

## Physical Activity

Lack of physical activity among youth can contribute to obesity. Many physical education programs in schools are severely limited. Therefore, daily physical activity is not something adolescents typically receive at school unless they are involved in a sport or an intramural program. The Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health recommends that all Americans should do 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week.<sup>35</sup>

- Physical activity declines dramatically during adolescence. Nearly half of American youths 12 to 21 years of age are not vigorously active on a regular basis. Participation in regular physical activity helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, control weight, build lean muscle, reduce fat, reduce feelings of depression and anxiety and promote psychological well being.<sup>35</sup>
- In the long term, regular physical activity decreases the risk of dying prematurely, dying of heart disease and developing diabetes, colon cancer and high blood pressure.<sup>35</sup> Physical activity may also improve mental health<sup>35</sup> and is important for the health of muscles, bones, and joints.
- Major decreases in vigorous physical activity occur during grades 9-12, particularly for girls. By 11<sup>th</sup> grade, more than half of female students are not participating regularly in vigorous physical activity.<sup>35</sup>
- School physical education classes can increase adolescent participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity<sup>36, 37</sup> and help adolescents develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to engage in lifelong physical activity.<sup>38</sup>
- Daily participation in physical education class has dropped from 42 percent in 1991 to 32 percent in 2001.<sup>39</sup>
- Television viewing is the principal sedentary leisure time behavior in the United States and studies have shown that television viewing in young people is related to obesity<sup>40</sup> and violent or aggressive behavior.<sup>41</sup>

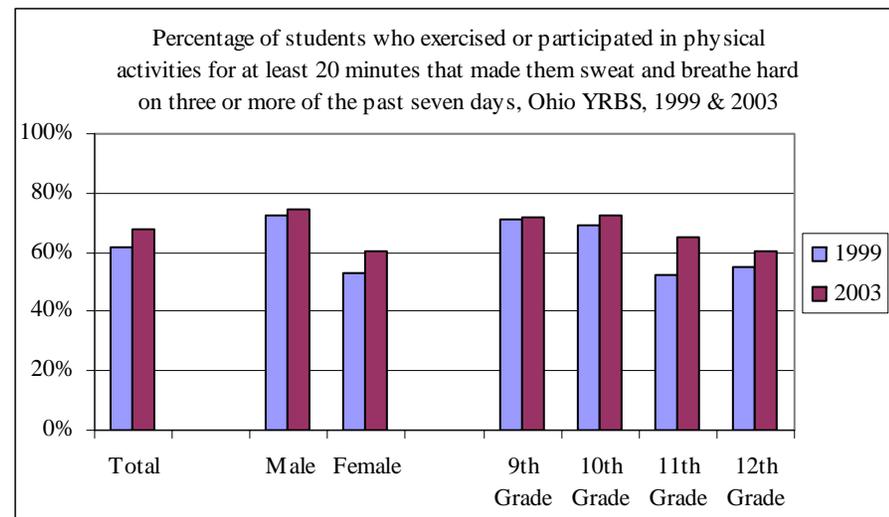
### HP 2010 Objective:

22-07: Increase the proportion of adolescents who engage in vigorous physical activity that promotes cardiorespiratory fitness three or more days per week for 20 or more minutes to at least 85 percent.

## • Physical Activity: Exercising

**Q88 On how many of the past seven days did you exercise or participate in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made you sweat or breathe hard, such as basketball, soccer, running, swimming laps, fast bicycling, fast dancing or similar aerobic activities?**

- **Approximately two-thirds of students exercise three or more days each week.**
  - In 2003, 68 percent of students report exercising or participating in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made them sweat and breathe hard on three or more of the past seven days.
  - Significantly more males (75 percent) than females (60 percent) report exercising. There are no significant differences in exercising by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in students exercising between 1999 and 2003.**

