MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit

Active approaches to health inequalities affecting children and young people

CPG on Health Inequalities

Tuesday 1st February

Dr Avril Johnstone

avril_johnstone

About the Unit

We work to understand how different factors – **social, behavioural, economic, political and environmental** – affect the health and wellbeing of people and populations.

We want to know why these factors affect people differently, and to identify the best ways to **improve health** and **reduce inequalities.**

We work with a wide range of policy and practice **partners,** and public groups.

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UKRI Medical Research Council | CHIEF SCIENTIST OFFICE | University of Glasgow

Our 5 research programmes

- Complexity in health
- Inequalities in health
- Relationships and health
- Systems science in public health
- Places and health

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MEET THE SCOTLAND

Active Healthy Kids team:

Prof. John Reilly

Dr. Farid Bardid

Dr. Avril Johnstone

Dr. Leone Craig

Dr. Simone Tomaz

Jenni Robertson

University of Strathclyde

Active Healthy Kids Scotland

A 'state of the nation' report card on the physical activity and health of Scottish children and adolescents, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Published in November 2021

4th report card = 10 years of data

Physical activity = any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including walking, cycling, sports, active play etc.

(WHO, 2020)

Physical activity
for children and young people (5–18 Years)

- BUILDS CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS
- MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT
- DEVELOPS CO-ORDINATION
- STRENGTHENS MUSCLES & BONES
- IMPROVES SLEEP
- IMPROVES CONCENTRATION & LEARNING
- IMPROVES HEALTH & FITNESS
- MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

Aim for an average of at least **60** minutes per day across week

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

PLAY · RUN/WALK · BIKE · ACTIVE TRAVEL

SWIM · SKATE · SPORT · PE

SKIP · CLIMB · WORKOUT · DANCE

Include muscle and bone strengthening activities **3 TIMES PER WEEK**

Get strong

REDUCE INACTIVITY

Move more

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate an average of at least 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019


Economic Environment
Physical Environment
Social Environment

Economic environment

- Employment status
- Income

Physical environment

- Greenspace
- Active travel infrastructure
- School resources
- Sports facilities

Social environment

- Parental modelling
- Supportive peers

2021 Active Healthy Kids Scotland Report Card

https://www.activehealthykidsscotland.co.uk/

Report Card Indicators

Health behaviours

- Sedentary behaviour
- Overall physical activity
- Organised sport
- Active Play
- Active transportation
- Fitness
- Diet
- Obesity

