

PIONEERING LOCAL SOLUTIONS

REPORT CARD NO.1
SPRING 2013

WE CAN—AND MUST—DO MORE TOGETHER.

THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE One-in-three Canadian children is either overweight or obese and at risk of health complications normally found only in adults. The effect of sedentary lifestyles and physical inactivity on the health of children and youth is one of our nation's biggest challenges.

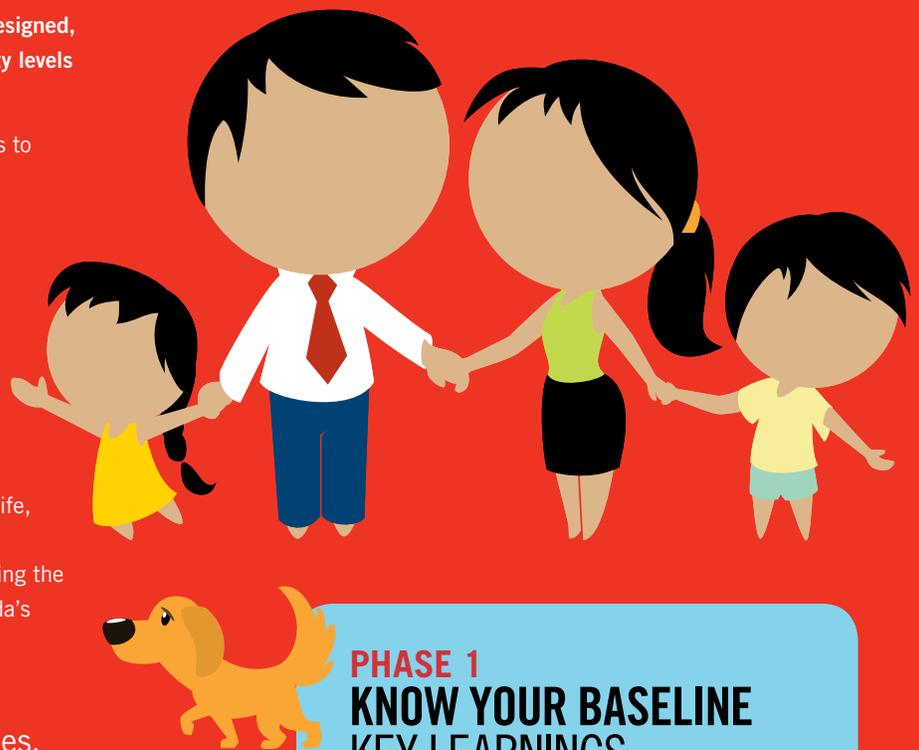
How can Canada's public recreation facilities be better designed, programmed and operated to significantly increase activity levels in children, youth and adults?

Vivo for Healthier Generations is pioneering local solutions to the national challenge. Working together with others, the goal is a new blueprint for healthier generations in Calgary and beyond.

The *Raise the Bar* Child+Youth Action Research Project is a first-of-a-kind collaborative initiative engaging the community, recreation and education to improve healthy living practices and increase physical activity levels.

This project is a multi-phased generational undertaking with Mount Royal University, the Flames Foundation for Life, the Alberta Province Lottery Fund, Allan Markin and Calgary communities. Its evidenced-based work is informing the future business model, design and programming of Canada's public recreation sector.

To date, it has engaged more than 550 young research associates and their families.



PHASE 1 KNOW YOUR BASELINE KEY LEARNINGS

Working with kids and their families Phase 1 established baseline fitness levels of children and youth ages 4–12 years by assessing motor proficiency skills, body mass index and moderate to vigorous physical activity levels.

[LEARN MORE](#)

This report card is the first in a series. Each will be designed to provide summary information arising from the Child+Youth Action Research project.

1

CALGARY KIDS COMPARE WELL

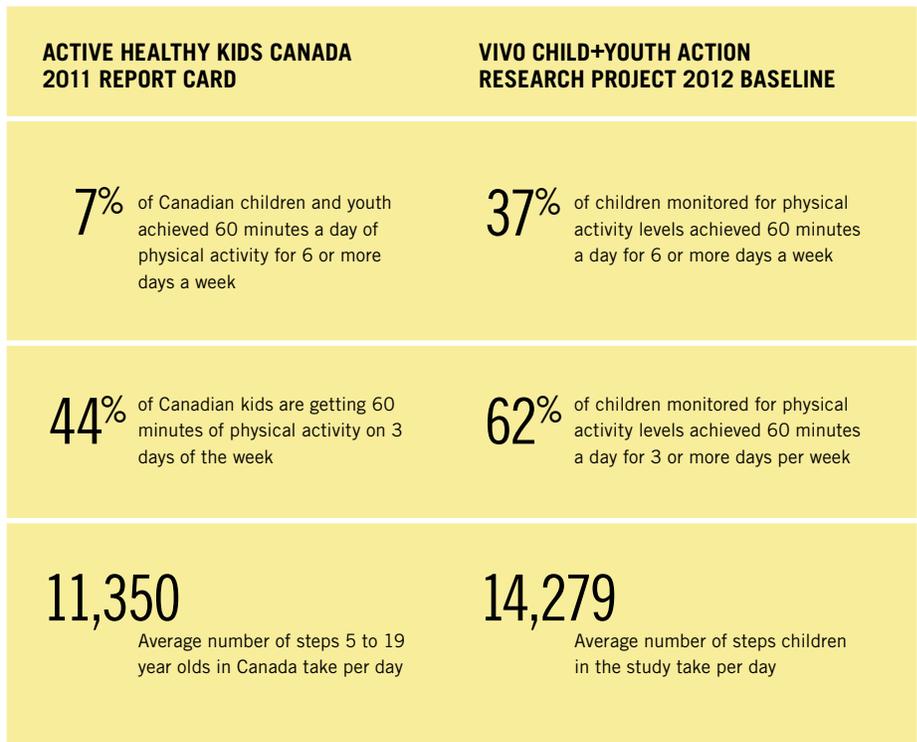
Physical activity levels of Calgary kids participating in the study compare well to the Active Healthy Kids Canada national report card. 37% of the children were active for an hour a day, at least six days a week, while 62% were active for 60 minutes at least three days a week. Both figures exceed the national findings (see chart). →

