



The Daily

Statistics Canada

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MAJOR RELEASES

- **Parent and child factors associated with youth obesity, 2000/01** 2
Having an obese parent greatly increased the odds of obesity among adolescent boys and girls, according to a new study.
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OTHER RELEASES

- Production and disposition of tobacco products, September 2003 4
 - Electric power statistics, August 2003 4
 - Crude oil, first quarter 2003 4
 - Steel primary forms — weekly data, week ending October 25, 2003 4
-

NEW PRODUCTS

INDEX: October 2003



MAJOR RELEASES

Parent and child factors associated with youth obesity

2000/01

Having an obese parent greatly increased the odds of obesity among adolescent boys and girls, according to a new study.

Girls who were former smokers had higher odds of being obese than those who had never smoked, but youth smoking behaviour was not associated with obesity among boys. When the parent smoked daily, however, this increased the odds that boys would be obese.

Activity level played a role for boys: being physically inactive — or even just moderately active — increased boys' odds of obesity.

In general, the health behaviours of both boys and girls mirrored those of the responding parent.

The study is based on a subset of data from the 2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). The sample comprised 4,803 girls and 4,982 boys aged 12 to 19 at the time of the interviews. Analysis is based on two independent reports from the same household: one from a 12- to 19-year-old and the other from one of his or her parents.

Excess weight and adolescents' self-perceptions

Close to 5% of the adolescents in this study were considered obese, based on their body mass index (BMI). In 2000/01, the proportion of boys who were obese was about twice that for girls: 6% versus 3%. Another 17% of 12- to 19-year-old boys were considered overweight, as were about 10% of the girls.

These differences between boys and girls did not always match their self-perceptions. In fact, girls were more apt to erroneously see themselves as overweight.

Slightly more than half (53%) of the girls who perceived themselves as overweight were actually neither obese nor overweight according to their BMI. In contrast, the proportion of boys who saw themselves as overweight when they did not have excess weight was 22%. However, boys were more likely than girls to see themselves in the acceptable to underweight range when they were, in fact, overweight or obese; 16% of boys who perceived their weight as normal or underweight, compared with only 6% of girls, had a BMI indicating they were overweight or obese.

Note to readers

This study is the second of several on the health of Canadian children that will be released this fall in the How Healthy are Canadians? series of annual supplements to Health Reports. The articles examine the conditions that impede, as well as those that enhance, children's potential to grow up healthy.

This article uses self-reported cross-sectional data from the 2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey to examine relationships between parent and adolescent weight, as well as other selected characteristics and health behaviours of both, to explore which factors are associated with youth obesity.

The data in this analysis are based on two independent reports: one directly from an adolescent aged 12 to 19, and another from one of his or her parents. Both the adolescent and the parent were living in the same household at the time of the survey. The sample comprises 4,803 girls and 4,982 boys. The large national sample allows for separate analysis by sex.

To determine excess weight for respondents (both overweight and obesity), body mass index (BMI) was used. BMI, a measure used to determine a person's weight status, is calculated by dividing weight in kilograms by height in metres squared.

Parental factors

Excess weight among parents was a major factor in excess weight for adolescent boys and girls. Among girls aged 12 to 19 who lived with an obese parent, 18% were overweight and 10% were obese. The situation was similar for boys: 22% of boys with an obese parent were overweight, and 12% were obese.

Aside from weight, other parental habits were associated with those of their children. These include physical activity, smoking and eating habits — all factors that should be considered together in investigations of youth obesity.

Youth aged 12 to 19 with a reporting parent who was inactive during leisure time were more likely to be inactive themselves. And if the adolescents' parents smoked or ate fruits and vegetables relatively infrequently, the adolescents were likely to mirror these behaviours.

A subtle difference emerged between the sexes in adolescent activity during leisure time. The proportion of boys who reported being active was similar in households with an active or moderately active reporting parent. But this was not the case for girls, who were less active even when the reporting parent was moderately active. This raises the possibility that if parents' level of physical activity is mimicked by their children, then it is especially important that girls have an active role model.