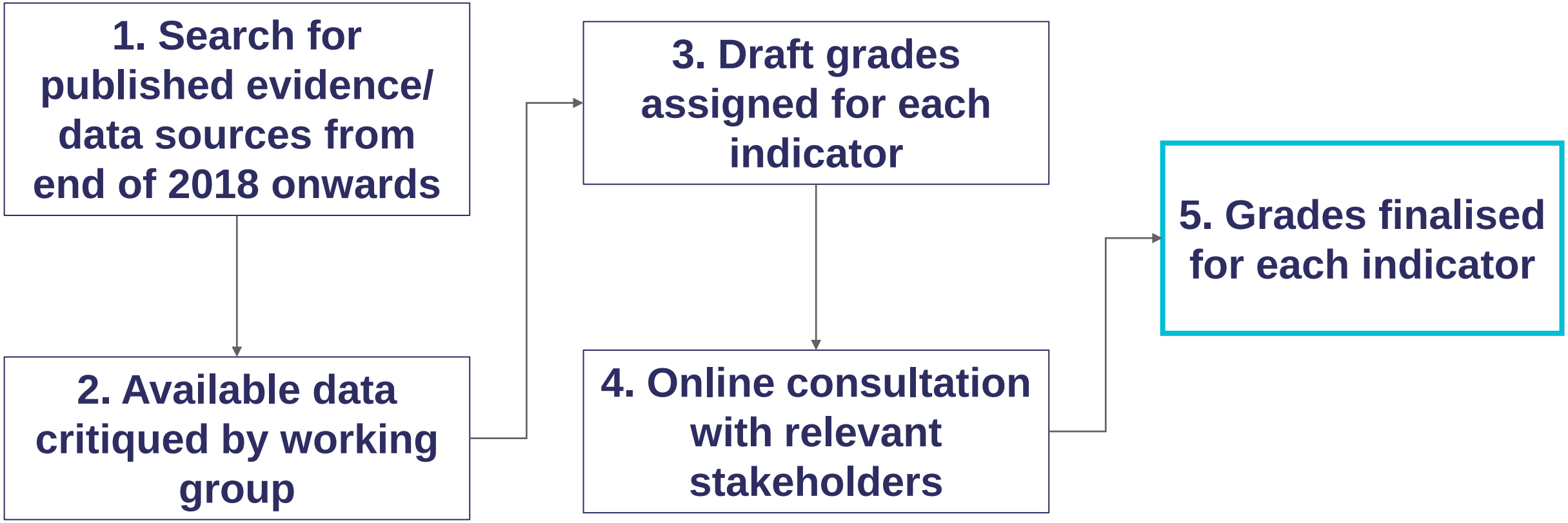
Influences on behaviour

- Family and peers
- Community and environment
- Government

Grading indicators

Grade	Benchmark
A+	= 94%-100%
A	**= We are succeeding with a large majority of children (87%-93%)**
A-	= 80%-86%
B+	= 74%-79%
B	**= We are succeeding with well over half of children (67%-73%)**
B-	= 60%-66%
C+	= 54%-59%
C	**= We are succeeding with about half of children (47%-53%)**
C-	= 40%-46%
D+	= 34%-39%
D	**= We are succeeding with less than half of children (27%-33%)**
D-	= 20%-26%
F	**= We are succeeding with very few of children (<20%)**
INC	**= Incomplete Grade, where Scottish data were not available or were insufficient/ inadequate to assign a grade**

How we did it


1. Search for published evidence/ data sources from end of 2018 onwards
2. Available data critiqued by working group
3. Draft grades assigned for each indicator
4. Online consultation with relevant stakeholders
5. Grades finalised for each indicator

Health behaviours

We are succeeding with well over half of children (60-66%)

- Organised sport

We are succeeding with about half of children (40-46%)

- Active transportation

We are succeeding with very few of children (<20%)

- Sedentary behaviour

Insufficient evidence to grade

- Physical activity
- Active play
- Fitness
- Diet
- Obesity

Influences on behaviour

We are succeeding with well over half of children (60-66%)

- Community and environment

We are succeeding with about half of children (47-53%)

- Government (physical activity policy)

We are succeeding with less than half of children (20-26%)

- Family and peers

Inequalities

	More Deprived	Less Deprived
Exceeding 2hr/day of TV time:	74%	60%
Exceeding 2hr/day of gaming:	61%	49%
Not engaging in sport:	53%	18%

	More Deprived	Less Deprived
With obesity in Primary 1:	14%	6%
Adults volunteered in sport:	16%	33%
Meeting physical activity guidelines:	13%	19%
Have safe outdoor spaces:	50%	72%

