



Childhood Obesity in Canada

In Canada,

- 25% of children and youth (2-17 y) are overweight /obese
- 41% of Aboriginal children living off-reserve are overweight/obese
- 55% of Aboriginal children living on reserve are overweight/obese

Data Sources: CCHS 2004; First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey 2002/2003

Many contributors to Childhood Obesity

- genetics
- maternal & fetal health
- low or high birthweight
- parent obesity
- parenting styles
- poverty



and many more ...



2007 Report Card Indicators



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY / INACTIVITY

Physical Activity Levels

Grade: F
(2006 Grade D)

Screen Time

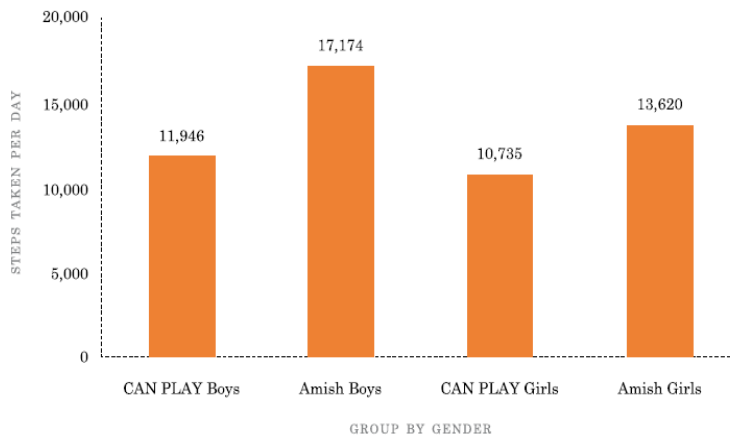
Grade: D-
(2006 Grade D-)

Sport Participation

Grade: C
(2006 Grade C-)

