

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN TEXAS

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

Texas children are falling behind in physical activity

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends **60 minutes or more** of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for youth aged 6-17¹.

Physical Inactivity Crisis

Texas children **do not** meet guidelines of **60 minutes** (or more) of physical activity.



78.4% of youth do not meet 60+ minutes of physical activity at least 5 days per week².



Classroom teacher-led physical activity breaks occur in **47.1%** of elementary schools, **28.6%** of middle schools, and **13.3%** of high schools².



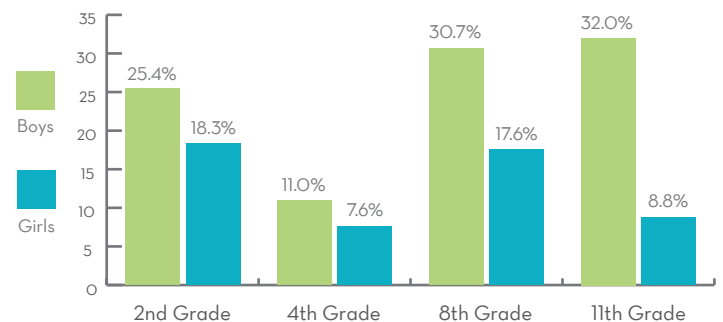
25.3% of Texas high school students meet 60 minutes per day of physical activity; though **31.2%** are in daily PE classes².

Current and Lifetime Risks

Texas children are **not exercising**. A lack of adequate physical activity has adverse lifetime consequences.

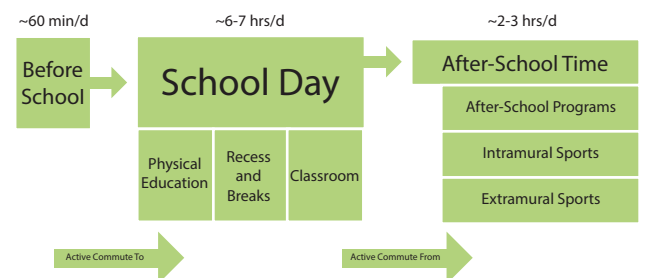
- Obesity³
- Social isolation^{4,5}
- Reduced cognitive abilities^{6,7}
- Chronic diseases^{8,9}

% of students meeting guidelines of 60+ minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity 7 days a week²



How we can improve Texas children's physical activity¹⁰

- Promote active commuting (biking, walking) for students
- Daily structured PE classes using an evidence-based program like CATCH¹¹
- Daily recess for K-5 of at least 30 minutes
- Encourage classroom physical activity breaks
- Quality training for physical education and classroom teachers



Comprehensive approach to school-wide physical activity promotion¹²

Current Physical Activity Guidelines

The Department of Health and Human Services recommends **60 minutes or more** of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for youth aged 6-17. Most of the 60 minutes or more per day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and should include vigorous-intensity physical activity on at least 3 days a week. Adolescents should include muscle-strengthening and bone-strengthening physical activity on at least 3 days a week¹.

Texas Administrative code requires PE be offered to all K-12 students, but this varies by grade level. **Grades K-6** are required to have 30 minutes of physical activity every day which can be structured (PE) or unstructured (recess). In **grades 6-8**, 30 minutes per day is required for 4 out of the 6 semesters. For **grades 9-12**, the requirement for graduation is 1 semester of PE.¹³

References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition. 2018.
2. School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project. Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN project details available online at go.uth.edu/SPAN.

The School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project is a surveillance system monitoring the prevalence of overweight/obesity in school-aged children in Texas conducted by researchers at the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN has been funded by the Texas Department of State Health Services since 2000 to conduct height and weight measurements across different grade levels.
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About the Texas Child Health Status Report

This project is funded by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. These reports utilize state-level data from the School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project to provide an accurate representation of Texas child health.

Learn more at go.uth.edu/TexasChildHealth

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