

## Physical Activity in Washington State

People who are physically active benefit from a sense of well-being that comes from physical fitness and an enhanced ability to cope with the stresses of daily life.<sup>1,2</sup> Compared to their sedentary neighbors, people who are active are more likely to maintain a healthy weight and less likely to develop chronic diseases.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup> Many social and environmental factors influence the decision to be active. Successful strategies to promote physical activity educate the individual and develop policies that create environments to support active lifestyles.

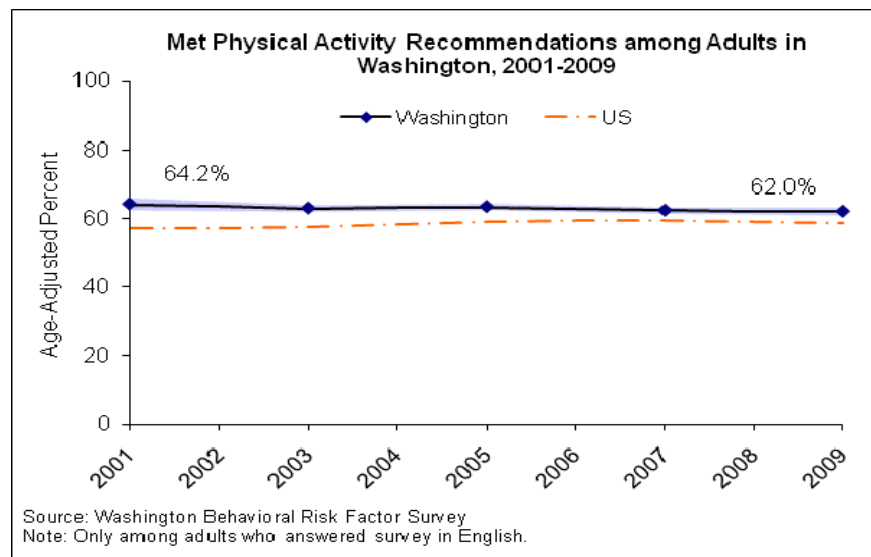
### Prevalence and Trends<sup>6</sup>

\* The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that adults engage in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on five or more days of the week, or in 20 minutes of vigorous activity on three or more days of the week.<sup>7</sup>

\* In Washington, sixty-two percent of adults meet or exceed the CDC recommendations for moderate or vigorous physical activity at work or during leisure time.

\* No significant change in physical activity has been observed over the past eight years.

\* Since 2001, the percentage of Washington adults that have met or exceeded recommendations for moderate or vigorous physical activity has been consistently higher than the national average.<sup>8</sup>

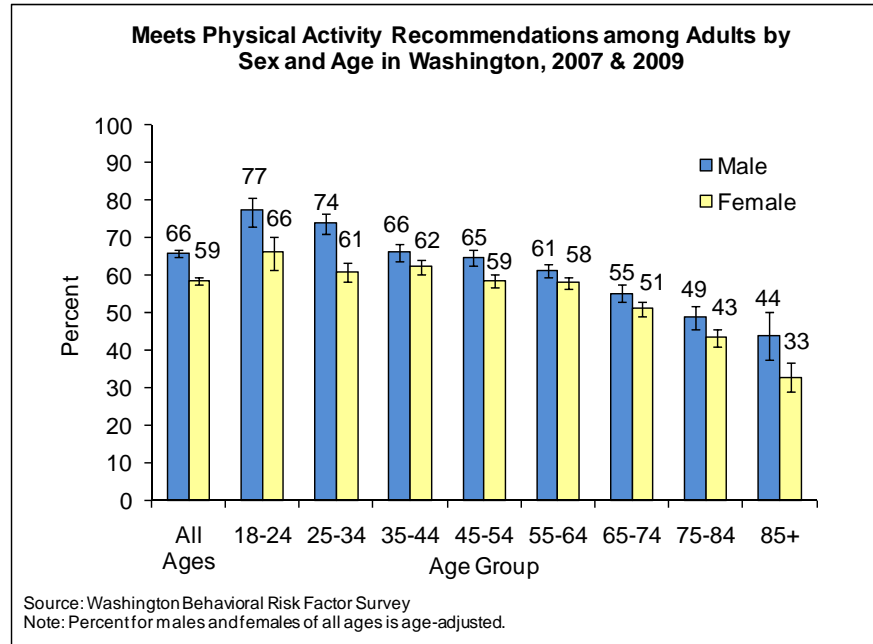


## Age and Gender<sup>6</sup>

\* Men meet recommendations for moderate or vigorous physical activity more often than women.

