



DEFINING PLAY DESERTS

Virtual Expert Panel Meeting Report

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Regular physical activity in children and adolescents promotes health and fitness. Compared to those who are inactive, physically active youth have higher levels of cardiorespiratory fitness and stronger muscles. They also typically have lower levels of body fat. Their bones are stronger, and they may have reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression. Improving physical activity levels of youth is paramount in the United States (US); less than 3 in 10 high school youth participate in physical activity at least 60 minutes daily. Creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity combined with informational outreach activities is a recommended strategy in *The Guide for Community Preventive Strategies* to improve physical activity in communities. Thus, identifying opportunities to increase access to places for active play or physical activity as well as ensuring communities are aware of those places may be an initial step to improving youth physical activity levels in the US.