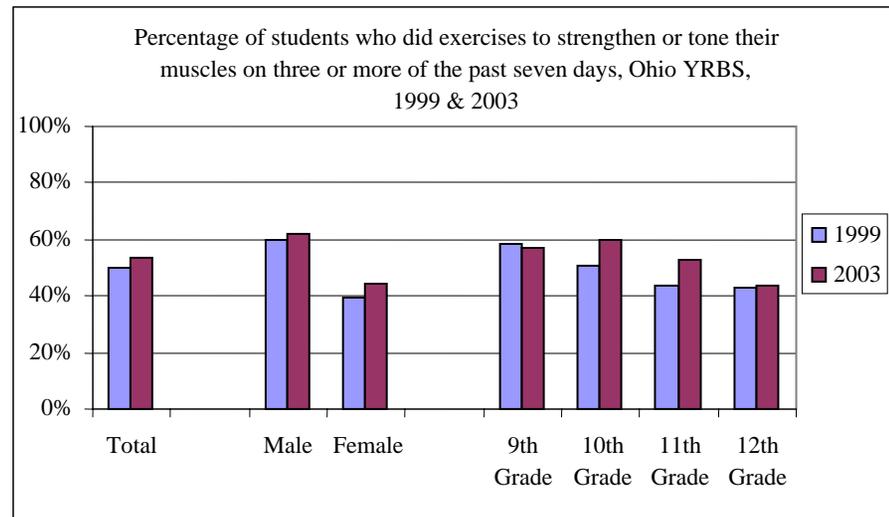


● **Physical Activity: Muscle Toning**

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**Q90 On how many of the past seven days did you do exercises to strengthen or tone your muscles, such as push-ups, sit-ups or weight lifting?**

- **Approximately one-half of students do muscle toning exercises.**
  - In 2003, 54 percent of students report exercising to strengthen or tone their muscles on three or more of the past seven days.
  - Significantly more males (62 percent) than females (45 percent) report exercising to strengthen or tone their muscles. There are no significant differences in exercising to strengthen or tone muscles by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in students exercising to strengthen or tone muscles between 1999 and 2003.**



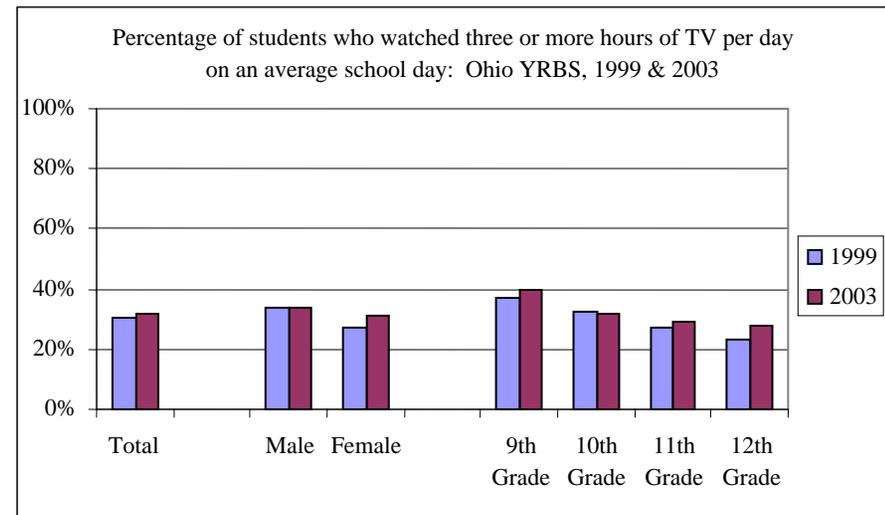
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- **Physical Activity: TV Viewing**

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**Q91 On an average school day, how many hours do you watch TV?**

- **Approximately one-third of students watch three or more hours of TV daily.**
  - In 2003, 32 percent of students report watching three or more hours of TV per day on an average school day.
  - There are no significant differences in watching TV between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in watching TV for three or more hours per day between 1999 and 2003.**