\* Adults in younger age groups meet the recommendations more often than those in older age groups.

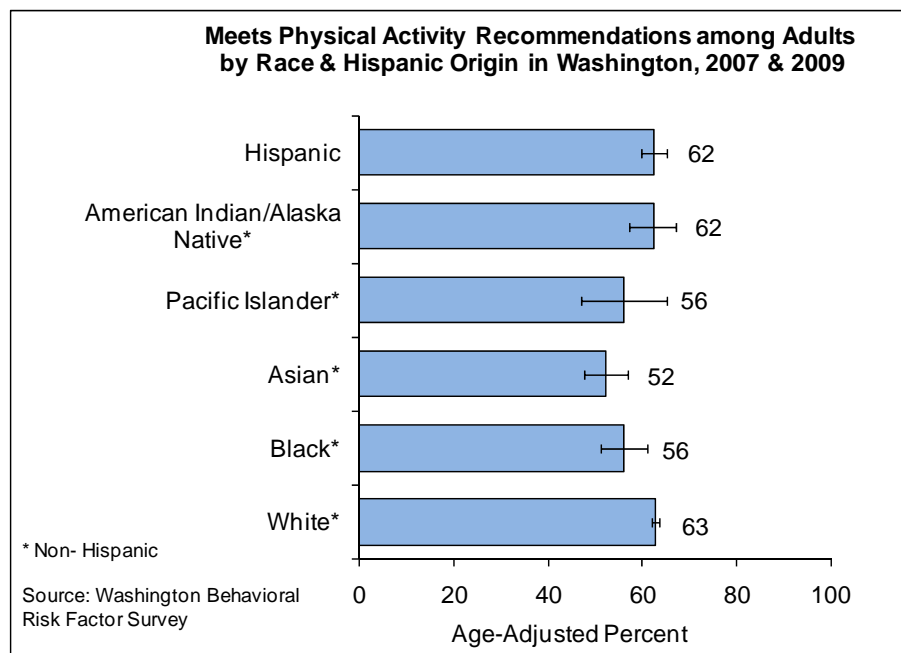
\* These relationships hold after controlling for income, education, race, and ethnicity.



## Race and Hispanic Origin<sup>6</sup>

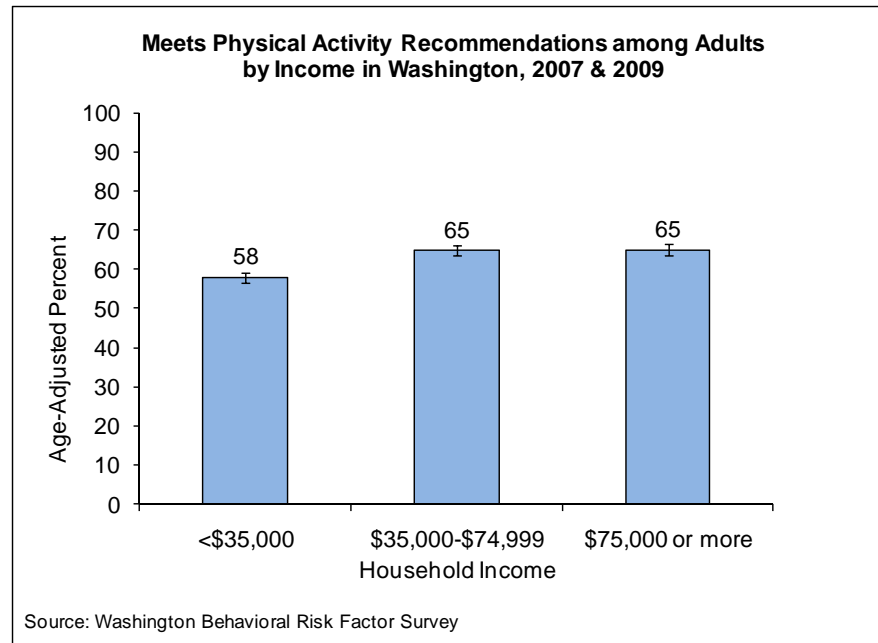
\* Asians and non-Hispanic blacks are less likely to meet physical activity recommendations than Hispanics or non-Hispanic whites.

