Results from Slovenia’s 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

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Introduction

Slovenian national surveillance data on physical fitness of children and youth (SLOfit)1 show that after almost two decades of decline, the trends of physical fitness started improving after 2010, providing indirect evidence that declining trends of physical activity have been improving as well. More than eight out of ten Slovenian children and youth accumulate the recommended daily amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA; ≥60 minutes).2

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the results of Slovenia’s 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth (Figure 1). Grades are based on the best available scientific data, peer reviewed literature and grey literature, such as government reports and web pages.

Methods

The 2018 Report Card includes the 9 core physical activity (PA) indicators that are common to the Global Matrix 2.0 (Overall PA, Organized Sport Participation, Active Play, Active Transportation, Sedentary Behaviour, Family and Peers, School, Community and Environment, Government), and two additional indicators, Sleep, and Physical Fitness. The Report Card relies on the data from several sources to inform the indicator grades. The main sources are the national study Analysis of Children’s Development in Slovenia (2013-14 ACDSi)3,4 and the SLOfit surveillance system (2010-17 SLOfit).5 Other sources include governmental reports, legislative documents, and web pages. ACDSi is the most comprehensive study of children’s lifestyles, physical fitness and somatic development study in Slovenia while the SLOfit surveillance system includes annual population data on physical fitness and somatic development of children and youth.

The 2018 Active Healthy Kids Slovenia Report Card benefits from a Report Card Research Committee (RCRC) consisting of a diverse group of experts in all areas of physical activity covered in the Report Card. Some members of the group have access to important PA-related datasets and are able to run custom analyses that directly address some of the benchmarks for a given indicator that, in some cases, could not otherwise be graded (ie, Active Play, Family and Peers, Active Transportation, Organized Sport Participation).

Results and Discussion

All 11 indicators were assigned a grade in the 2018 Report Card (Table 1) although there are research gaps that would better inform the grades, if addressed. For example, the data for Organized Sport are self-report in nature while aggregated statistics on sport memberships would assist in providing a more complete picture of child and youth sport participation in Slovenia. Objectively measured sleep would also improve the accuracy of current self-reported data. Aggregated municipal data on public funding and number of...
programmes of children’s sport would also provide more accurate information on community support of physical activity, but would have to be complemented with data on the quantity, quality and accessibility of parks, playgrounds and other PA-enhancing areas.

**Conclusion**

The proportion of children and youth who achieve the recommended levels of daily physical activity is fairly high, which corresponds to the observed levels of children with sufficient level of physical fitness. The encouraging results signal that in Slovenia we have been able to develop effective solutions to address the growing risk of physical inactivity which are strongly rooted in the educational system.

**References**