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Pooled Analysis of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior, and Sleep Among Children From 33 Countries

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IMPORTANCE The prevalence estimates of physical activity, sedentary behavior, and sleep (collectively known as movement behaviors) in 3- and 4-year-old children worldwide remains uncertain.

OBJECTIVE To report the proportion of 3- and 4-year-old children who met the World Health Organization guidelines for physical activity, sedentary behavior, and sleep across 33 countries.

DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS Pooled analysis of data from 14 cross-sectional studies (July 2008 to September 2022) identified through systematic reviews and personal networks. Thirty-three countries of varying income levels across 6 geographical regions. Each study site needed to have at least 40 children aged 3.0 to 4.9 years with valid accelerometry and parent-/caregiver-reported screen time and sleep duration data. Data were analyzed from October 2022 to February 2023.

EXPOSURES Time spent in physical activity was assessed by reanalyzing accelerometry data using a harmonized data-processing protocol. Screen time and sleep duration were proxy reported by parents or caregivers.

MAIN OUTCOMES AND MEASURES The proportion of children who met the World Health Organization guidelines for physical activity (≥180 min/d of total physical activity and ≥60 min/d of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity), screen time (≤1 h/d), and sleep duration (10-13 h/d) was estimated across countries and by World Bank income group and geographical region using meta-analysis.

RESULTS Of the 7017 children (mean [SD] age, 4.1 [0.5] years; 3585 [51.1%] boys and 3432 [48.9%] girls) in this pooled analysis, 14.3% (95% CI, 9.7-20.7) met the overall guidelines for physical activity, screen time, and sleep duration. There was no clear pattern according to income group: the proportion meeting the guidelines was 16.6% (95% CI, 10.4-25.3) in low- and lower-middle–income countries, 11.9% (95% CI, 5.9-22.5) in upper-middle–income countries, and 14.4% (95% CI, 9.6-21.1) in high-income countries. The region with the highest proportion meeting the guidelines was Africa (23.9%; 95% CI, 11.6-43.0), while the lowest proportion was in North and South America (7.7%; 95% CI, 3.6-15.8).

CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE Most 3- and 4-year-old children in this pooled analysis did not meet the current World Health Organization guidelines for physical activity, sedentary behavior, and sleep. Priority must be given to understanding factors that influence these behaviors in this age group and to implementing contextually appropriate programs and policies proven to be effective in promoting healthy levels of movement behaviors.

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Supplemental content

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In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) published global guidelines for physical activity, sedentary behavior, and sleep (collectively referred to as movement behaviors) for children younger than 5 years.[1] These guidelines are based on an integrated movement behavior paradigm,[2] acknowledging the codependencies of these behaviors and their synergistic effects on health. For children aged 3 to 4 years, the guidelines recommend participating in at least 180 minutes of physical activity (at least 60 of which should be of moderate to vigorous intensity), not spending more than 1 hour in sedentary screen time, and having 10 to 13 hours of good-quality sleep in a 24-hour day.[1] Meeting these guidelines is associated with better adiposity status,[3] psychosocial health,[4] and motor skills[5,6] in this age group. To increase awareness of the importance of healthy levels of movement behaviors in early childhood, it is important to know the proportion of children meeting the guidelines globally.

Building on the systematic review by Rollo and colleagues,[7] 33 articles (representing 21 studies) published from January 2015 to August 2022 have examined adherence to the WHO guidelines for children aged 3 and 4 years, with the reported proportions ranging from 0% to 37%. Notably, 17 of the 21 studies (85%) were conducted exclusively in high-income countries, indicating the lack of evidence among lower-income countries. A more recent meta-analysis, including data from 26 articles, reported the overall proportion meeting the guidelines was 11% among children aged 3 to 5 years.[8] However, these estimates should be interpreted cautiously given the methodological variations across studies, particularly in the accelerometer data processing methods applied to obtain physical activity estimates. Pooling data from these studies using the same data processing protocols while complementing them with new data from more low- and lower-middle-income countries would allow, for the first time, the ability to report the global proportion of children who meet the WHO guidelines. This will contribute to the limited knowledge base on global prevalence estimates of movement behaviors in young children[9] and inform global and regional policies to promote healthy movement behaviors from an early age.