Conclusions

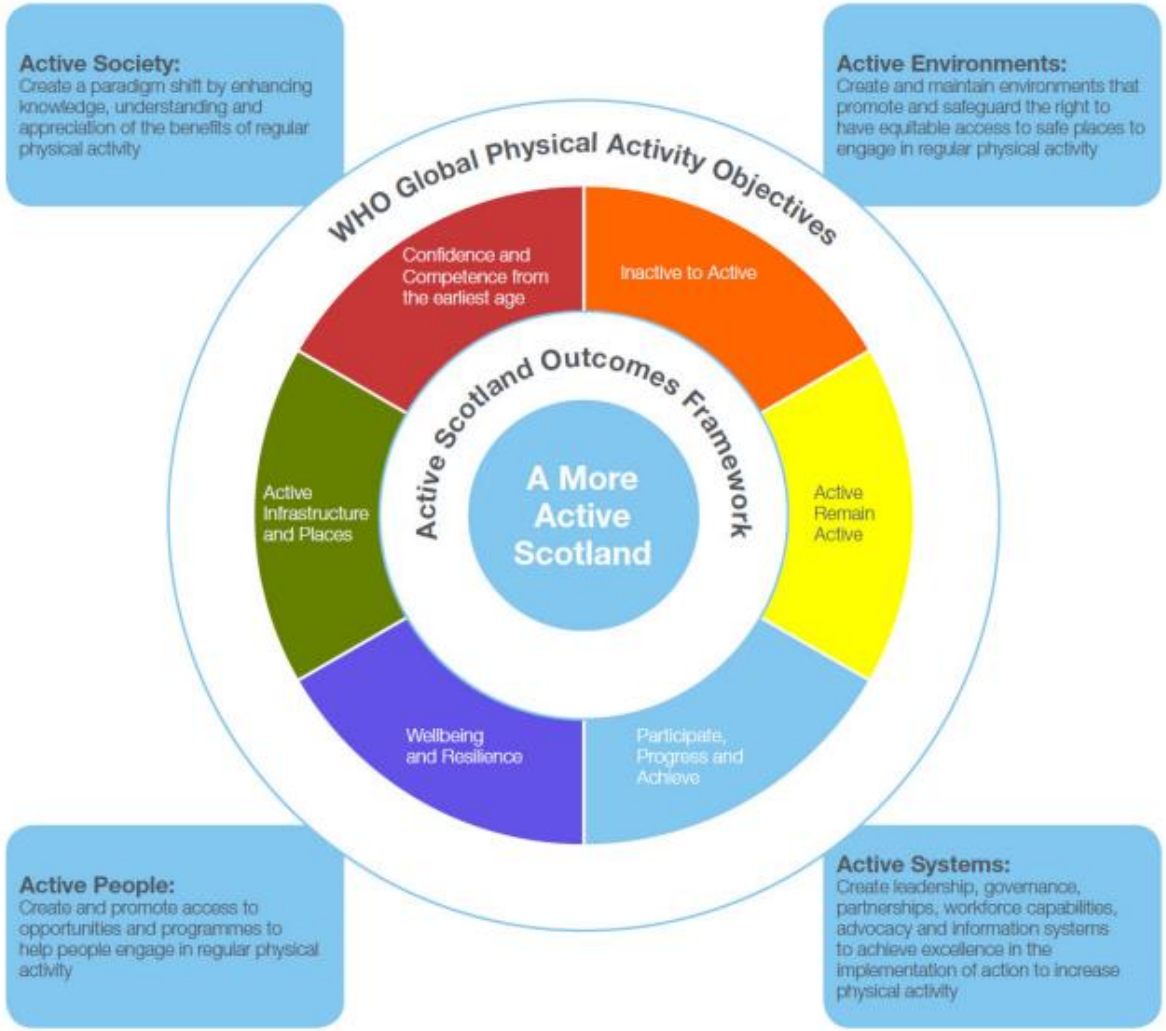
Children from more deprived areas:

- Have higher levels of screen time
- Are engaging in less sports
- Have higher levels of obesity
- Are less likely to meet the physical activity recommendations
- Have less access to safe outdoor spaces
- Have fewer adults volunteering in sport

Key considerations

1. Consider the wider system (i.e. economic, physical and social environment)
2. Improve monitoring of physical activity and related indicators
3. Ensure any policies or interventions do not widen inequalities
4. Greater focus on policy implementation and evaluation*
5. Consider how COVID may have widened inequalities on health behaviours*

Greater focus on policy implementation and evaluation



Consider how COVID may have widened inequalities on health behaviours*

BMI levels increase for Primary 1 School Children during first year of the COVID-19 pandemic

First published on 14 December 2021

Children | Coronavirus (COVID-19) | Diet and healthy weight

Data released today by Public Health Scotland (PHS) shows that between 2019/20 and 2020/21 there has been a marked increase in the overall proportion of Primary 1 children (those aged around 5 years old) who are at risk of overweight or obesity - from 23% in recent years to 29.5% this year. The annual statistics cover school years 2001/02 to 2020/21 which allows a comparison to be made with past data, which in recent years have been relatively stable.

During school year 2020/21, 69.8% of Primary 1 children measured had a healthy weight, 29.5% were at risk of overweight or obesity and 0.8% were at risk of underweight. Boys in Primary 1 were also found to be slightly less likely than girls to have a healthy weight.

While the relationship between deprivation and children has been observed in previous years, between 2019/20 and 2020/21 among children living in the most deprived areas, the increase of those at risk of overweight or obesity is more than twice as large as those living in the least deprived areas.

What's next?

A report card focused on impacts of COVID will be published towards the end of 2023, should there be sufficient data.

An international report card consisting of approx. 60 countries will be published by the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance towards the end of 2022.

https://www.activehealthykids.org/global-matrix/

Acknowledgments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University of Glasgow

Get in touch!

Email: avril.johnstone@glasgow.ac.uk

Twitter: avril_johnstone

https://www.activehealthykidsscotland.co.uk/

https://www.activehealthykids.org/global-matrix/

Questions or comments?
Email sphsu-knowledge@glasgow.ac.uk

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- Follow us on Twitter: @theSPHSU
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