence in the lives of youth: the individual; family and peer group; the school and the community; society and policy.

Spheres of Influence



The report card provides a clear picture that can serve as the basis for promotion of policies to encourage physical activity among children and adolescents in Israel. This issue is extremely important in light of the COVID-19 pandemic that caused disruption in many health spheres, and had a significant effect on physical activity patterns and active and healthy lifestyle habits.

Methodology

In Israel, the process of preparing the report card, which included identifying data sources, determining grades and formulating recommendations for policy makers and professionals, was held in collaboration with a wide-ranging expert forum that was established especially for this purpose and included representatives of government, health services, academia and the third sector. The list of forum members appears on the back of the report card.

The Israel Physical Activity Report Card for Children and Adolescents, 2022 presents information about physical activity behaviors and habits among children and teenagers. The expert forum determined that the long form of the report card include information on physical activity from early childhood through high school as well as a chapter dedicated to children with special needs.

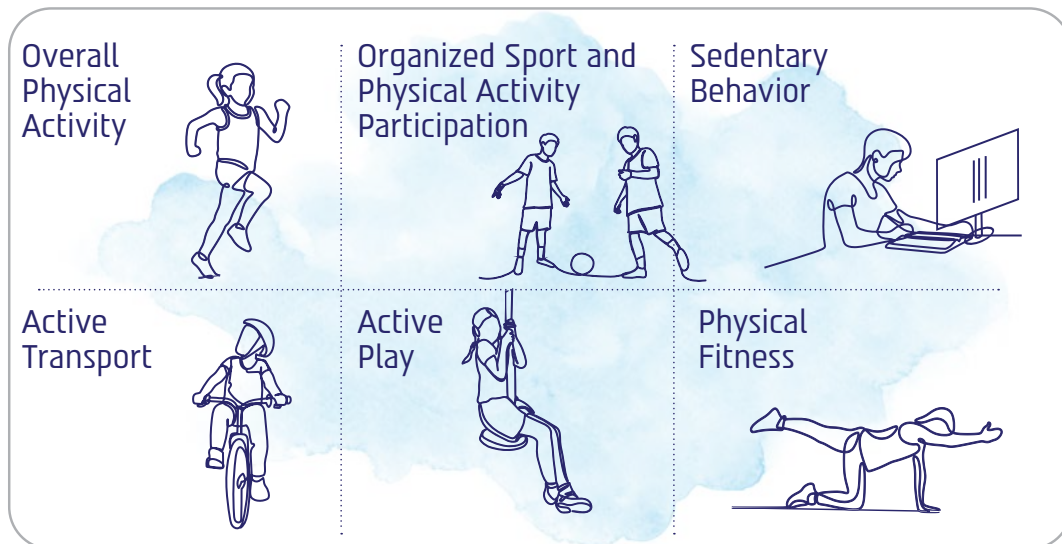
The primary data sources include:

- The World Health Organization (WHO) Health Behaviors in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Cross-National Study, Bar Ilan University, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, including: Physical Activity and Sports among Youth in Israel, 2019 and the Effects of COVID-19 on Health Behaviors and Wellbeing of Youth in Israel, 2021;
- National Survey of Physical Activity of Israel Residents age 21+, 2016 Israel Centers for Disease Control and Ministry of Culture and Sports;
- Database of Sports Facilities, Ministry of Culture and Sports, 2021;
- Audit and Personnel Data, Commissioner of Physical Education, Ministry of Education, May 2019;
- Database of Health Promoting Schools, Health Supervision Data, Ministry of Education, 2021; and
- Review of policies, regulations, position statements and data sources 2022-2021, from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Sports and the Ministry of Health.

Physical Activity Indicators & Grades

The AHKGA organization defines ten key indicators for child and adolescent physical activity representing the different spheres of influence. The grades are assigned based on an assessment of various data sources that are analyzed for each indicator, based on an examination of the proportion of children and youth who meet these measures, as defined in advance according to the international AHKGA organization.