In this article, we conducted a pooled analysis to determine the proportion of children aged 3 to 4 years who met the WHO recommended levels of physical activity, sedentary behavior (operationalized and hereinafter referred to as screen time), and sleep across 33 countries using a harmonized data processing protocol.

Key Points

Question What is the global proportion of children aged 3 to 4 years who meet the World Health Organization guidelines for physical activity, sedentary behavior, and sleep?

Findings This cross-sectional study of 7017 children across 33 countries found that a low proportion of children met the recommendations for physical activity, screen time, and sleep duration. While differences were noted between sexes, regions, and country income levels, the compliance with the overall guidelines was universally low.

Meaning Identifying key factors and implementing contextually appropriate, effective programs and policies is essential to tackle movement behavior inequalities among 3- to 4-year-old children worldwide.

Methods

This study was approved by the University of Wollongong Human research ethics committee. All datasets used had prior ethical approval, including approval for data sharing, or obtained additional approval for the purposes of this study. As the analyses used only deidentified data, no additional consent from parents or caregivers was required as determined by the University of Wollongong Human research ethics committee. The study followed the Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (STROBE) reporting guideline.

Study Design and Participants

For the present analyses we collated data collected from July 2008 to September 2022 identified through systematic reviews and personal networks. Our updated literature search (eMethods in Supplement 1), along with the published reviews,[7,8] identified 21 articles from 13 studies that met the inclusion criteria: cross-sectional study that involved children aged 3.0 to 4.9 years and provided valid accelerometer-measured physical activity and parent- or caregiver-reported screen time and sleep duration data for at least 40 children per study site. Four additional studies were identified through personal communications with the lead investigators, resulting in a total of 17 studies eligible for inclusion (eTable 1 in Supplement 1). The sample size was selected based on the observation that many studies from low- and lower-middle-income countries were pilot studies and, as such, recruited small, nonrepresentative samples. Therefore, having a larger sample size as the inclusion criteria would limit the scope of our analysis to provide a more global examination of movement behaviors. For the types of measures, we considered only studies that used ActiGraph or Actical accelerometers, as they are most frequently used in research and have been validated for measuring physical activity in young children.[10] We selected only studies that provided parent or caregiver reports of screen time and sleep duration, in line with the body of evidence that guided the development of WHO guidelines.[1]

We approached lead authors and invited them to share their dataset, including accelerometer data files, parent- or caregiver-reported screen time and sleep duration, and child's sex and age in months. Following confirmation of data availability and the establishment of data sharing agreements with respective institutions, we obtained datasets for 14 studies before September 2022 (eTable 2 in Supplement 1).

Measurements

Physical Activity

Data were collected using ActiGraph (ActiGraph LLC) or Actical (Philips Respironics Inc) accelerometers, worn on the right

hip or nondominant wrist during waking hours only or 24 h/d for at least 4 days (eTable 2 in Supplement 1). Data were harmonized by reprocessing the accelerometer files using ActiLife software version 6.12.1 (**Figure 1**[12-15]). This was not possible with data from the Canadian Health Measures Survey due to data sharing policies. In this case, we asked the collaborator to reanalyze the data using the same procedure. Data files were reintegrated into 15-second epochs for the analysis of physical activity. Nonwear time was defined as 20 minutes of consecutive 0 counts.[11] Time spent in total physical activity and moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity were calculated using the best available device- and wear-site-specific cut points.[12-15] Physical activity data were only included if children had at least 3 days of accelerometry data, with at least 6 hours of wear time per day[16] between 5 AM and 11 PM. Valid weekend data were not required for inclusion, as this does not substantially increase the reliability of physical activity estimates in this age group.[16]

Screen Time

Questionnaire items typically asked parents or caregivers to report the total time their child spent using electronic media for recreational purposes on a typical day (eTable 2 in Supplement 1). For studies collecting data separately for weekdays and weekend days, the weighted average of screen time was used.