\* After controlling for income, education, age, and gender, Asians are still less likely to be physically active, but the pattern for non-Hispanic blacks is not statistically detectable.

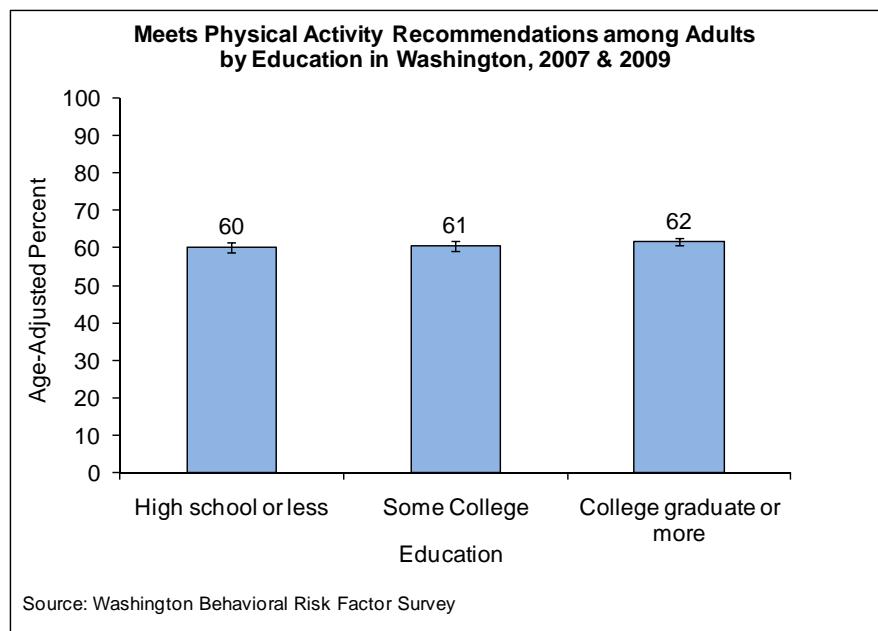


## Income and Education<sup>6</sup>

\* Lower income (<\$35,000) adults are less likely to meet recommendations for physical activity than mid- or upper income adults, even after controlling for age, education, gender, race, and Hispanic origin.



