



# SEDENTARY BEHAVIORS IN YOUTH PREDICT INACTIVITY LEVELS AND RISK OF OBESITY IN LATER LIFE

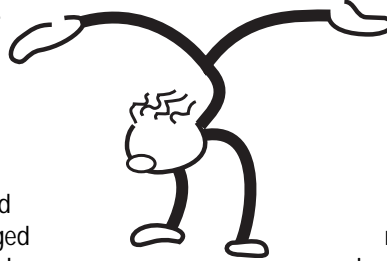


Active kids are more likely to remain lean and healthy during their youth and inactive adolescents are more likely to become adults who do not exercise, according to new results on tracking of physical activity behaviors in children to help predict the physical activity and fitness levels of adults. Researchers also say physically-active children do not necessarily grow up to be adults who exercise. Their results were presented at the American College of Sports Medicine's 50th Annual Meeting in San Francisco, May 28 - 31.



of physical activity behavior and physical fitness of young males and females who were followed over a period of 23 years, from age 13 to age 36. The study, conducted in Amsterdam, found inconsistent physical activity behaviors in adolescents and young adults: active adolescents are not more active at all at later ages, and the opposite was shown to be true. Researchers explain this means physical fitness factors such as endurance and muscle force show more stability than other exercise behaviors, such as the frequency and intensity of exercise.

The first set of data examined changes in activity in young children during middle childhood (roughly kindergarten through third grade), an important transition period for youth. Researchers studied a large group using accelerometers and surveys to quantify activity. This method allowed researchers to track real-time movement and determine which activities children were performing at what times of day, and the intensity of each activity. Researchers also measured the level of fatness of the children involved in the study. Results suggest those engaged in vigorous activity are more likely to stay lean, while TV viewing was the behavior most likely to predict weight gain during middle childhood. These results show children who watch the most TV were more than 2.4 times more likely than peers to gain high levels of fat in middle childhood.



The collective data points to early and consistent health promotion across the lifespan as the key to getting adults to embrace physical activity as part of their daily routine. Researchers note they are interested in learning how effective a tool health promotion and public education can be in the combating the nation's emerging public health crisis in its obesity epidemic.

"Although inactive children are likely to grow up to be inactive adults, it is certainly not true that when you are physically active in your youth that you also stay active in your adult years," said Han CG Kemper, Ph.D., FACSM. "It appears that, to be most effective, physical activity promotion must be a life-long activity." ■

"There is enough evidence at this point to suggest that physical activity promotion for children matters a great deal in that it impacts children's immediate health," said Kathleen Janz, Ed.D., FACSM, one of the session's presenters. "This information may also help establish the stability of physical activity as a behavior to ensure active adults."



Another set of tracking data demonstrated the instability

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The American College of Sports Medicine is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world. More than 20,000 International, National, and Regional members are dedicated to promoting and integrating scientific research, education, and practical applications of sports medicine and exercise science to maintain and enhance physical performance, fitness, health, and quality of life.