Sleep Duration

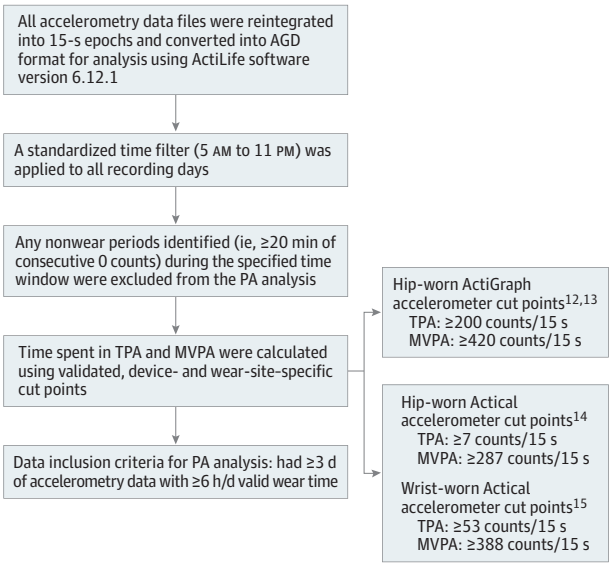
Questionnaire items typically asked parents or caregivers to report either their child's total hours of sleep per night per 24-hour period (including naps) or typical sleep schedule (eTable 2 in Supplement 1). For studies collecting data separately for weekdays and weekend days, the weighted average of sleep duration was used.

Statistical Analysis

Individual-level data were pooled to estimate the proportion of children who met the WHO recommendations for physical activity, screen time, and sleep duration (individually and in combination)[1] across countries, according to the World Bank income classification[17] at the time the data were collected, and by WHO region (eTable 3 in Supplement 1).

Prior to the analyses, accelerometer variables were adjusted to address discrepancies in accelerometer protocol (waking-hour only vs 24-hour wear) across studies. As our analyses focused only on physical activity during waking hours, a linear mixed model[18] was fitted using R package lme4 (with participants as random intercepts and countries as fixed intercepts) based on day-level data to adjust children with 24-hour-measured accelerometer variables as if they were measured with a waking-hour protocol using the residual method. Physical activity variables were further adjusted for accelerometer wear time using the residual method by fitting a linear mixed model (moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity and total physical activity as response variables, wear time as covariate, and children as random effects) and using the same average wear time of 662 minutes for all children in all countries. Similar methods were applied to adjust sleep data to account for discrepancies in measures used (nocturnal sleep duration vs total sleep duration, including naps).

Figure 1. Accelerometry Data Processing and Analysis Procedures



MVPA indicates moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity; PA, physical activity; TPA, total physical activity.

Using the adjusted data, we conducted a meta-analysis with the R package meta (metamean function for means and metaprop for proportions using the inverse method and the summary measure plogit)[19] to derive aggregated country-level estimates and confidence intervals for each movement behavior variable. These estimates were used in a subsequent meta-analysis to obtain average estimates and confidence intervals for each income group and region, overall and separately for boys and girls. Following this, a meta-analysis of the pooled estimates across regions was conducted to derive overall estimates. It was not possible to produce valid survey-based estimates due to the lack of population-level data for all countries included. All analyses were conducted using R version 4.3.0 (R Foundation). Data were analyzed from October 2022 to February 2023.

Results

The analytical sample included 7017 children (mean [SD] age, 4.1 [0.5] years; 3585 [51.1%] boys and 3432 [48.9%] girls) from 33 countries across 6 regions (4.1% Africa, 21.2% North and South America, 3.1% Eastern Mediterranean, 31.8% Europe, 3.4% South-East Asia, and 36.4% Western Pacific). Two-thirds (78.1%) of the sample came from high-income countries, followed by low-income and lower-middle-income (12.8%) and upper-middle-income countries (9.1%). The descriptive characteristics of participants are reported in eTable 4 in Supplement 1.

