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Human Kinetics
BRIEF REPORT

Results From Portugal's 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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Introduction

In 2016 we presented the first Portuguese Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth, based on available data from 2010 to 2016. Meantime, new data has emerged and there is a need to update the evidence. Therefore, the current report aims at describing the main results of the second Portuguese Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth (Figure 1).

Methods

The Research Center in Physical Activity, Health and Leisure at the Faculty of Sport, University of Porto leads and coordinates the Portuguese Report Card project. Similar to the previous Portuguese Report Card, a leadership group was established to prepare the current Report Card. This group included experts in the field of sport and physical activity (PA) and represents the main Portuguese Universities and research centers in Sport Sciences.

The 2018 Portuguese Report Card corresponds to the second report of its kind for the Portuguese population of children and adolescents. It includes ten indicators of PA and sedentary behavior (SB) that are common to the GLOBAL matrix 3.o: Overall Physical Activity, Organized Sport and Physical Activity, Active Play, Active Transportation, Sedentary Behaviors, Family and Peers, School, Community and the Environment, Government and Physical Fitness.

Results and Discussion

The grades assigned to each indicator are presented in Table 1. National representative studies with objectively measured data on physical activity and sedentary time are necessary given that a substantial data provides from self-reported surveys. Future studies on active play and leisure activities among Portuguese school-aged children would also be key to inform future Portuguese Kids Cards.

Conclusion

Available evidence indicates that there are still a large proportion of Portuguese children and adolescents that are not sufficiently active and that exceed the recommended levels of screen-time. In Portugal, virtually all students, enrolled in formal education, attain regular Physical Education classes, which is of significance. Conversely, there has been a significant progress in Portugal regarding government efforts in promoting physical activity.

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Figure 1 — Portugal's 2018 Report Card cover.

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Table 1 Grades and Rationales for Portuguese's 2018 Report Card

Indicator	Grade	Rationale
Overall Physical Activity Levels	D	Objectively measured data on PA shows that 36% of young people aged 10 to 11 years and 4% among adolescents aged 16 to 17 years accomplished the WHO PA guidelines of 60 minutes per day of moderate-to-vigorous PA.[1] Recent self-reported data on PA shows that 57.5% of youth aged 6–14 years and 35.6% for those aged 15 to 21 years[2]; and that less 25% of youth aged 11 to 15 years[3] complies with the WHO PA recommendations.
Organized Sport Participation	B-	Self-reported data indicates that 61.8% of children aged 6 to 9 years and 59% of youth aged 10 to 17 years participates in some form of organized sports at least once per week.[2] About 21% of children and adolescents living in Portugal are currently enrolled in a sport club/sport federation (http://www.idesporto.pt/conteudo.aspx?id=103 and https://www.pordata.pt). About 18% of children and adolescents, enrolled in formal education, participate in school sports clubs (Portuguese Ministry of Education – unpublished data).
Active Play	INC	For this indicator no grade was assigned, because there is little available literature related to active play and leisure activities among Portuguese school-aged children.
Active Transportation	C-	45% of 1067 urban school-aged children commute actively to and from school[4] with walking being the main pattern of transportation to school.[5] About 30% of 3000 Portuguese children aged 7 to 8 years, living in a country side region walk or cycle to school on a regular basis.[6]
Sedentary Behaviours	C-	35% of children aged 6 to 14 years spent more than 2 hours per day watching TV on weekdays and more that 75% on weekends.[2] Results from the latest HBSC also shows that the percentage of Portuguese youth, aged 11 to 15 years, engaging in 2 or more hours of TV viewing on weekdays ranges ranged between 45 to 62%.[3]
Family and Peers	C	Available data for Portuguese youth suggests parental influence of offspring PA levels.[7]
School	A	Portugal has national curricula and Physical Education (PE) classes are mandatory for all students, from pre-school until the 12th grade. Time allocated to PE classes ranges from 90 to 150/week over 2 or 3 sessions/week. PE is taught by a graduated PE teacher. 85% of schools offer school clubs under the supervision of a PE teacher including competitions within and between school and it is of generalized school policy to allow students to be active during their recess time.
Community and Environment	B	Data from the latest Eurobarometer indicates that 67% of Portuguese tended to agree that their living areas offer many opportunities to be physically active[8]
Government	B	The Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth is implementing a National Sports for All Program. In 2016, the Portuguese government set up an inter ministerial commission for the promotion of PA with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Work, Solidarity and Social Security, Ministry of Education and the Ministry Science Technology and Higher Education. And, recently this commission launched the Portuguese Action Plan for Physical Activity.
Fitness	C	Data from the 2011 Portuguese National Observatory of Physical Activity[9] with youth aged 10–18 years and baseline data from the 2011–14 LabMed Study[10] with youth aged 12–18 years was reanalyzed and in both data sets participants attained on average percentile 50 on the 20 m shuttle run test according to Tomkinson, Lang et al (2017) criteria.

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