Youths were most likely to smoke, either daily or occasionally, if they lived in homes where the reporting parent was also a daily smoker. Conversely, the highest proportion of adolescents who had never smoked lived in homes where the reporting parent also had never smoked.

Parental obesity strongly associated with youth obesity

To better understand the risk factors for youth obesity, adolescent and parental characteristics were examined together. Several factors were taken into account, such as the youth's age, leisure-time physical activity level, smoking status and daily frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption; the reporting parent's smoking status and BMI; the household income; and the reporting parent's sex. Parental obesity emerged as being strongly associated with youth obesity.

Girls who lived in the same household as an obese parent had much higher odds of being obese themselves — nearly six times as high compared with girls whose reporting parent was not obese. For boys, those with an obese parent were almost three times as likely to be obese.

Although inferences about the causes of youth obesity cannot be drawn from the CCHS cross-sectional

data, the results of this analysis do support the claim that parents can influence their children's attitudes and behaviours and play a role in the development or prevention of childhood obesity. The findings are particularly notable in light of the fact that over half (52%) of the reporting parents in this study were overweight or obese.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3226.

The report "Parent and child factors associated with youth obesity" (82-003-SIE, free) is now available online. The study is the second of several articles to be released this fall in the *How Healthy are Canadians?* series, an annual supplement to *Health reports* (82-003-XIE, \$17/\$48; 82-003-XPE, \$22/\$63). Other articles in the series focus on topics such as self-perceived health, children who become active, adolescent self-concept and the effects of witnessing violence. A print compendium of all articles will be released in December 2003.

For more information, or to enquire about the methods, concepts or data quality of this release, contact Gisèle Carrière (604-666-5907; gisele.carriere@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Production and disposition of tobacco products

September 2003

The total number of cigarettes sold in September increased 5% from August to 3.4 billion. This total was down 10% from the level recorded in September 2002. The cumulative amount of cigarettes sold for the first nine months of 2003 totalled 28.7 billion, down 9% from the same period of 2002.

Cigarette production for September stood at 3.7 billion cigarettes, up 34% from August and 18% from the 3.2 billion cigarettes produced in September 2002. Cumulative production for the first nine months of 2003 was 28.1 billion cigarettes, down 11% from the same period of 2002.

In September, the level of closing inventories decreased to 3.6 billion cigarettes, down 1% from August and 19% over the level recorded for September 2002.

Available on CANSIM: table 303-0007.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2142.

The September 2003 issue of *Production and disposition of tobacco products* (32-022-XIB, \$6/\$51) is now available. See *How to order products*.

For general information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Electric power statistics

August 2003

Data on electric power are now available for August

Available on CANSIM: table 127-0001.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2151.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release,

contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energ@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Crude oil

First quarter 2003

Data on the supply and disposition of crude oil and equivalent hydrocarbons, gas use, reprocessing and supply of processing plant products, are now available for the first quarter of 2003.

Available on CANSIM: tables 126-0001 and 131-0002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2198.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; energ@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

Steel primary forms — weekly data

Week ending October 25, 2003 (preliminary)

Steel primary forms production for the week ending October 25 totalled 317 183 metric tonnes, up 3.1% from 307 651 tonnes a week earlier and 4.0% from 305 015 tonnes in the same week of 2002.

The year-to-date total as of October 25 was 12 845 696 tonnes, down 2.3% from 13 153 741 tonnes in the same period of 2002.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2131.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the dissemination officer (1-866-873-8789; 613-951-9497; manufact@statcan.ca), Manufacturing, Construction and Energy Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Production and disposition of tobacco products,
September 2003, Vol. 32, no. 9
Catalogue number 32-022-XIB (\$6/\$51).

Canadian Foreign Post Indexes, November 2003
Catalogue number 62-013-XIE
(free).