The proportion of children who met the WHO guidelines is presented in the **Table** and visualized in **Figure 2**. The overall proportion of children who met all 3 recommendations was 14.3% (95% CI, 9.7-20.7), with a lower proportion in

Table. Proportion of Children Meeting the World Health Organization Guidelines for Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior (Screen Time), and Sleep Duration

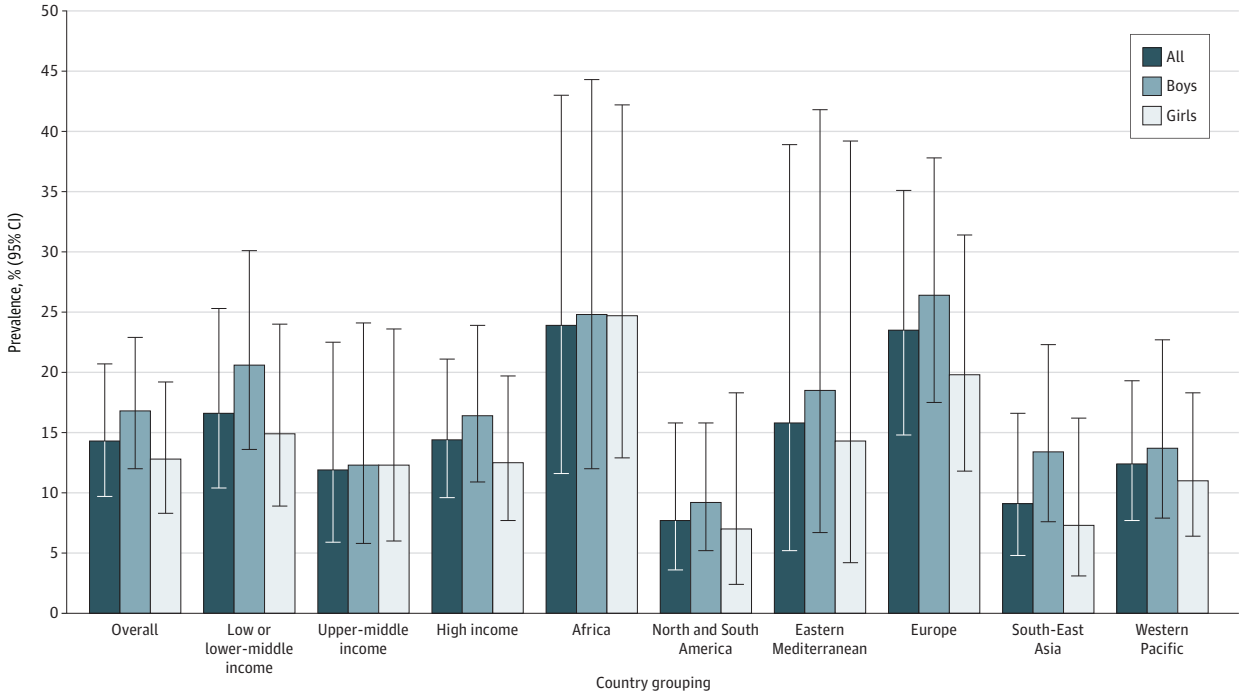
	% (95% CI)											
	Physical activity[a]			Sedentary behavior (screen time)[b]			Sleep duration[c]			All 3 recommendations		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Global estimate (N = 7017)	55.6 (42.3-68.1)	41.7 (29.3-55.1)	49.2 (36.1-62.3)	38.2 (27.3-50.4)	45.1 (30.7-60.5)	41.8 (29.0-55.9)	78.8 (67.9-86.7)	82.3 (71-89.8)	81.0 (69.7-88.8)	16.8 (12.0-22.9)	12.8 (8.3-19.2)	14.3 (9.7-20.7)
World Bank income groups												
Low-/lower-middle-income countries (n = 900)	47.2 (35.8-58.9)	35.3 (21.9-51.5)	43.3 (29.7-58.0)	47.2 (33.7-61)	53.3 (37.4-68.5)	49.9 (35.9-64.0)	76.3 (68.7-82.5)	77.8 (70.3-83.8)	77.9 (70.7-83.8)	20.6 (13.6-30.1)	14.9 (8.9-24.0)	16.6 (10.4-25.3)
Upper-middle-income countries (n = 641)	44.7 (23.9-67.5)	36.6 (11.8-71.2)	43.7 (16.2-75.7)	45.2 (25.0-67.1)	53.0 (29.8-75.0)	50.5 (27.1-73.7)	67.2 (47.9-82.1)	72.1 (55.5-84.2)	71.0 (52.4-84.5)	12.3 (5.8-24.1)	12.3 (6.0-23.6)	11.9 (5.9-22.5)