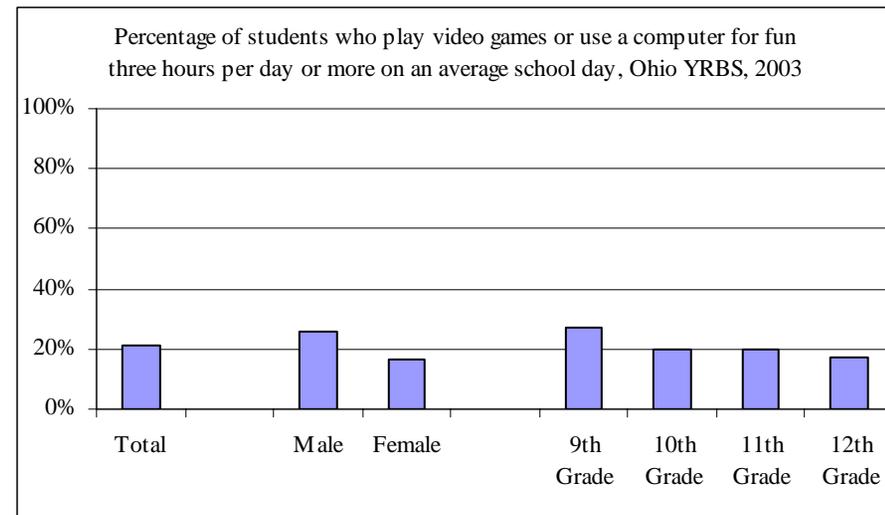
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- **Physical Activity: Recreational Computer Use**

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**Q92 On an average school day, how many hours do you play video game or use a computer for fun?**

- **Some students play video games or use a computer for fun three or more hours daily.**
  - In 2003, 21 percent of students report playing video games or using a computer for fun three hours per day or more on an average school day.
  - There are no significant differences in playing video games or using a computer for fun three hours per day or more between males and females or by grade level.
- **This question was not asked in 1999.**



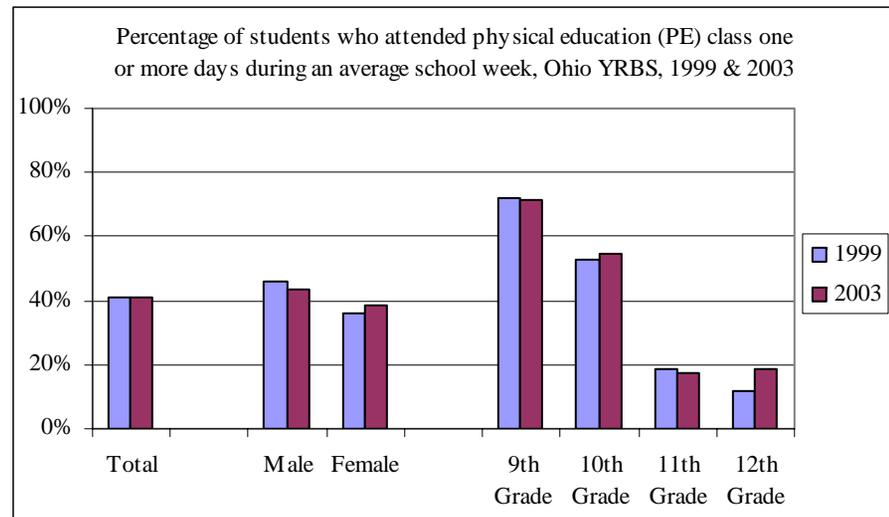
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- **Physical Activity: PE Class**

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**Q93 In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you go to physical education (PE) classes? (one or more times)**

