



The Association Between Active Transportation to School and Daily Physical Activity

Among Elementary Students Living in Northeastern Ontario

Background

- Only 9% of 5- to 17-year-old children and youth in Canada meet physical activity guidelines (1).
- Active transportation to school is an opportunity for children to increase their daily physical activity (2).



Purpose

- To assess the contribution of active transportation to total daily physical activity and moderate physical activity among students living in a small city in Northeastern Ontario.



Methods

- Each participant was given an accelerometer to determine how much of their time was spent sedentary or active during their day.



Results

- Total active minutes were significantly higher on active transportation school days.
- Moderate physical activity levels were greater on days of active transportation to school.



Conclusions

- The active minutes accumulated on the trip to school during active transportation are important contributors to daily physical activity.
- Walking and cycling to school may be associated with overall higher levels of daily physical activity in school-aged children compared to those students who travel to school by bus or car.



Implications for Policy and Practice

- This study provides support for policy initiatives to promote active transportation to school.
- It is important for elementary schools and key stakeholders work together to implement effective strategies to encourage active transportation to school among students.

