

Results from Finland's 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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Introduction

Finland's 2018 Report Card was prepared as part of the Global Matrix 3.0 (Figure 1). It was the third assessment of physical activity (PA) for Finnish children and adolescents (previous years 2014 and 2016). The purpose of this abstract is to summarize the results of Finland's 2018 Report Card and provide grades for 10 indicators concerning the status and promotion of PA among Finnish school-aged children and youth.

Methods

Finland's 2018 Report Card included the 10 core PA indicators that are common to the Global Matrix 3.0 (Table 1). The data sources were most recent national monitoring and surveys related to PA including the LIITU study (2016), the School Health Promotion (SHP) Study (2017), National Move! monitoring system for physical functioning capacity 2017 and Promotion of PA in municipalities – TEAvisari 2016. Finland's 2018 Report Card work group included 19 specialists from different fields, working on research, policy or practices related to PA among children and adolescents. Grades and rationales for Finland's 2018 Report Card are presented in Table 1.

In addition to the Global Matrix 3.0 process concerning school-aged children (7–15 years old in Finland), the Finnish work group gathered the data for children and adolescents in four categories: 0–6 years old, 7–12 years old, 13–15 years old and 16–18 years old. These results are presented in Finland's national Report Card.

Results and Discussion

Compared to Finland's last assessment of PA for children and adolescents in 2016, seven indicators in the 2018 Report Card were graded as slightly better (Organized Sport Participation, Active Play, Active Transportation, Family and Peers, School, Community and the Built Environment, Government Strategies and Investments). Overall PA remained unchanged from the previous assessment (grade of D) and sedentary behaviours was graded D-, which is slightly lower than D in 2016. Physical fitness was a new indicator in the Global Matrix 3.0 and it was graded C in Finland.

Conclusion

Governmental support for PA promotion among school-aged children and youth in Finland during past few years has been stronger than ever before. Nevertheless, the proportion of Finnish children and youth who achieve the recommended levels of daily PA and screen time is still low. Facilitating a population level change in PA among children and youth requires wide collaboration and contribution of different sectors and actors. Everyone working with children and adolescent and influencing their lives has an opportunity to facilitate their PA. In addition, more effective interventions, operation models, concrete tools as well as



Figure 1 — Finland's 2018 Report Card cover.

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