**Health report - supplement: Parent and child factors
associated with youth obesity,** 2003
Catalogue number 82-003-SIE
(free).

**Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada:
Process, progress and prospects,** 2001
Catalogue number 89-611-XIE
(free).

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Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 9, 1997
For release at 9:30 a.m.

MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1996** 2
Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, about 46 million Canadians took an average of about 45 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was relatively weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **Measures of Inflation, May 1997** 3
- **Short-term Expectations Survey** 3
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 12
- **EQB production, April 1997** 12

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11

 

Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

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The Daily

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INDEX

October 2003

Subject	Reference period	Release date
2001 Census cumulative electronic profiles and topic-based tabulations (various levels of geography)		October 1, 2003 October 22, 2003
2001 Census technical report: Age, sex, marital status and common-law status		October 28, 2003
2001 Census topic-based tabulations (various levels of geography)		October 14, 2003 October 29, 2003
Adult education and training	1998	October 15, 2003
Aircraft movement statistics	August 2003 September 2003	October 2, 2003 October 31, 2003
Aircraft movement statistics: Major airports	July 2003	October 17, 2003
Alberta Aboriginal Labour Force Survey: Pilot Project	March to September 2003	October 10, 2003
Aquaculture statistics	2002	October 30, 2003
Asphalt roofing	September 2003	October 30, 2003
Building permits	August 2003	October 6, 2003
Cable and satellite television	2002	October 24, 2003
Canada's international transactions in securities	August 2003	October 20, 2003
Canadian economic observer	October 2003	October 23, 2003
Canadian international merchandise trade	August 2003	October 10, 2003
Canadian Vehicle Survey	First quarter 2003	October 2, 2003
Cement	August 2003	October 7, 2003
Cereals and oilseeds review	August 2003	October 21, 2003
Charitable donors	2002	October 29, 2003
Charitable donors: Erratum	2002	October 30, 2003
Civil aviation operating statistics	May to July 2003	October 8, 2003
Coal and coke statistics	July 2003	October 7, 2003
Construction type plywood	August 2003	October 17, 2003



INDEX: October 2003

Subject	Reference period	Release date
Construction Union Wage Rate Index	September 2003	October 16, 2003
Consumer Price Index	September 2003	October 21, 2003
Crime statistics: Additional detailed information	2002	October 27, 2003
Crude oil and natural gas	July 2003	October 2, 2003
	August 2003	October 28, 2003
Crushing statistics	September 2003	October 22, 2003
Dairy statistics	July 2003	October 15, 2003
Deliveries of major grains	September 2003	October 22, 2003
Domestic sales of refined petroleum products	August 2003	October 6, 2003
	September 2003	October 31, 2003
Domestic travel	First quarter 2003	October 6, 2003
Earnings of immigrant workers and Canadian-born workers	1980-2000	October 8, 2003
Education quarterly review	Volume 9, number 3	October 20, 2003
Electric power statistics	July 2003	October 6, 2003
Electric utility construction price indexes	Annual 2002 and first half 2003	October 24, 2003
Employment Insurance	August 2003	October 28, 2003
Energy supply and demand	2002	October 2, 2003
Export and import price indexes	August 2003	October 10, 2003
Factors related to adolescents' self-perceived health	2000/01	October 31, 2003
Family income and participation in postsecondary education	1980 to 2000	October 3, 2003
Family wealth across the generations	1984 to 1999	October 16, 2003
Farm Product Price Index	August 2003	October 29, 2003
Farm product prices	August 2003	October 7, 2003
Financial and operational statistics for railways	2001	October 29, 2003
Financial performance indicators for Canadian business	2001	October 31, 2003
Food consumption	2002	October 16, 2003
Functional Foods and Nutraceuticals Survey	2003	October 6, 2003
Gross domestic product by industry	August 2003	October 31, 2003
Health of rural Canadians	2000/01	October 21, 2003
Hog inventories	Third quarter 2003	October 22, 2003
Homicides	2002	October 1, 2003
Impact of the Ontario-US power outage on hours worked	August 14 to 31, 2003	October 30, 2003
Industrial chemicals and synthetic resins	August 2003	October 17, 2003
Industrial diversity of Canadian cities	1992 to 2002	October 27, 2003
Industrial product and raw materials price indexes	September 2003	October 29, 2003

