

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.