

Encouraging children to be physically active for at least an hour a day is vital for their health and happiness but a new council report reveals that just 55% of Leeds children are getting enough physical exercise every day.

The *Leeds Children and Young People Physical Activity Needs Assessment 2016* says most children are simply not getting enough physical exercise with children from disadvantaged communities more likely to be inactive.

This is despite physical activity being essential for good mental and physical health as well as cognitive and physical development with benefits lasting through to adulthood. Being active doesn't only improve children's physical health but also their emotional wellbeing meaning active children are more confident and happier.

It can also mean they achieve better at school as physical activity helps the brain develop and function well.

The report calls on services across the council, schools and partners to work together to improve children's activity, whether by encouraging sports and youth organisations to engage more inactive children in their programmes, [building in opportunities to be active throughout the school day, or encouraging families to be active beyond school.](#)

Read the full *Leeds Children and Young People Physical Activity Needs Assessment 2016*, at the Leeds Observatory <http://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/> or contact Jan Burkhardt for more information on the assessment report.

The report is being launched at the Active Schools conference where teachers from across Leeds will be gaining knowledge and inspiration from national speakers and sports stars.

Schools can access practical ideas and resources to help children be active at the [Change4Life School Zone](#).

Families can visit [Change4Life](#) for ideas and top tips for being active, both for children, for you and as a family.

Too much time spent on computers, TV and mobile devices is one of the main reasons children can be inactive so swapping some "screen time" for being active is one of the best ways to get children off the sofa and help keep them happy and healthy.