High-income countries (n = 5476)	71.1 (52.7-84.5)	56.7 (36.4-75.0)	65.4 (45.4-81.2)	31.0 (22.3-41.3)	32.1 (23.9-41.7)	31.3 (22.8-41.2)	84.7 (73.6-91.7)	87.8 (76.9-94.0)	86.7 (75.6-93.1)	16.4 (10.9-23.9)	12.5 (7.7-19.7)	14.4 (9.6-21.1)
WHO regions												
Africa (n = 286)	52.0 (43.2-60.6)	49.2 (34.2-64.4)	50.1 (38.6-61.5)	59.4 (26.7-85.4)	64.8 (33.3-87.1)	62.9 (31.6-86.2)	81.5 (50.4-95)	78.2 (57.1-90.6)	80.3 (55.2-93.1)	24.8 (12.0-44.3)	24.7 (12.9-42.2)	23.9 (11.6-43.0)
North and South America (n = 1487)	72.8 (27.2-95.0)	61.3 (14.0-93.9)	67.6 (20.4-94.4)	17.5 (9.8-29.3)	17.1 (8.4-31.8)	17.0 (9.1-29.7)	62.8 (40.5-80.8)	64.4 (42.2-81.7)	63.5 (41.5-81.0)	9.2 (5.2-15.8)	7.0 (2.4-18.3)	7.7 (3.6-15.8)
Eastern Mediterranean (n = 219)	41.2 (25.6-58.8)	28.8 (10.3-58.8)	36.2 (19.0-57.8)	39.7 (16.0-69.5)	60.3 (32.5-82.7)	47.7 (22.8-73.8)	74.9 (53.0-88.7)	84.0 (73.9-90.8)	80.1 (61.8-91.0)	18.5 (6.7-41.8)	14.3 (4.2-39.2)	15.8 (5.2-38.9)
Europe (n = 2232)	62.8 (46.7-76.5)	44.1 (33.0-55.9)	53.5 (40.4-66.1)	43.6 (29.9-58.3)	48.6 (29.3-68.4)	50.0 (27.5-72.5)	93.1 (87.4-96.3)	95.1 (89.7-97.7)	94.7 (89.1-97.5)	26.4 (17.5-37.8)	19.8 (11.8-31.4)	23.5 (14.8-35.1)
South-East Asia (n = 240)	33.1 (15.5-57.2)	20.2 (8.5-40.9)	26.0 (12.3-46.9)	35.6 (24.5-48.4)	46.8 (21.3-74.1)	40.6 (22.1-62.2)	75.3 (66.6-82.3)	83.2 (75.2-89.1)	79.7 (74.0-84.3)	13.4 (7.6-22.3)	7.3 (3.1-16.2)	9.1 (4.8-16.6)
Western Pacific (n = 2553)	69.4 (42.5-87.4)	51.5 (24.9-77.3)	62.9 (35.3-84.1)	39.2 (27.6-52.2)	39.3 (27.9-52.1)	39.0 (27.9-51.5)	74.1 (61.4-83.8)	75.2 (62.6-84.6)	75.0 (62.5-84.4)	13.7 (7.9-22.7)	11.0 (6.4-18.3)	12.4 (7.7-19.3)

