



**KEY FINDINGS FACT SHEET NO. 2**

**Results from the Western Australian Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (CAPANS) 2003**

# School-based Physical Activity



In 2003, the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce, Healthway and the Department of Health commissioned the University of Notre Dame to undertake a Statewide survey to collect baseline data on child and adolescent physical activity behaviours, eating patterns and physiques.

This fact sheet describes the participation of Western Australian children in school-based physical activity, including physical education (PE) and sport and activity during recess and lunch.

### SURVEY SAMPLE

Data were collected from 2,275 students across nineteen primary schools (58.9%) and seventeen secondary schools (41.1%). Of the sample 49.8% were males and 50.2% were females. Primary school students ranged from 7–12 years of age (school years 3,5,7) and secondary school students from 12–16 years of age (school years 8,10,11).

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT

**Physical Education / School Sport** referred to physical activity sessions performed as part of the school curriculum.

### PARTICIPATION

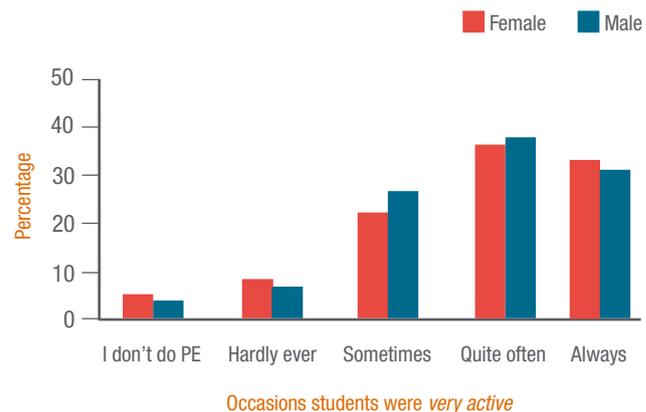
- **Physical Education (PE)** and **school sport** classes were the most prevalent of all activities for both males and females.
- 95.1% of primary school males and females participated in school-based PE and sport.
- 86.5% of secondary school males and 84.5% of females participated in school-based PE and sport.
- Participation in PE and sport was similar for most **metropolitan** and **non-metropolitan** students.
- More **non-metropolitan** secondary school females (96%) participated in PE and sport than **metropolitan** females (81.7%).

### HOW OFTEN DO CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN PE AND SPORT?

#### Primary School Students (age 7–12 years)

- The **frequency** and **intensity** of PE and sport was similar for primary school males and females.
- More primary school males (11.8%) than females (7.6%) reported they did not participate in PE and sport.

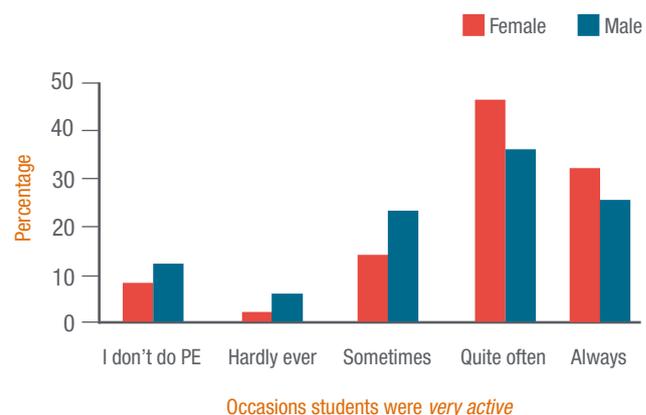
Figure 1. Occasions primary school students were *very active* during PE classes



#### Secondary School Students (age 12–16 years)

- Secondary school males participated in PE or sport on more occasions than secondary school females (2.5 vs 1.9 sessions per week).
- Secondary school males participated in PE or sport for a longer time than secondary school females (152.9 vs 112.7 minutes per week).
- More secondary school females (16.7%) than males (10.3%) reported they did not participate in PE and sport.