▶ OPPORTUNITY

While the Calgary results are encouraging, more can be done to help all kids be active.

Kids are typically meeting the targeted physical activity levels 0–3 days a week. Shifting the baseline to 4–5 days a week of physical activity is a realistic and achievable next step. Eventually, all kids can be active 5–6 or more days a week.

Physical Activity Levels Assessment*



* The Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that children accumulate at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day for 6 or more days per week (2007–2009 CHMS), which is estimated to be equivalent to the recommended target of 12,000 to 13,500 steps per day.

2

FOCUS ON COORDINATION AND BALANCE

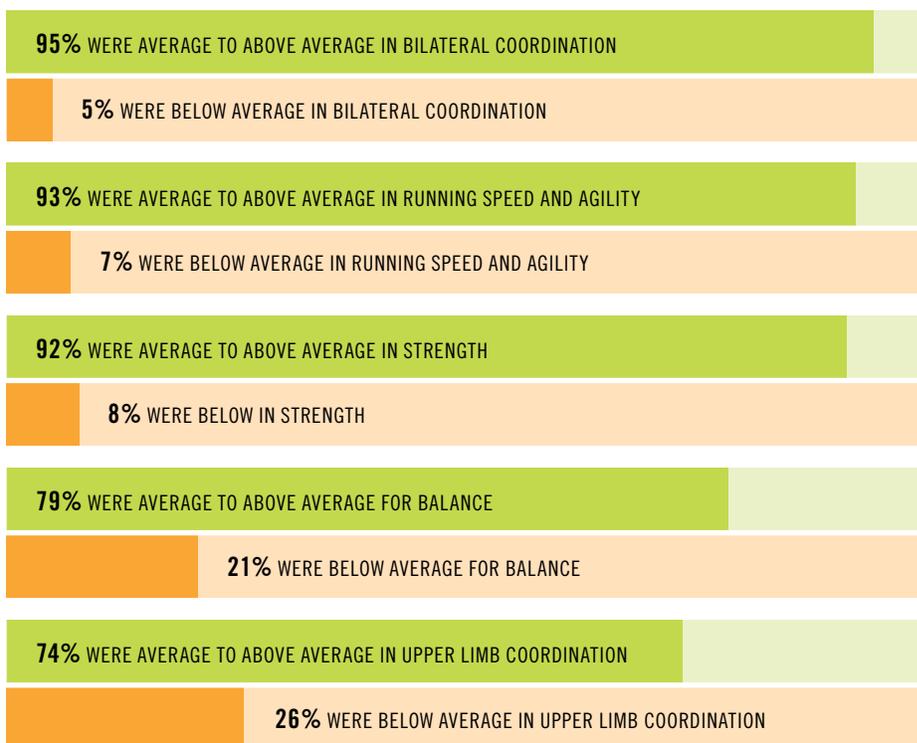
While Calgary kids are more active than others, more can be done to improve their coordination and balance.

Kids in the study are assessed for motor proficiency skills, which looks at the basic ability to perform activities such as throwing and catching a ball or balancing on one foot. Baseline results reveal that bi-lateral coordination and balance skills are trending lower than the North American average. →

▶ OPPORTUNITY

These findings will help inform curriculum design of future programs and services, beginning with Phase 2 pilots.

Motor Proficiency Assessment*



* Compared with North American studies of kids of the same gender and ages.