Daily Behavior



Settings and Sources of Influence



Strategies and Investments



We are succeeding with a large majority children and adolescents (80-100%)



We are succeeding with well over half of the children and adolescents (60-79%)



We are succeeding with about half of children and adolescents (40-59%)



We are succeeding with some but less than half of the children and adolescents (20-39%)





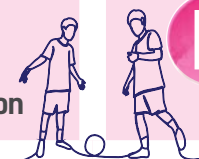











We are succeeding with very few children and adolescents (20%>)



Incomplete or inadequate information to assign a grade

Note: A score may appear on a scale of + or -, depending on the percentages

Israel 2022 Report Card

Overall Physical Activity 		<p>Most of the children and youth in Israel do not participate in physical activity in accordance with international guidelines; only 32% reported performing moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes on average for 4 or more days a week and only about 9% reported daily physical activity for at least 60 minutes. During the COVID-19 pandemic the situation worsened and only about 3% reported daily physical activity for at least 60 minutes.</p>
Organized Sport and Physical Activity Participation 		<p>About 55% of children and adolescents indicated that they participate in 30-45 minutes of organized sports at school. Only about 21% reported that they participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity at least 4 times and 2 hours a week after school.</p>
Active Transport 		<p>About 41% of children and adolescents reported walking or cycling to school and 50% reported using active travel back from school.</p>
Sedentary Behavior 		<p>Approximately 64% of children and teenagers reported that they watch TV and / or play computer games up to two hours a day in their free time.</p>
Active Play 		<p>No national or representative data sources were found on active play among children and adolescents in Israel.</p>
Physical Fitness 		<p>No national or representative data sources were found on physical fitness among children and adolescents in Israel.</p>
Family and Peers 		<p>About a quarter of the parents in Israel comply with the international guidelines for physical activity for adults and reported performing moderate physical activity for 150-300 minutes per week, or 75-150 minutes of vigorous physical activity. A similar proportion of children and teenagers (about 23%) stated that they exercise with their parents and or that they go on walks with their parents every day or most days of the week.</p> <p>No national or representative data sources were found on physical activity with peers.</p>

Schools



An evaluation of physical activity in educational settings found that physical education is delivered by specialists in all public schools in Israel. Most schools offer two hours of physical education per week in grades 1-12 in accordance with national policy, as well as allow regular access to facilities and equipment that support physical activity, such as a sports field and sports equipment. However, gymnasiums are only in place in half of the state educational institutions. Only 30% of educational institutions are recognized as health promoting schools. No national or representative data sources were found regarding the proportion of parents who reported that their children have access to opportunities for physical activity at school beyond physical education classes.

Community and the Built Environment



Almost all municipalities in Israel employ a sports department/division manager in accordance with the policy of the Ministry of Culture and Sports. Most municipalities reported that they have a policy to promote physical activity and have at least one sports field and hall. However, only about half of them reported that they have a swimming pool or fitness facilities. About half of the children and/or parents reported that they have facilities, programs, parks and playgrounds available to them in the community and that they live in a safe neighborhood where they can be physically active.

Government



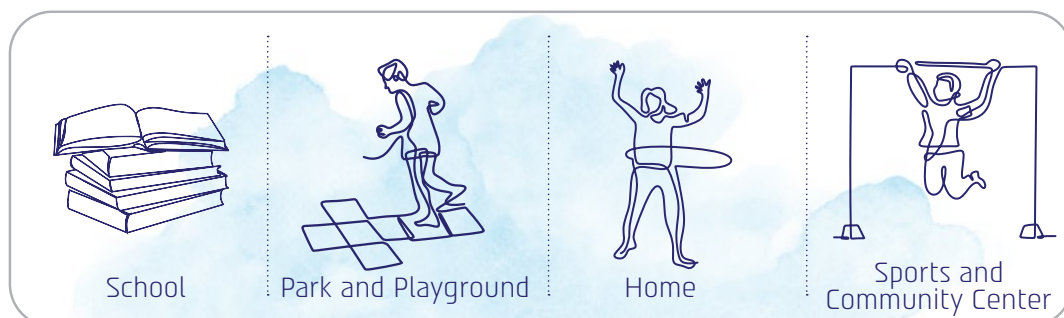
Leadership and commitment to providing opportunities for physical activity, along with the allocation of funds and resources to implement strategies and initiatives for the advancement of children and youth are evident. However, progress in several key stages of public policy is limited (formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies and decisions about the future). In addition, there is an absence of policy to promote an active lifestyle among minority populations, including the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community and the Bedouin community in the Negev.