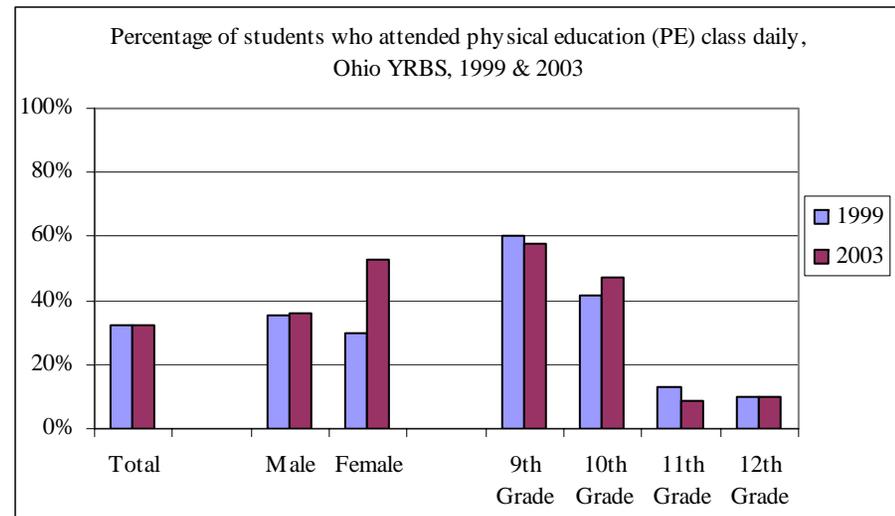
- **Almost one-half of students attend physical education (PE) class every week.**
  - In 2003, 41 percent of students report attending PE class one or more days during an average school week.
  - There are no significant differences in attending PE class between males and females. Significantly more ninth (71 percent) and 10<sup>th</sup> (55 percent) graders than 11<sup>th</sup> (17 percent) and 12<sup>th</sup> (19 percent) graders report attending PE classes weekly.
- **There are no significant differences in attending PE in an average school week between 1999 and 2003.**



## • Physical Activity: PE Class Daily

**Q93 In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you go to physical education (PE) classes? (five days)**

- **Approximately one-third of students attend physical education (PE) class daily.**
  - In 2003, 32 percent of students report attending PE class daily.
  - There are no significant differences in attending PE class daily between males and females. Significantly more ninth (58 percent) and 10<sup>th</sup> (47 percent) graders than 11<sup>th</sup> (8.6 percent) and 12<sup>th</sup> (9.7 percent) graders report attending PE classes daily.
- **There are no significant differences in attending PE daily between 1999 and 2003.**



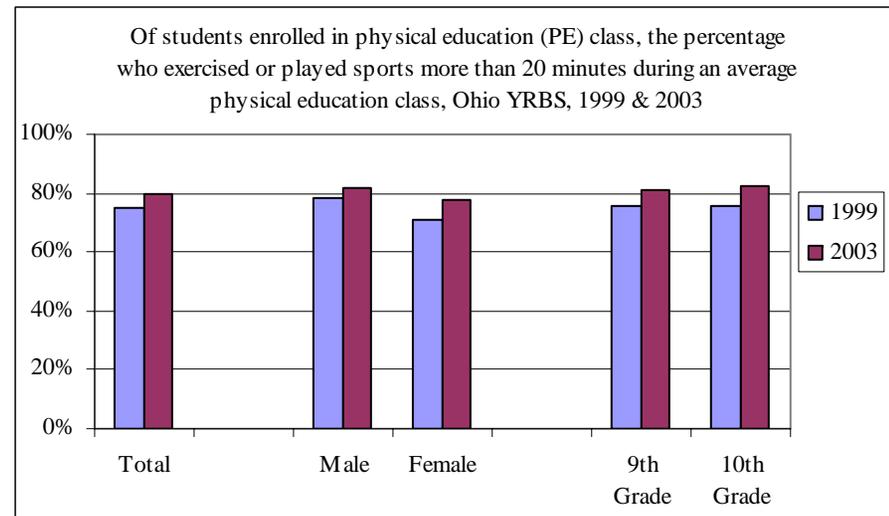
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- **Physical Activity**

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**Q94 During an average physical education (PE) class, how many minutes do you spend actually exercising or playing sports?**

- **Most students exercise or play sports more than 20 minutes during an average physical education (PE) class.**
  - In 2003, 80 percent of students who are enrolled in a PE class report exercising or playing sports more than 20 minutes during an average PE class.
  - There are no significant differences in exercising or playing sports more than 20 minutes during an average PE class between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in exercising or playing sports more than 20 minutes during an average PE class between 1999 and 2003.**



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- **Physical Activity: Sports Teams**

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**Q95 During the past 12 months, on how many sports teams did you play?**

- **Most students play on sports teams.**
  - In 2003, 63 percent of students report playing on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months.
  - There are no significant differences in playing on one or more sports teams between males and females or by grade level.
- **There are no significant differences in playing on one or more sports teams between 1999 and 2003.**

