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Physical activity and neighborhood conditions for exercise in Kentucky

Being physically active is one of the most valuable things a person can do to maintain good health. The U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion states, "All adults should avoid inactivity. Some physical activity is better than none, and adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits."¹ The **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)**, sponsored by Interact for Health and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, asked Kentucky adults about neighborhood conditions and physical activity.

8 in 10 adults report being physically active

KHIP asked, "In general, would you say you are very, somewhat, not very or not at all physically active?" Eight in 10 Kentucky adults (79%) said they were very physically active (30%) or somewhat physically active (49%).

Responses varied by self-reported health status.² Nine

¹ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2008). *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* (ODPHP Publication No. U0036). Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <https://health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/>.

Percentage of adults who say that, in general, they are very or somewhat physically active



in 10 adults with excellent, very good or good health (88%) said they were very or somewhat physically active. This compared with 5 in 10 adults in fair or poor health (54%).

Responses also varied by household income. More than 8 in 10 adults earning more than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG)³ reported that they were very or somewhat physically active (84%). This compared with less than 8 in 10 adults earning 200% FPG or less (76%).

Most adults report good neighborhood conditions for exercise

KHIP asked about neighborhood conditions for physical activity.

² KHIP asked, "Would you say that in general your health is ... excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?"

³ In 2015, 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines was \$48,500 for a family of four.

Respondents were asked "How would you rate your neighborhood as a place to walk, jog or bike?" Three in 4 Kentucky adults (76%) rated their own neighborhood excellent, very good or good. One in 4 adults (24%) rated their neighborhood fair or poor.

KHIP asked, "How would you rate the condition of sidewalks and shoulders in your neighborhood?" Half of Kentucky adults (51%) said sidewalks and shoulders were excellent, very good or good. About 4 in 10 (44%) said they were fair or poor.

KHIP also asked, "How safe is it to walk, jog or bike in your neighborhood?" Nearly 5 in 10 Kentucky adults (46%) said it was very safe, and more than 3 in 10 (35%) said it was somewhat safe. About 2 in 10 adults (19%)

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said their neighborhood was somewhat unsafe or not at all safe for exercise.

Ratings of conditions for exercise vary by region, income

Adults' ratings of their neighborhood as a place to walk, jog or bike varied by region. More than 8 in 10 adults in the Louisville area (84%) rated their neighborhood excellent, very good or good. That compares with about 8 in 10 Lexington area (81%), Western Kentucky (78%) and Northern Kentucky (77%) adults, and 6 in 10 Eastern Kentucky adults (61%).

Responses also varied by income. About 7 in 10 adults earning less than 200% FPG (71%) rated their neighborhood excellent, very good or good as a place to walk, jog or bike. This compares with

Percentage of adults who think that increasing level of physical activity would improve their overall health



nearly 8 in 10 adults earning more than 200% FPG (79%).

Most think increasing physical activity would improve health

KHIP asked, "Do you think increasing your level of physical activity would improve your overall health, make your overall health worse or not make much difference in your overall health?"

Nearly 7 in 10 Kentucky adults

(67%) said that increasing their level of exercise would improve their overall health. More than 2 in 10 (25%) said it would make no difference. Fewer than 1 in 10 (7%) said it could make their health worse.

Adults with more education were more likely to say that increased activity would improve their health. Those with less education were more likely to say it would make no difference.