All the data and sources used to compile the grades in the sheet are correct for 2019 and will be detailed in Israel's Report Card - long form.

An Active and Healthy Day in the Lives of Children and Adolescents



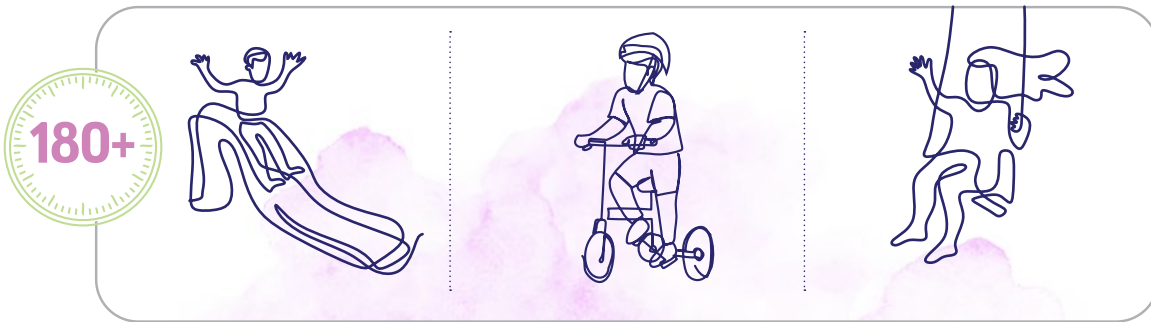
Healthy and Active in Different Settings



Kids on the Move: Recommendations for Incorporating Daily Physical Activity

Early Childhood

180+ daily cumulative minutes of active play and physical activity is recommended.



Children age 6-12

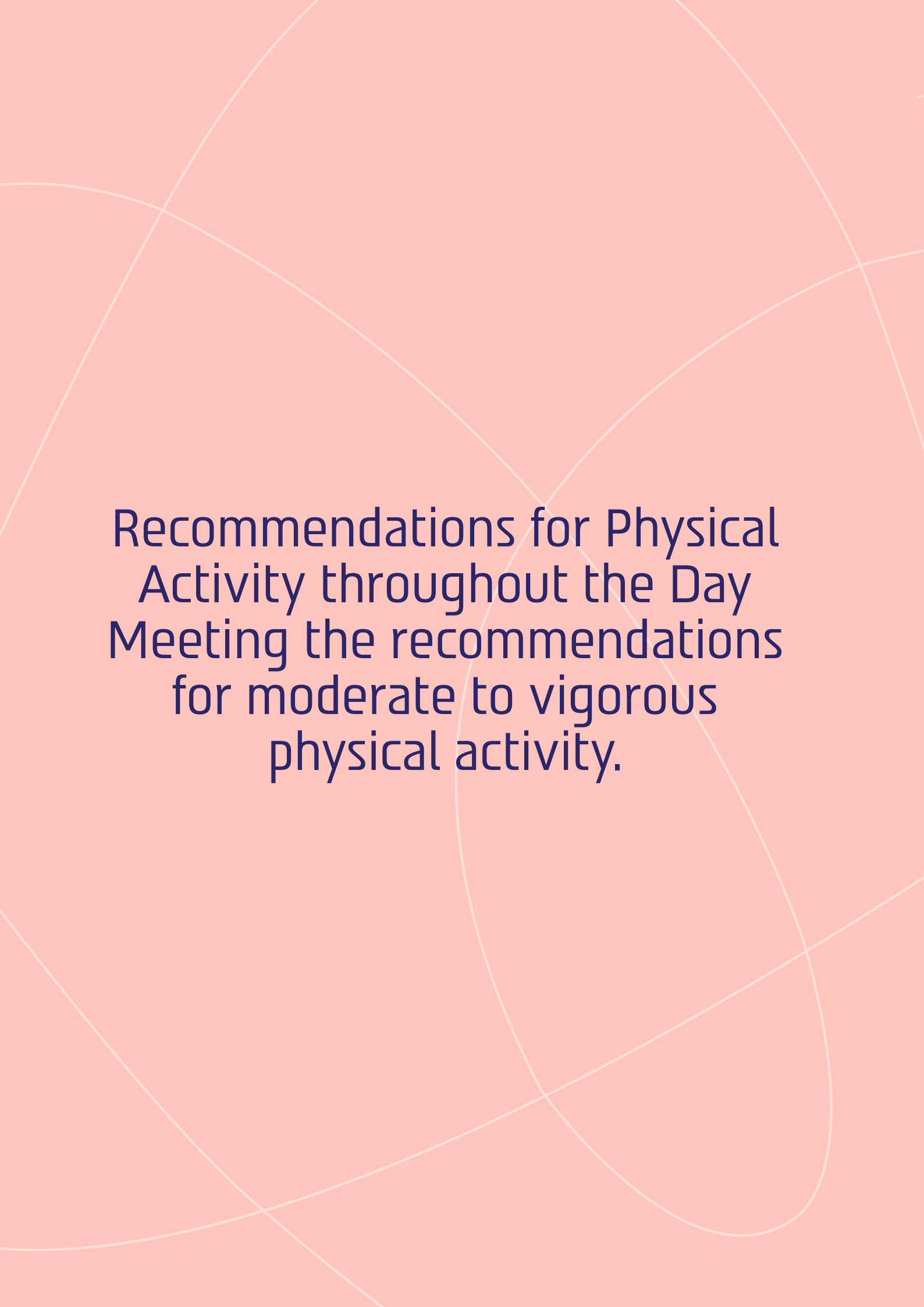
60+ cumulative minutes per day of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity including exercise to strengthen muscles and bones.