[a] Defined as meeting both the total physical activity (≥180 min/d) and moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity (≥60 min/d) recommendations.

[b] Defined as not more than 1 hour of screen time per day.

[c] Defined as 10 to 13 hours of sleep per day.

Figure 2. Proportion of Children Meeting the World Health Organization Guidelines, Overall and by Income Group and Region



upper-middle-income countries (11.9% (95% CI, 5.9-22.5) than in low- and lower-middle-income (16.6% (95% CI, 10.4-25.3) and high-income (14.4% (95% CI, 9.6-21.1) countries. Higher proportions meeting the guidelines were observed in Africa (23.9%; 95% CI, 11.6-43.0) and Europe (23.5%; 95% CI, 14.8-35.1), while the lowest proportion was found in North and South America (7.7%; 95% CI, 3.6-15.8). Similar patterns of sex differences were noted across income groups (except for upper-middle-income countries) and regions, with higher proportions of boys meeting the guidelines. Country-level data on guideline adherence is reported in eTable 5 in Supplement 1.

The proportion of children who met the sleep duration recommendation was nearly 2 times higher than that of physical activity and screen time recommendations (Table). Similar patterns were noted across income groups and regions (except for North and South America, where the proportion meeting the physical activity recommendation was the highest). Concerning sex differences, the proportions meeting the physical activity recommendation were higher in boys than in girls across income groups and regions. For both screen time and sleep duration recommendations, however, higher adherence was observed in girls than in boys (except for Africa and North and South America, where higher rates were reported in boys for sleep duration and screen time recommendation, respectively).

Discussion

To our knowledge, this cross-sectional study is the first to report pooled data on the proportion of 3- to 4-year-old children meeting the WHO global guidelines[1] from a large number of countries of varying incomes across 6 geographical regions. Overall, 14.3% of children from 33 countries met all 3 recommendations, with the lowest proportion in upper-middle-income countries and North and South America. The proportion was generally higher among boys than girls, which appeared to be due to sex differences in physical activity.

Early childhood is recognized as a critical window of opportunity for establishing healthy movement behavior patterns that are important for lifelong health and well-being.[9] Our finding of a low proportion of children meeting the overall WHO guidelines across countries and regions poses important implications for future population health if no further actions are taken to address this issue. We also found that the low proportion of children meeting the WHO guidelines was primarily driven by the low adherence to physical activity or screen time recommendations, which varied by income groupings and regions. This suggests inequalities in movement behaviors worldwide, consistent with the results of a multicountry study[20] involving older children. This finding emphasizes the urgent need to address the surveillance and research gaps among underrepresented populations to strengthen the accountability of global health metrics, and inform the development of more inclusive strategies to tackle movement behavior inequalities. There is also a critical need for contextually relevant and scalable interventions capable of achieving population-wide impacts while reducing inequalities within and between countries.[9]

Our study reinforces the urgency of increasing physical activity participation in young children worldwide, as less than

half of individuals in our sample were meeting the physical activity recommendations. This concern is particularly evident for low- and middle-income countries, possibly due to ongoing rapid urbanization,[21] which often results in less supportive environments for physical activity. For example, the decrease in size and availability of green spaces or parks and pedestrian access is evident due to the increased demand for commercial and residential areas and road infrastructure.[22] This, along with parental concerns about child safety from strangers and traffic, reduces opportunities for children to play actively outside.[23] To increase physical activity participation will require a systems-based approach,[24] involving all relevant stakeholders working together to use their expertise and resources to make changes to systems, environments, and policies.

Less than half of the children in our sample met the screen time recommendation. Notably, adherence was particularly low among children from high-income countries and North and South America, likely due to their high mobile digital accessibility and ownership.[25] A recent review on parental perceptions of their children's screen time found that most parents acknowledged screen time as a necessity in this technological era, and they often reported using screen-based devices as a distraction (eg, to keep their child occupied while they are busy), for educational purposes, and as a reward for their children's behaviors.[26] Additionally, the review highlighted that parents expressed difficulty in regulating their child's screen use and knowing how much screen time children should have.[26] The changes in routines and social disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic may have further increased children's exposure to prolonged screen time,[25] underscoring the importance of better activating the guidelines to assist parents and caregivers in understanding healthy screen use and in establishing boundaries for children's screen usage.

Compared to the physical activity and screen time recommendations, a higher proportion of children met the sleep duration recommendation. This trend was consistent across different income groups and regions—except in North and South America, where fewer children met the sleep recommendation compared to physical activity. This discrepancy may be attributed to the widespread use of screen-based devices in this region, which has been shown to adversely affect sleep outcomes in this age group.[27] It is important to note that this finding was based on parent-reported measures, which tend to overestimate actual sleep duration compared to device-based measures.[28] Further, our study did not assess other aspects of sleep (quality and consistency) due to a lack of available data. Future studies are recommended to explore how adherence to sleep recommendations varies with different measurement methods and examine their associations with health outcomes. This will inform future updates to sleep recommendations, which are currently based predominantly on evidence synthesized from studies using only parent-reported measures.[1]