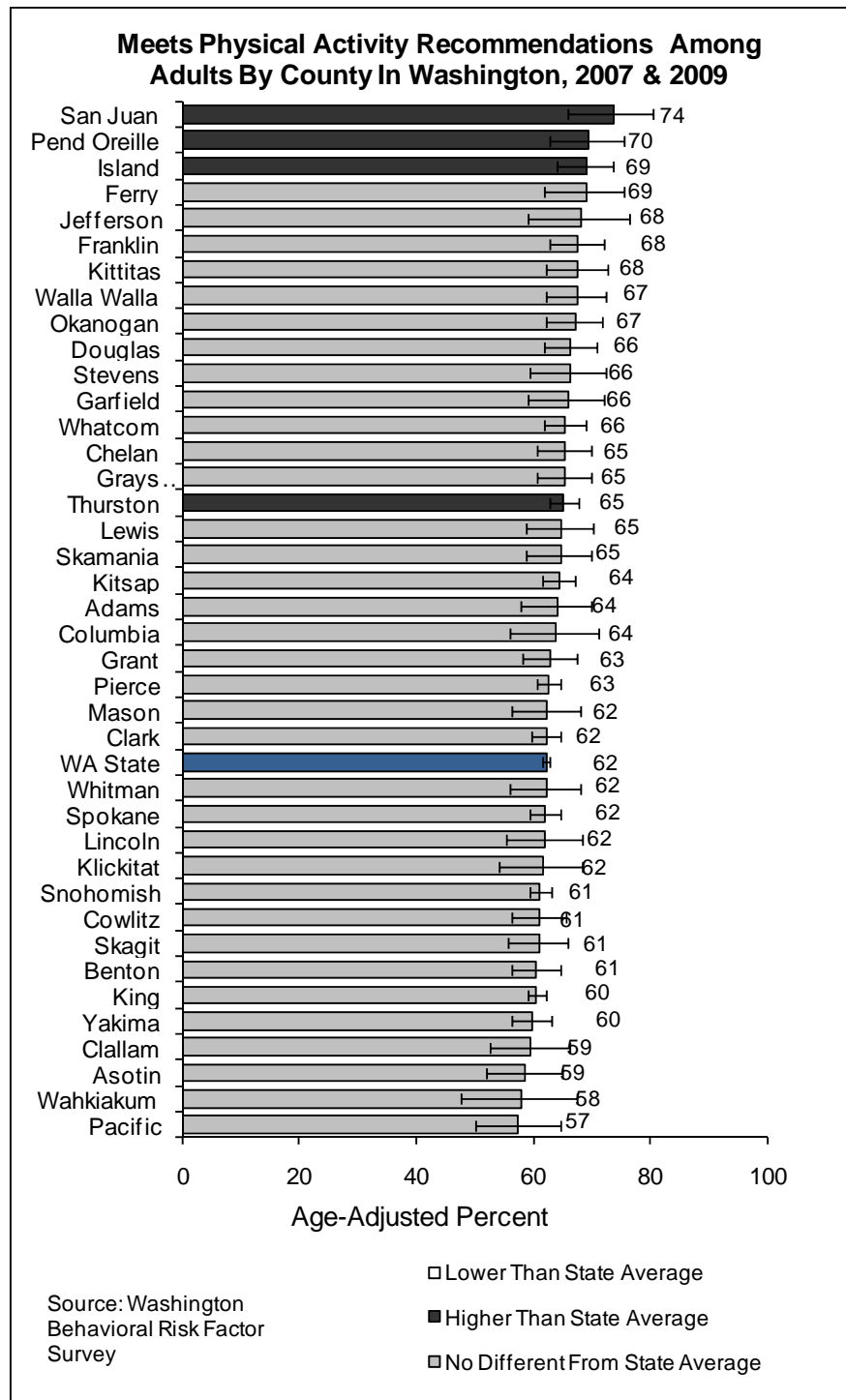
\* There are no statistically detectable differences in physical activity by education.



## Geographic Variation<sup>6</sup>

\* The age-adjusted percent of adults who report meeting recommendations for moderate physical activity at work or during leisure time ranges from 57% in Pacific County to 74% in San Juan County.

\* In San Juan, Pend Oreille, Island, and Thurston Counties the percent of adults who met recommendations for physical activity is higher than the state average.



## **Physical Activity in Youth**

\* Physical activity is essential for a healthy childhood. Regular physical activity has beneficial effects on weight, muscular strength, cardiorespiratory fitness, bone mass, blood pressure, anxiety and stress and self-esteem.<sup>9,10</sup>

### ***Recommendations***

\* Children and Adolescents: The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005<sup>11</sup> and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education<sup>12</sup> recommend that children and adolescents participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week, preferably daily. Any type of moderate or higher intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking, playing tag, jumping rope, or swimming count, as long as it adds up to at least one hour a day.

\* Infants and Toddlers: The National Association for Sport and Physical Education recommends that infants (birth to 12 months old)<sup>13</sup> should interact with parents and/or caregivers in daily physical activities that promote exploration of their environment. Toddlers (12 to 36 months old) should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity, preschoolers (3 to 5 years) at least 60 minutes. Both toddlers and preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes of unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.

\* In 2008, only 43% of Washington 10<sup>th</sup> graders were physically active at recommended levels.<sup>14</sup>

\* Additional data on physical activity in adolescents is collected as part of Washington State's Healthy Youth Survey and is found here: <http://www.askhys.net/layout.asp?page=intro>. Click on the HYS Fact Sheets Menu to access data.

## References

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