

## What are your kids up to this summer?

With summer vacation just around the corner, it's a good time for parents to consider what their children will be doing over the next couple of months.

A recent report card published by Active Healthy Kids Canada shows just how little exercise our children are getting. The report is the most comprehensive annual assessment of child and youth physical activity in Canada. It reported that only seven per cent of children are meeting the new Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines.

While free time after school – between 3:00 and 6:00 pm – provides an opportunity for activity, kids are getting less than ever – a mere 14 minutes out of a possible 180 minutes of physical activity. At one time, kids were running and playing outdoors, now they're getting, on average, over 40 hours per week in front of computer and TV.

"Today's children are on pace to be among the least healthy in Canada's history," says Kate Mansell, Director of Development at the Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria. "More than 1.6 million children are overweight or obese – triple the rate of 25 years ago – and the number continues to rise due to increased inactivity and improper diet. While only a generation or two ago children would spend their after school time in active play, today more and more children are spending their leisure time on sedentary activities such as watching television, surfing the internet, and playing video games."

The Boys and Girls Club Ser-

vices of Greater Victoria was founded in 1960. In fact, the group, previously named the Boys' Club of Victoria was one of the Victoria Foundation's very first grantees in 1969.

For 50 years the club has been encouraging children and youth to live healthy lives by providing a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.

Its mandate is simple and effective. The organization offers services to support everyone from young moms to children in before and after-school programs, promotes the development of youth leadership through adventure-based programs, and provides youth justice and other programs for youth at risk.

The Boys and Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria offer a number of programs to keep kids healthy and active this summer, including: Wild About Whales Derby on June 18th – a free event

in which participants will race yellow whales down the Gorge waterway; Earth Adventures day camps throughout the summer – in 98 acres of forest, ponds, trails and fields; and Urban Adventures Camp in Esquimalt that will offer trips to parks and attractions, events, and visits with special guests from the community.

To learn more, visit Active Healthy Kids Canada at [www.activehealthykids.ca](http://www.activehealthykids.ca) and the Boys and Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria at [www.bgcvic.org](http://www.bgcvic.org) or (250) 384-9133.

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**– Kate Mansell,  
Director of  
Development Boys &  
Girls Club Services  
of Greater Victoria**



**For years, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria has been making physical activity and nutrition for youth a fun part of their daily activities. Through its programs, the Club aims to help young people develop healthy habits and important skills for life.**



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