INDEX: October 2003

Subject	Reference period	Release date
Informatics professional services price indexes	2001/02	October 28, 2003
Innovation analysis bulletin	October 2003	October 20, 2003
Intellectual property commercialization in the higher education sector	2001	October 20, 2003
Investment in non-residential building construction	Third quarter 2003	October 9, 2003
Labour Force Survey	September 2003	October 10, 2003
Leading indicators	September 2003	October 22, 2003
Mineral wool including fibrous glass insulation	August 2003 September 2003	October 1, 2003 October 27, 2003
Monthly railway carloadings	August 2003	October 21, 2003
Monthly Survey of Large Retailers	August 2003	October 17, 2003
Monthly Survey of Manufacturing	August 2003	October 15, 2003
National supply and disposition of major grains	1999/2000 to 2002/03	October 22, 2003
Natural gas liquids and liquefied petroleum gases	March 2003	October 1, 2003
Natural gas sales	August 2003	October 24, 2003
New Housing Price Index	August 2003	October 9, 2003
New motor vehicle sales	August 2003	October 14, 2003
Oil and gas extraction industry: capital and operating expenditures	2002	October 23, 2003
Oil and gas extraction industry: Volume and value of marketable production	2002	October 23, 2003
Parental work, child-care use and young children's cognitive outcomes		October 23, 2003
Particleboard, oriented strandboard and fibreboard	August 2003	October 29, 2003
Payroll employment, earnings and hours	August 2003	October 27, 2003
Perspectives on labour and income	October 2003 online edition	October 16, 2003
Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products	February 2003	October 6, 2003
Pipeline transportation of crude oil and refined petroleum products	January 2003 March 2003	October 1, 2003 October 24, 2003
Placement of hatchery chicks and turkey poults	September 2003	October 28, 2003
Population of businesses with employees	Fourth quarter 2002	October 20, 2003
Primary iron and steel	August 2003	October 24, 2003
Production and disposition of tobacco products	August 2003	October 2, 2003
Production of eggs and poultry	August 2003	October 8, 2003
Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey	Second quarter 2003	October 7, 2003

INDEX: October 2003

Subject	Reference period	Release date
Refined petroleum products	July 2003	October 1, 2003
	May 2003	October 9, 2003
	August 2003	October 23, 2003
Registered retirement savings plan contributions	2002	October 23, 2003
Restaurants, caterers and taverns	August 2003	October 21, 2003
Retail trade	August 2003	October 22, 2003
Savers, investors and investment income	2002	October 28, 2003
Sawmills and planing mills	August 2003	October 27, 2003
Self-Sufficiency Project	2001	October 7, 2003
September estimates of production of principal field crops	2003	October 3, 2003
Services indicators	Second quarter 2003	October 16, 2003
Steel pipe and tubing	August 2003	October 15, 2003
Steel primary forms - weekly data	Week ending September 27, 2003	October 3, 2003
	Week ending October 4, 2003	October 10, 2003
	Week ending October 11, 2003	October 17, 2003
	Week ending October 18, 2003	October 24, 2003
Steel wire and specified wire products	August 2003	October 10, 2003
Stocks of frozen and chilled meats	October 2003	October 30, 2003
Stocks of frozen poultry meat	October 1, 2003	October 20, 2003
Study: Knowledge workers in Canada's workforce	1971-2001	October 30, 2003
Survey of earned doctorates		October 24, 2003
Travel between Canada and other countries	August 2003	October 20, 2003
Wholesale trade	August 2003	October 21, 2003