

Results from the Bailiwick of Guernsey's 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth

Alun Williams, Lucy Whitman, Yve Le Page, Colin Le Page, Graham Chester, and Simon J. Sebire

Introduction

This is the first Report Card undertaken in the Bailiwick of Guernsey (Referred to as Guernsey in this document). Located in the English Channel and near the French coast, Guernsey is a self-governing British Crown Dependency with a population of approximately 63,000. Similar to England,¹ previous local school-based surveys suggest that few of Guernsey's children and youth meet recommendations for 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity per day. Such levels of inactivity undermine the development, health, and well-being of current children and youth as well as future generations. This Report Card will summarise the existing evidence on levels and provision of physical activity amongst Guernsey's children and youth (Figure 1).

Methods

Using available evidence, five indicators have been reported on Overall Physical Activity, Organized Sport Participation, Active Transportation, Sedentary Behaviors, Government. The remaining indicators of physical fitness, family and peers, school, community and environment were all graded as inconclusive. The main data source was the most recent Guernsey Young People's Survey,² undertaken in spring/ summer 2016. The online survey was administered in 16 primary (100% of all schools) and 8 secondary and post-16 schools (75% of all schools). In primary schools, 591 Year 6 pupils (95% of eligible pupils) participated and in secondary schools 985 pupils from Years 8 and 10 (80% of eligible pupils) participated. Survey questions used in this report card were self-reported: number of days on which they performed moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for ≥ 60 mins, attendance at a sports club in the 4 weeks before the survey, travel mode to school on the day of the survey and screen time on the previous day. The grades were assigned by the Guernsey Report Card Research Working Group representing a cross-sector panel comprising government departments, third sector organisations, and academics with diverse expertise in the activity levels of young people in Guernsey (listed above as authors). Benchmarks were applied according to the criteria established by the Global Matrix 3.0.

Results and Discussion

Data indicates that Guernsey is similar to other Very High HDI countries in recording a small proportion of Guernsey children and

youth accumulating the recommended amount of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity on a daily basis. Equally, the levels of sedentary behavior are of concern especially amongst the older cohort. Few young Guernsey people undertake active transportation to and from school.

The grades and rationale for the report card are included in Table 1 below.

Whilst the survey data source provided a high level of coverage of the target year groups, gaps in the local evidence base prevented the grading of five indicators. Broader and more robust monitoring (including school policy/provision measures and objective assessment of physical activity levels) would provide further insight into the physical activity levels of Guernsey's children and young people.

Conclusion

Guernsey's youth are not immune to global trends towards low levels of physical activity and active transportation and high levels of sedentary behavior. Yet, islands like Guernsey have a golden opportunity to develop a coordinated and collaborative community response to increasing physical activity in children and youth. There has been recent promising evidence of government commitment to support such a response and to ensure this remains a priority. Making child and youth physical activity "everyone's business" will be key to its success.



Figure 1 — Guernsey's 2018 Report Card cover.

Williams is with the States of Guernsey Education Services. Whitman is with The Health Improvement Commission for Guernsey and Alderney Yve Le Page is with the Health Promotion Unit, Public Health Services, Guernsey; Colin Le Page is with the States of Guernsey Traffic and Highway Services; Chester is with the Guernsey Sports Commission, Sebire is with the Centre for Exercise, Nutrition & Health Sciences, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, England and The Health Improvement Commission for Guernsey and Alderney. Williams (alun.williams@gov.gg) is corresponding author.

Table 1 Grades and rationales for Guernsey's 2018 Report Card

Indicator	Grade	Rationale
Overall Physical Activity	D	27% of primary school pupils and 22% of secondary pupils did physical activity that caused them to breathe faster and feel warmer for an hour or more on at least 4 days in the week before the survey.
Organized Sport Participation	C+	66% of primary school pupils and 52% of secondary school pupils reported attending a sports club (not school club & not just watching) in the 4 weeks before the survey.
Active Play	Inc	Data are not currently collected on active play
Active Transportation	D	43% of primary pupils and 25% of secondary school pupils reported active travel to school on the day of the survey (walking/ bicycle/ scooter). Years 6, 8+10 average = 31%
Sedentary Behaviors	C	74% of primary school pupils and 39% of secondary school pupils reported no more than 2 hours of screen time on the day before survey. Years 6, 8+10 average = 57%.
Physical Fitness	Inc	Sufficient data are not currently collected on physical fitness
Family and Peers	Inc	Data are not currently collected on family and peer influence on physical activity
School	Inc	Whilst there is lots of good practice in this area in schools, formal data are not collected at present. Our intention is to formalise this in time for the 2020 Global Matrix
Community and Environment	Inc	Data are not currently collected on community and the built environment
Government	D	<p>The States of Guernsey & Alderney, alongside community partners are showing an increased commitment to promoting and facilitating physical activity opportunities for Children and Youth. This includes commitment demonstrated through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having 'Healthy and Active' as a priority in the Children and Young People's Plan.³ - Guernsey and Alderney's Healthy Weight Strategy (2016-2023⁴) commits to supporting the community to increase levels of physical activity with a core focus being children and young people. - The Guernsey Committee for Health and Social Care have indicated their intention to establish a Health Improvement Commission, an independent organisation with the remit and resources to, amongst other actions, deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy. As a charitable organisation, the commission will also be able to raise additional funds to support its work (some of which will be focussed on physical activity of children and young people). - The Guernsey Sports Commission is a well-established (and part State-funded) organisation which provides and supports organised sport and physical activity opportunities to young people. - There is a commitment to establish a comprehensive Sports Strategy by 2019, although the positioning of children and young people's physical activity in this (including and beyond formal sport) is yet to be determined. - An integrated transport strategy is also in place that promotes active travel. The On-island Integrated Transport Strategy includes the progressive action to hypothecate vehicle emissions tax to support the promotion of active travel. This is a demonstration of cohesive thinking across States departments with the aim of impacting positively both on environmental and health outcomes. Current data collection methods only partially reflect developments in this area and are due to be reviewed to capture the broader picture. - These policy intentions and additional funding streams represent an exciting and promising time for the support and facilitation of physical activity amongst children and young people in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. The intentions are beginning to be translated into actions, but many of these are in their infancy. We hope that this will result in greater leadership and commitment in providing physical activity opportunities for all children and youth. These efforts will require ongoing evaluation to provide evidence of their effectiveness.

References

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