Adolescents age 13-18

60+ cumulative minutes per day of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity including exercise to strengthen muscles and bones.





Recommendations for Physical
Activity throughout the Day
Meeting the recommendations
for moderate to vigorous
physical activity.

For children age 5 and up, aim for an average of 60 cumulative minutes per day of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity that to increase your physical fitness. Vigorous aerobic activity is an activity that increases your heart rate and breathing, in a way that makes it difficult to complete a complete sentence, without the need to stop for breath. Physical activity should include exercise to strengthen muscles and bones at least 3 times a week.

In early childhood, approximately 180 cumulative minutes per day of age-appropriate physical activity is recommended.

- Most types of physical activity can be performed at different levels of intensity from moderate to high intensity depending on the effort, physical ability, age, health status, etc.
- The proposed activities can be carried out individually or in groups and in both a formal and informal setting.
- The activities suggested above can be carried out in a wide variety of settings such as: the educational system, classes, teams, leagues, youth movements and other social, family and community settings.
- The activities suggested above can be performed in diverse physical environments that include outdoor and indoor spaces such as gardens and playgrounds, parks, the beach, community centers, gymnasiums and classrooms.

Age/ Activity Type	Moderate Physical Activity	Vigorous Physical Activity	Muscle Strengthening	Skeletal Strengthening
Preschool 3-5	<p>Games: Catch, Obstacle Course</p> <p>Yard Play: preschool or kindergarten/ school/ yard, climbing (on a wall), use of play/sports facilities</p> <p>Riding: bicycle, skateboard, rollerblades, scooter (non-motorized)</p> <p>Ball games: soccer, basketball, volleyball, darts, tennis, rackets, ping pong</p> <p>Water sports: swimming, windsurfing/waves, kayaking</p> <p>Hiking: family trip, trips with youth movement, walking with a pet</p> <p>Gymnastics: floor, acrobatics, athletics</p> <p>Classes: dance, martial arts, ninja</p> <p>Computer and console games: Video / console games that involve movement such as Just Dance</p>		<p>Climbing Play: Play/sports facilities, climbing wall, ninja training</p> <p>Classes: gymnastics, acrobatics, yoga, activity with exercise bands</p>	<p>Activities that include quick changes in direction:</p> <p>Skipping, jumping, running</p> <p>Classes: gymnastics, acrobatics, yoga,</p>
Grade School 6-12				
Adolescents 13-18 - Additional Activities for Teens	<p>Running</p> <p>Training and classes: functional training, TABATA, intervals, aerobics, kickboxing, Zumba</p>		<p>Pilates</p> <p>Plank Exercises</p> <p>Weights and Fitness Equipment</p>	<p>Pilates</p>

Policy Recommendations to Promote Physical Activity for Children and Adolescents in Israel

The recommendations reflect good practice, recommended strategies and correspond with the Physical Activity indicators in the Report Card.

STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
<p>Central policy principles and recommendations for promoting physical activity, movement and sports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish national goals for physical activity among children and youth for each of the indicators in the report card. • Determine an overall policy for key agencies that promotes physical activity for children and youth, including: Municipalities, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and Sports and Ministry of Health. • Renewed emphasis on the many possibilities for physical activity, not only within the framework of competitive sports, including opportunities for play, movement, walking every day and more. • Prioritize populations that are inactive and/or without access to existing programs. • Dedicated culturally adapted programs for different populations, such as the Jewish Ultra-Orthodox and Arab communities. • Encourage play and movement from an early age.
<p>1</p> <p>Physical Activity in the Education System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of intervention programs to promote active play and movement from preschool to high school. • Expanding, implementing and monitoring the addition of physical activity in the classroom and the addition of integrated movement teaching units. • Incorporate a voucher program to add physical activity after the school day and in the school facilities, with an emphasis on students in the social and geographic periphery. • Introduce an evaluation measure of physical fitness into the education system.
<p>2</p> <p>Expanding the Circle of Stakeholders to support Physical Activity in the Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of multi-generational and family physical activity and movement, such as «Fathers and Sons», «Mamanet», "Girls on the Run". • Actions to monitor children who are not active at the local level and organize activities adapted and subsidized by the municipality. • Develop of dedicated and culturally adapted programs for different populations based on resident participation and accessibility at the local level, such as the Ultra-Orthodox Jewish community and the Bedouin community in the Negev. • Inclusion of college students in physical activity promotion among youth, utilizing the Perach Scholarship System. • Determine a policy to implement more physical activity in settings and institutions intended for children and teenagers, especially at-risk teens. • Develop a response to promote physical activity among children with special needs.

3	Expanding the Circle of Stakeholders to support Physical Activity in the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and encourage pediatricians, family doctors and other health professionals to provide recommendations to children and adolescents to participate in physical activity in the community. • Develop of programs for physical activity among children and youth within the HMO network focusing on children at risk and children with special needs. • Introduce a monitoring system for the implementation of physical activity and provision of recommendations within the education system student health services via public health nurses. • Determine a policy to implement more opportunities for physical activity for children as part of national mental health guidelines.
4	Environment that Promotes Physical Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a national policy for building gymnasiums in new schools and supplementing schools without gymnasiums, as well as improving fitness equipment in schools. • Develop of comprehensive infrastructure to promote walkability and active transport in local authorities including; walking and cycling paths, signs, shade, water coolers and more. • Develop of accessible, challenging and safe playgrounds for outdoor play in local authorities. • Implement national policy to build more swimming pools that are accessible to children and youth, especially in the geographic and social periphery.
5	Expanding Public Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and distribution of information and recommendations on social media and various platforms, annual campaigns, and games adapted for children and youth of different ages to encourage physical activity. • Improve public information for professionals and the general public on the importance of physical activity and its contribution to health, development, emotional resilience, educational achievements and reducing violence. • Development of targeted recommendations on physical activity and nutrition for youth to be distributed directly to parents as part of student health services; alongside height and weight measurements in Grades 1 and 7.
6	Monitoring, evaluation and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a program to conduct physical fitness assessment, to monitor and promote improvement for each child (based on EUROFIT). • Develop of tools intended for self-testing as well as for physical activity teachers. • Incorporate monitoring and recommendations as part of public health services in grades 1, 7 and within the national Well-Baby clinics network.

The recommendations are detailed in full in Israel's Report Card - long form.





Forum Participants

In Alphabetical Order

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Dr. Michal Azmon, Physical Therapist, Ministry of Health

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Israel Pediatrics Association

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Yael Nasimian-Pai, Health Coordinator, Ramle Municipality

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