3 TARGET AGE-SPECIFIC GROUPS

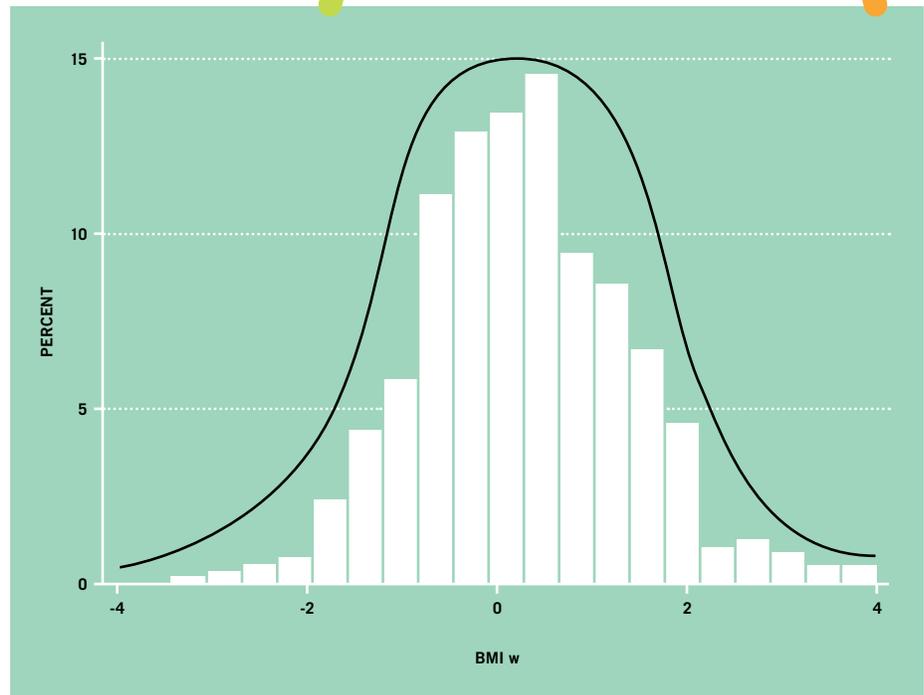
Calgary kids' Body Mass Index (BMI) is similar to the North American average, except for 4–5 year olds have slightly higher levels. →

▶ OPPORTUNITY

The BMI results demonstrate the need for a effective, evidence-based intervention programs targeted at age-specific groups. Developing age-specific recreation curriculum and programs will begin during Phase 2. As part of the longitudinal study design, the first pilot, beginning January 2014, will focus on kids 6–7 years old with the second pilot focusing on kids 4–5 years old.



Body Mass Index*



* Compared with North American studies of kids of the same gender and ages.

4 CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

Information and knowledge can spark life changes. 550 Calgary children, youth and their families participated in the study, know their baseline fitness levels and are committed to getting healthy for life. →

▶ OPPORTUNITY

Providing immediate, easy-to-understand feedback for children and their parents is a valuable part of the experience and for creating awareness and influencing lifestyle behaviours.

Developing new and expanding communication channels to provide relevant, meaningful and timely feedback and engagement will be incorporated into all future phases.

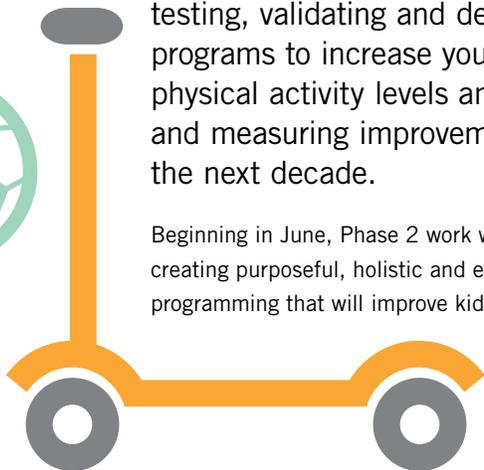
Small Effort, Big Effect

“The knowledge we received as part of the Child+Youth Action Research Project confirmed many things we believed, but it also surprised us. We strive to be an active family, but this program reminded us that a small effort has a big effect.”

— Kent Bates, PARENT



PHASE 2 DEVELOPING NEW CURRICULUM NEXT STEPS



Phase 2 is focusing on creating, testing, validating and delivering new programs to increase young peoples' physical activity levels and tracking and measuring improvements over the next decade.

Beginning in June, Phase 2 work will begin creating purposeful, holistic and evidence-based programming that will improve kids' motor

proficiency, competence and physical activity behaviours, especially in recreation and after-school program environments.

While curriculum-based physical education (PE) exists for use in school environments, there is a lack of evidence-based curriculum and programming for recreation purposes.

Beginning in early 2014, Phase 2 will examine the integration of recreation programs for 6–7 year olds using educational-based SPARK (Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids) lesson plans. The 22-week pilot will also integrate Canadian Sport for Life principles and Alberta Education Physical Education outcomes.

This, and other pilot projects, will seek to prove that a purposeful holistic curriculum can increase motor proficiency helping to create a generation of children and youth who are competent and confident in their fundamental movement skills and thus more physically active for life.

KNOW YOUR BASELINE REGISTER YOUR CHILD IN THE STUDY TODAY

Kids between 4–12 years can now register to join the study team.

Participating kids and their families receive a personal, customized report on their physical fitness and skill level. They also receive resources to support and encourage their family to stay active. It's great information, it's good for life, and it's free.

To register in the study or to learn more, contact our Project Coordinator at Nvanwyk@vivo.ca or call the Child+Youth Action Research Project at **587.435.3553**

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