Figure 2. Occasions secondary school students were *very active* during PE classes



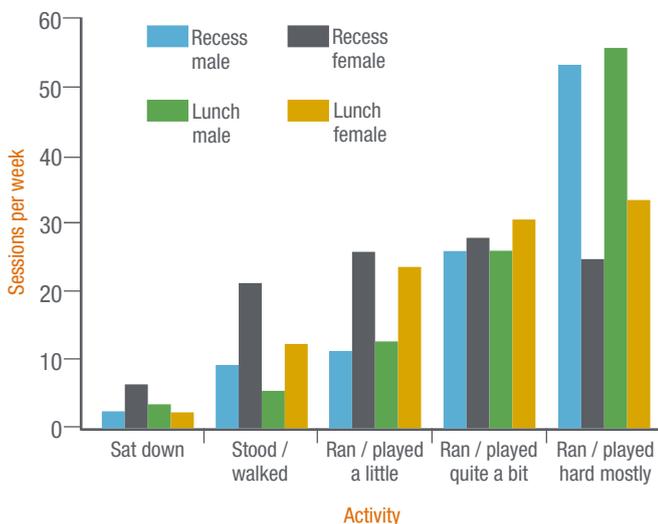


## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT RECESS AND LUNCH

### PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (7–12 YEARS)

- Most males ran and played hard *most of the time* during recess (52.7%) and lunch (55.1%).
- Most females ran around and played *quite a bit* during recess (26.5%) and ran and played hard most of the time during lunch (33.3%).
- More females *stood around or walked around* during recess (20.2%) and lunch (12.4%) compared with males during recess (8.9%) and lunch (4.5%).
- Primary school students were more active during recess and lunch than secondary school students.

Figure 3. recess and lunch activity for primary school students

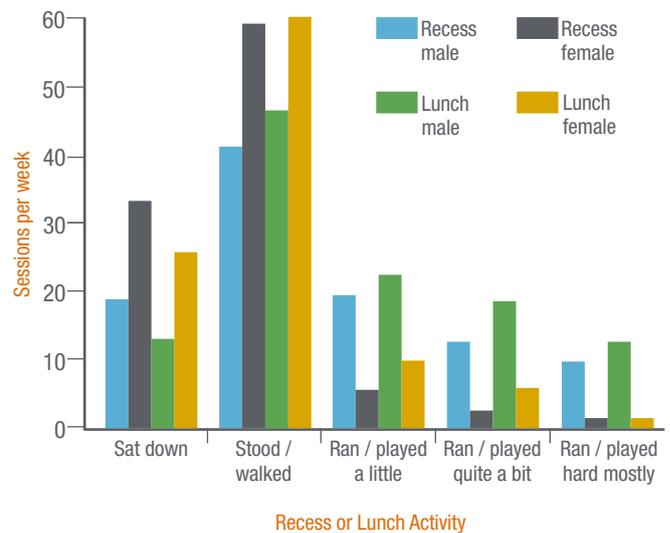


### SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (12–16 YEARS)

- Most males *stood around or walked around* during recess (41.8%) and lunch (35.7%).
- Most females *stood around or walked around* during recess (59%) and lunch (60.2%).
- Males were more active than females during recess and lunch.
- Only a small percentage of females did any form of running or playing during recess (7.4%) and lunch (14.6%), compared with males during recess (39.7%) and lunch (51.4%).
- Females were more likely to sit down during recess (33.6%) and lunch (25.2%), than males during recess (18.5%) and lunch (12.9%).



Figure 4. Recess and Lunch Activity for Secondary School Students



## AUSTRALIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN

### (5–12 YEARS) AND YOUTH (12–18 YEARS)

1. Children and youth should participate in at least 60 minutes (and up to several hours) of **moderate** to **vigorous intensity** physical activity every day.
2. Children and youth should not spend more than 2 hours per day using electronic media such as TV, computer games and the internet for entertainment, particularly during daylight hours.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Recommendations for increasing the levels of physical activity in children as well as other key findings can be found in the CAPANS report<sup>1</sup> at [www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au](http://www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au) or by contacting the Physical Activity Taskforce Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce  
Department of Health



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<sup>1</sup> Hands, B., Parker, H., Glasson, C., Brinkman, S. & Read, H. (2004). *Physical Activity and Nutrition Levels in Western Australian Children and Adolescents: Report*. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.