

## Physical Activity

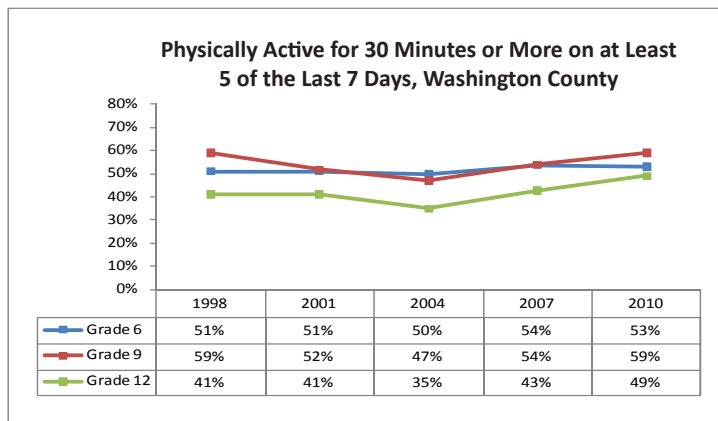
Engaging in regular physical activity is a contributing factor to maintaining a healthy body weight. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children engage in at least 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity daily. Recommendations include moderate physical activity levels of 30 minutes or more on at least five or more days per week and vigorous activity levels of 20 minutes or more on at least three of the last seven days. The current recommendation for adults is at least 150 minutes of combined moderate or vigorous activity per week.

Major research findings conclude that engaging in regular physical activity reduces the risk of many adverse health outcomes for people in all age, gender, and racial/ethnic populations. Regular physical activity in children can lead to benefits such as improved cardio-respiratory and muscular fitness, improved bone health and favorable body composition. Regular physical activity in adults can lead to lower risks for many diseases, including coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and many types of cancers.<sup>1</sup>

### Key Trends

- Youth moderate and vigorous physical activity levels have remained relatively stable since 1998. On average, slightly over half of students in grades six, nine and twelve combined are meeting the recommended level of moderate activity. Less than three-fourths of students are meeting recommendations for vigorous activity.
- Nearly 73% of adults in Washington County reported meeting the recommended level of physical activity per week in 2010. This is the first year county-level data was available for this indicator.

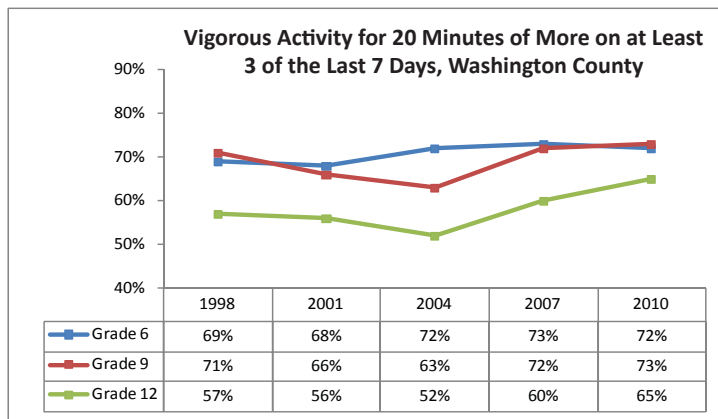
### Youth Physical Activity



Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team

### Youth Moderate Physical Activity

- Slightly over half of 6th graders reported being physically active for 30 minutes or more on at least five of the last seven days in 2010.
- Approximately 59% of 9th graders and 49% of 12th graders met the recommended levels of moderate activity per week in 2010.
- County levels for all grades are slightly above state levels.



Source: Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team

### Youth Vigorous Physical Activity

- Approximately 72% of sixth graders and 73% of ninth graders met the recommended level of vigorous activity in 2010.
- Vigorous activity levels for grades six and nine have remained relatively steady since 1998.
- Males were more likely to meet recommended vigorous activity levels than females in all three grades. Only 60% of females in 12th grade met the recommended vigorous activity level, compared with 71% of males.

## Adult Physical Activity

Meets recommendations of 150 or more of moderate or vigorous physical activity per week Adults, Washington County, 2010

<i>n</i> = 514		72.8%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	74.9%
	Female	70.7%
<b>Age</b>	18-34	73.7%
	35-44	70.2%
	45-54	66.3%
	55-64	83.5%
	65-74	88.2%
	75+	49.4%
<b>Education</b>	High school graduate/GED or less	72.0%
	Some college	70.8%
	Bachelor's degree	70.5%
	Graduate or professional degree	80.1%
<b>Poverty status</b>	200% poverty or less	61.6%
	Greater than 200% poverty	72.9%

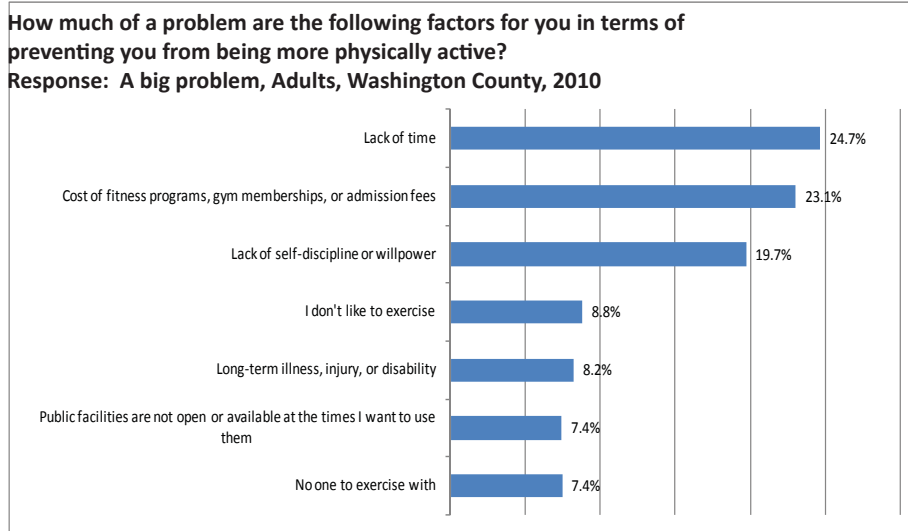
Source: Metro Adult Health Survey, 2010

## Adult Physical Activity

- In Washington County, nearly three quarters of adults meet the recommended 150 minutes or more per week of moderate or vigorous activity. The county rate of 73% is similar to the Metro rate of 74%.
- About 75% of males and 71% of females meet the adult weekly physical activity recommendations.
- The age group with the lowest percentage of adults meeting the physical activity recommendations is individuals ages 75 and older, with only 49% meeting the guidelines. This compares with 88% of those ages 65-74 meeting the recommendations.
- Nearly 73% of adults at the greater than 200% poverty level meet the physical activity recommendations, compared with 62% of those at the 200% poverty level or less.

## Barriers to Physical Activity

Adults in Washington County were asked what factors prevented them from being more physically active.



Source: Metro Adult Health Survey, 2010

## Barriers to Physical Activity

- Nearly one in four respondents indicated that lack of time was a big problem to engaging in more physical activity.
- More than one in five adults responded that the cost of fitness programs/gym memberships was a big problem.
- Slightly fewer than 20% indicated that lack of discipline or willpower was a big problem.

## Contact Information:

Questions about this and other Washington County Health Data Profiles can be directed to:

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Last Updated: September 2011