

Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

2012 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR THE EARLY YEARS - 0 – 4 YEARS

Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy infants (aged less than 1 year), toddlers (aged 1-2 years) and preschoolers (aged 3-4 years) irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status of the family. For healthy growth and development, parents and caregivers are encouraged to limit sedentary behaviours of infants, toddlers and preschoolers in the context of family, childcare, school and community.

The benefits of reduced sedentary time exceed potential risks. In particular, sedentary screen time is associated with detrimental effects on aspects of cognitive and psychosocial development and may be associated with adverse effects on body composition.

These guidelines may be appropriate for infants, toddlers and preschoolers with a disability or medical condition; however, their parents or caregivers should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of activities appropriate for them.

This recommendation places a high value on the harms associated with exposure to screen time, the value of having a guideline that is acceptable to parents and practitioners and the importance of avoiding screen time in the earliest years of development.

For guidance on increasing physical activity at all ages, please refer to the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines (www.csep.ca/guidelines).

Guidelines

- For healthy growth and development, caregivers should minimize the time infants (aged less than 1 year), toddlers (aged 1-2 years) and preschoolers (aged 3-4 years) spend being sedentary during waking hours. This includes prolonged sitting or being restrained (e.g., stroller, high chair) for more than one hour at a time.
- For those under 2 years, screen time (e.g., TV, computer, electronic games) is not recommended.
- For children 2-4 years, screen time should be limited to under one hour per day; less is better.

Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR CHILDREN - 5 – 11 YEARS

Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy children (aged 5-11 years) irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status of the family. Children are encouraged to limit sedentary behaviours and to participate in physical activities that support their natural development and are enjoyable and safe.

Children should limit recreational screen time (television, computer, video games, etc.), motorized transportation, indoor time and extended sitting in the context of family, school and community (e.g., volunteer, employment) activities.

Following these guidelines can improve body composition, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, academic achievement, self-esteem and social behaviours. The benefits of reduced sedentary time exceed potential risks.

These guidelines may be appropriate for children with a disability or medical condition; however, their parents or caregivers should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of activities appropriate for them.

For those with screen time levels in excess of 2 hours per day it is appropriate to start to progressively reduce screen time as a stepping-stone to meeting the guidelines.

For guidance on increasing physical activity please refer to the *Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Youth*.

Guidelines

- For health benefits, children (aged 5-11 years) should minimize the time they spend being sedentary each day. This may be achieved by
 - Limiting recreational screen time to no more than 2 hours per day; lower levels are associated with additional health benefits.
 - Limiting sedentary (motorized) transport, extended sitting and time spent indoors throughout the day.

Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

2011 SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

FOR YOUTH - 12 – 17 YEARS

Preamble

These guidelines are relevant to all apparently healthy youth (aged 12-17 years), irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status of the family. Youth are encouraged to limit sedentary behaviours and to participate in physical activities that support their natural development and are enjoyable and safe.

Youth should limit recreational screen time (television, computer, video games, etc.), motorized transportation, indoor time and extended sitting in the context of family, school and community (e.g. volunteer, employment) activities.

Following these guidelines can improve body composition, cardiorespiratory and musculoskeletal fitness, academic achievement, self-esteem and social behaviours. The benefits of reduced sedentary time exceed potential risks.

These guidelines may be appropriate for youth with a disability or medical condition; however, their parents or caregivers should consult a health professional to understand the types and amounts of activities appropriate for them.

For those with screen time levels in excess of 2 hours per day it is appropriate to start to progressively reduce screen time as a stepping-stone to meeting the guidelines.

For guidance on increasing physical activity please refer to the *Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines for Children and Youth*.

Guidelines

- For health benefits, youth (aged 12-17 years) should minimize the time they spend being sedentary each day. This may be achieved by
 - Limiting recreational screen time to no more than 2 hours per day; lower levels are associated with additional health benefits.
 - Limiting sedentary (motorized) transport, extended sitting and time spent indoors throughout the day.