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Special issue: Global Matrix 3.0 — An introduction to the report cards on the physical activity of children and youth from five Asian countries and regions

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Insufficient physical activity is a leading risk factor for global health, causing an estimated 5.3 million (9%) deaths globally each year.¹ Physical inactivity increases the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and several cancers, while also shortening life expectancy. Globally, physical inactivity is estimated to cost INT\$54 billion per year in direct health care, with an additional INT\$14 billion attributable to lost productivity.² These data highlight the importance of the global monitoring and surveillance of physical activity.

The extraordinary impact of the *Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Cards on Physical Activity for Children and Youth* from 2005 to 2014,³ helped fuel international comparisons through the development of country Report Cards on the Physical Activity of Children and Youth in order to power the movement to get kids moving.^{4,5} On the 20th of May 2014, at the *Global Summit on the Physical Activity of Children* in Toronto, Canada, 15 country Report Cards were compared in the first *Global Matrix* of grades.⁴ Using a harmonized process and a standardized grading framework, countries reviewed their available data and synthesized the evidence to assign a grade to nine common indicators related to individual physical activity behaviors, as well as sources of influence and strategies and investments.

Building on the success of the Global Summit, the *Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance* was formed to provide a portal and mechanism where interested countries could register and be mentored through the Report Card process to facilitate future global matrices.⁶ Released on the 16th of November 2016, at the *International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health* in Bangkok, Thailand, the *Global Matrix 2.0* consolidated the findings from 38 country Report Cards and identified considerable variation in grades both within and between countries.⁵

On the 27th of November 2018, the *Global Matrix 3.0* was

released at the *Movement to Move: Global Insights to Get our Kids Moving* event in Adelaide, Australia. Forty nine countries and regions, representing all inhabited continents and all income levels participated, including: Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, England, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Guernsey Channel Islands, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Jersey, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Scotland, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Wales, and Zimbabwe. These 49 countries and regions represent approximately 25% of the countries in the world, 47% of the world's land mass, 64% of the world's population, and an increase of ~230% in participating countries compared to the *Global Matrix 1.0*. In addition, approximately one-quarter of these countries represented Asia, including the east (China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Japan, and South Korea), south (Bangladesh, India, and Nepal), south-east (Thailand), and west (Lebanon, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates) sub-regions.

This supplemental issue of the *Journal of Exercise Science and Fitness* contains Report Card summary papers for five Asian countries and regions — China,⁷ Chinese Taipei (Taiwan),⁸ Hong Kong,⁹ Japan,¹⁰ and South Korea.¹¹ These papers are presented in alphabetical order and follow a prescribed template to facilitate comparisons. Each paper describes the process used to develop each Report Card, the data sources, partners, final grades for each indicator (overall physical activity; organized sport and physical activity; active play; active transportation; sedentary behaviors; family and peers; school; community and environment; government; and physical fitness), and a figure of the Report Card cover. This supplemental issue is available electronically through open access.

Conflicts of interest

None declared.

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