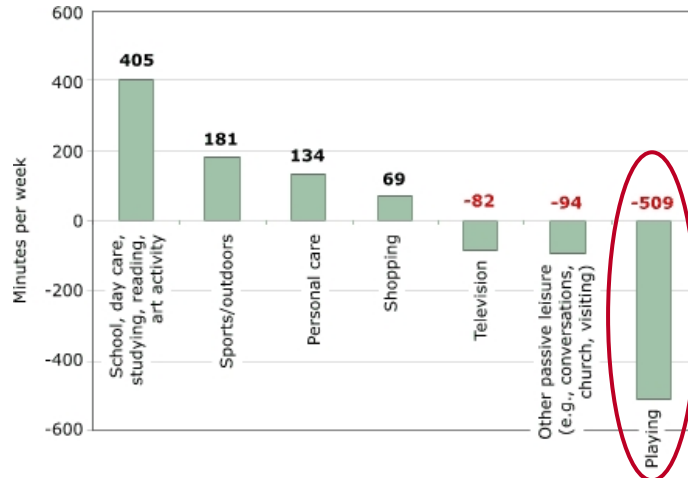


Average Number of Steps Per Day



Source: CFLRI

**Changes in Time (min/week) Spent in Activities by Children Ages 3-5 years in USA:
Change from 1981-1997**

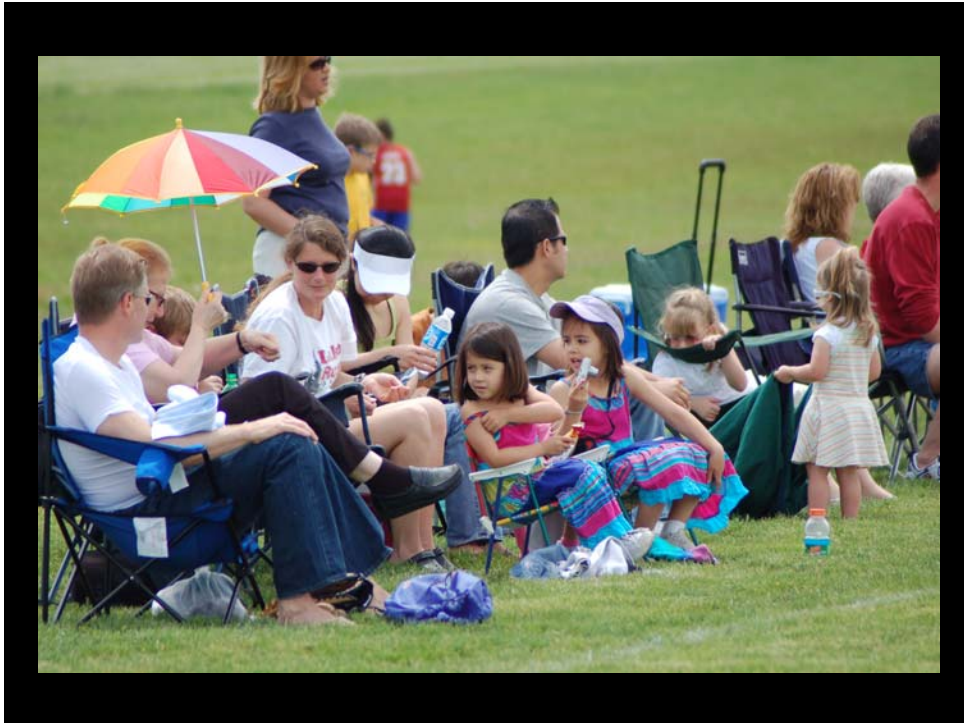


Strum R. Public Health Practice and Policy. 2:1:1-9, 2005
Data from University of Michigan:Hofferth SL & Sandberg JF. 2001



“Recreation has gone from spontaneous to organized and regimented activity: parents exercise at the gym while the young play soccer and hockey in leagues with schedules rather than in the backyard or the street in front. More time is often spent preparing for and getting there rather than on the activity itself.”

Friedman. Room For Thought. 2005



Time spent in various types of activity



TAAG study, USA

There is No Single Cause

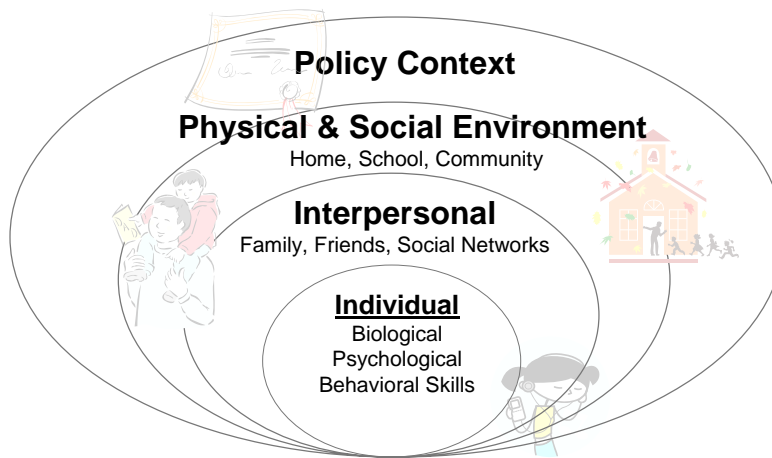
- broad range of changes have occurred together throughout the past several decades
- we must examine both our biology and our environment



SOLUTIONS must be multi-faceted!



Influences on Health Behavior



Individual



Young People have to:

- Want to
- Think they can
- Overcome barriers
- Be reinforced

GET THEM INVOLVED!!