We found that a higher proportion of boys than girls met all 3 recommendations. Specifically, a consistently higher proportion of boys met the physical activity recommendation across all income groupings and regions. This disparity is likely due to environmental and social factors. In some countries, boys often dominate play spaces in public playgrounds.[29] Parents typically grant boys greater freedom, allowing them to play outdoors more frequently with less supervision compared to girls.[23] In contrast, girls tend to receive less social support and encouragement from their parents to participate in outdoor play.[23] Physical activity is also less socially reinforced among girls in many cultures, particularly in the African and Asian regions, where girls are encouraged to spend more time indoors and engage in more static types of play (eg, playing with toys) or activities that are more nurturing or domestic in nature (eg, doing household chores) as observed by local researchers. This reinforces the need for a holistic approach targeting social and cultural environments to reduce sex inequalities in physical activity.

A higher proportion of girls met the screen time recommendation than boys. The observed sex differences in screen time may be attributed to the digital divide, especially in low- and lower-middle-income countries where girls are reported to be less likely than boys to own or access digital technologies, even within the same households.[30] This may be related to traditional gender norms in certain cultural contexts, where girls are expected to contribute more to household chores or other routine domestic tasks, leaving them with less leisure time. Because the correlates of screen time are different for boys and girls in this age group,[31] there may be a need for sex-specific strategies to manage young children's screen use.

Consistent with observations in child and adolescent populations,[32] we found a higher proportion of girls that met the sleep duration recommendation. This may be linked to higher screen time among boys, resulting in later bedtimes and shorter sleep compared to girls.[27,32] It is noted that multiple factors, including environmental (eg, sleeping arrangement) and social-cultural contexts (eg, bedtime routine), may influence a child's sleep duration differently.[33] This complexity makes it challenging to determine the primary factor contributing to the observed sex differences in sleep duration. Further cross-cultural studies assessing sleep characteristics and associated factors are needed to better understand the mechanisms underlying sex differences in early childhood sleep.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the dataset used covers only a small proportion of countries globally (approximately 17%), and the sample sizes in most of the included studies were small and not representative of the preschool-aged population in each country. This calls for more large-scale, international studies that use standardized and culturally appropriate measurement protocols to provide stronger evidence on the global prevalence of movement behaviors in this age group. Second, it is acknowledged that pooling accelerometry data collected using different devices and protocols, even when reprocessed with a standardized method, may have introduced biases into the physical activity estimates. The intensity cut points used, though tailored to specific devices and wear-sites, have notable limitations, such as being de-

rived from small calibration studies and lacking robust measurement properties.[34] The best available cut points for the wrist-worn Actical accelerometer were based on validation studies in older children (aged 6-11 years),[15] which may have introduced errors in determining physical activity for the younger children in this study. Additionally, the use of absolute intensity-based cut points could potentially lead to the misclassification of activity behaviors.[35] Nevertheless, we chose this approach to align with past literature from which the evidence guiding the development of the physical activity guidelines was derived. Similarly, variations in questions used to assess screen time and sleep duration may have led to varying estimates across studies, subsequently influencing our pooled estimates. More importantly, the evidence supporting the use of the existing measures of movement behaviors is largely based on studies conducted in high-income countries, with limited evidence on their cross-cultural validity.[10,36] Therefore, our estimates may not accurately reflect the true disparities between countries or regions. Our data were mostly collected more than 5 years ago and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, our estimates of movement behaviors may not be generalizable to postpandemic populations.

Conclusions

We found that in a large multicountry sample of children, less than 1 in 6 children met the overall WHO guidelines. While differences were noted between boys and girls and among regions and income settings, the proportion meeting guidelines was universally low. The WHO recommends a systems-based approach to promote healthy levels of movement behaviors across all ages. At the country level, stakeholders from all sectors must work collaboratively to create an active society by changing social norms and attitudes and by providing places and spaces that support children to move more, be less sedentary, and have adequate sleep. These actions must not leave any country behind to ensure that current gaps in the evidence base are addressed equitably. In many low- and middle-income countries, movement behaviors need to be better anchored to other more salient outcomes, such as school readiness, and framed in the context of other priorities such as food insecurity and undernutrition. Robust surveillance processes are essential for monitoring temporal changes and assessing interventions intended to elicit improvements.

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