Families (Interpersonal)

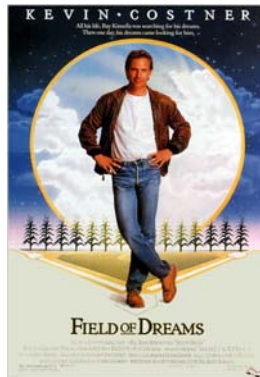
➤ Family interventions are not always successful despite good evidence that support from parents, siblings, and peers is related to youth physical activity

➤ **Promising approaches:**

- Reducing sedentary behaviours
- Transporting and paying for activity programs
- Walking/cycling as transportation

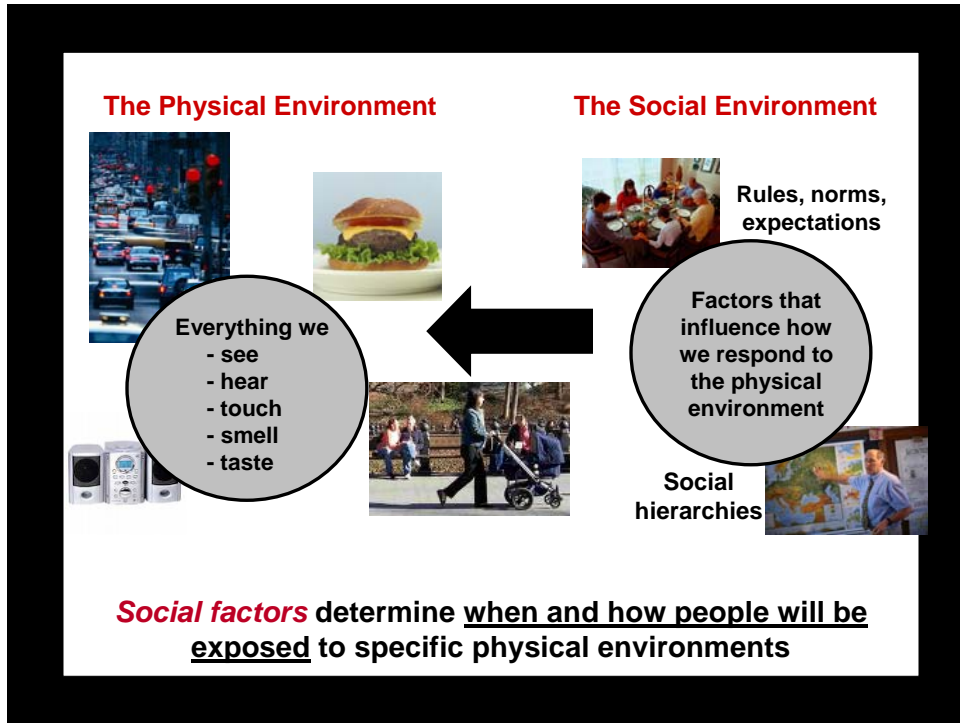


Physical & Social Environment




“If you build it, they will come”...?





The Community Environment

- Youth PA is influenced by urban design, especially proximity to destinations
 - *More PA if youth live close to recreational facilities and school*
- Venues and physical features of a location matter in determining:
 - *What activity occurs*
 - *Intensity of activity*
- Novelties (e.g. markings, equipment, signs) can increase PA



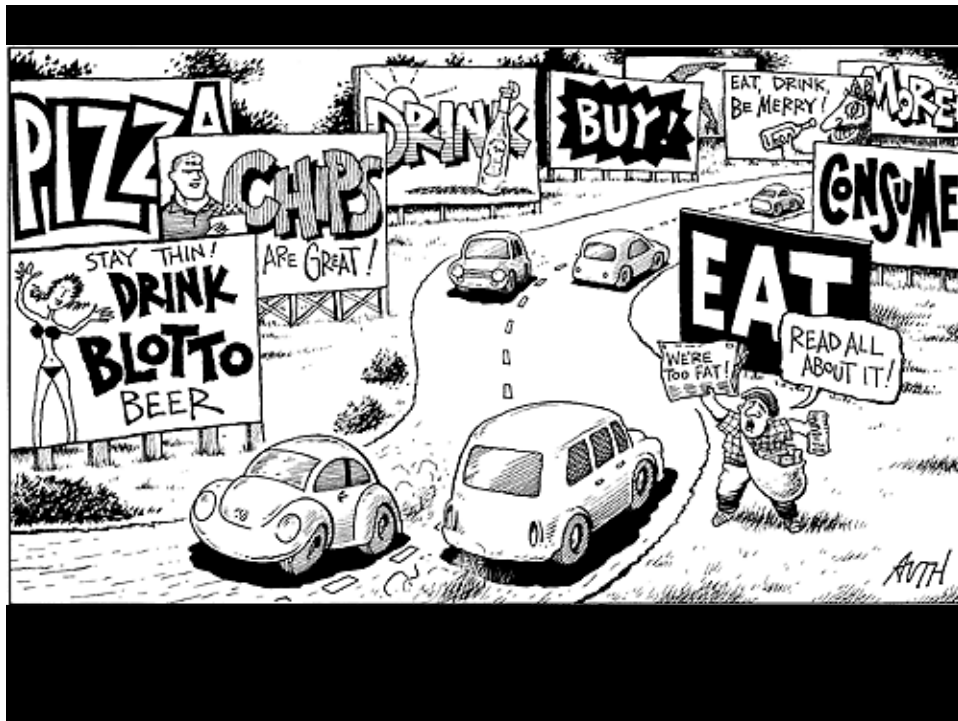
Policy

➤ Policies have broad reach -

housing, transportation, environment, economic

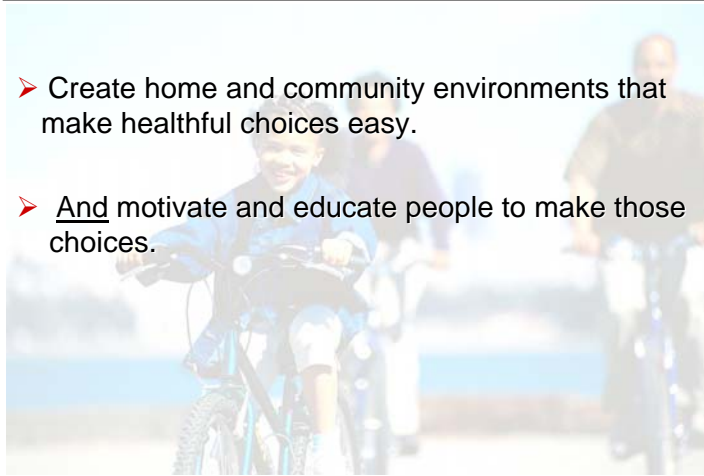


- Use a solution-based approach
 - focus on solution rather than problem
- Connect science with advocacy efforts
 - i.e. frame issue as a story, backed up with *data*
- Tailor communications to emphasize short-term benefits for policy-makers



Support Healthier Choices

- Create home and community environments that make healthful choices easy.
- And motivate and educate people to make those choices.

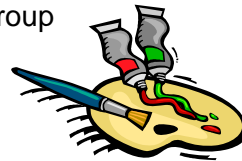


Make Healthy Choices The Easy Choice

Create 'Optimal Defaults'

Consider:

- **Abundance** – lots of opportunities
- **Convenience** – cost, proximity, etc.
- **Choice** – appealing to target group





Many Potential Allies

Health

- Emphasising benefits
- Addressing costs

Economic

- Appraisal of health impacts

Industry

- Alignment with product design, architecture, etc.

Transport / Planning

- Alignment with targets
e.g. road safety, congestion

Climate Change

Keys to Success



- Many targets for change
 - increasing physical activity **and** decreasing sedentary time
- Multiple, complimentary approaches
- Involve many partners & aim for sustainability
- Evaluate process & outcomes

SUMMARY

- Look for opportunities to be active throughout the ENTIRE day
- Make HEALTHY choices the EASY choices identifying the barriers to physical activity in your community
- Consider ways to target multiple “levels of influence”
- Improving physical structures alone may not change physical activity
- Social structures need to be in tune with physical changes



Physical Activity is about having fun...





...this should not be lost!!

Thanks to:



HEART &
STROKE
FOUNDATION
OF ONTARIO

Finding answers. For life.



Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle
Research Institute



THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION
TRILLIUM
DE L'ONTARIO