

Study: Girls living near parks more active

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U.S. scientists say adolescent girls who live within one-half mile of a public park are significantly more physically active than other girls.

The Rand Corp. study could have implications for both males and females in other age groups, said Deborah Cohen, a senior scientist at the non-profit corporation and lead author of the study.

Rand conducted the study in the wake of increasing national concern about obesity and health problems brought about by diet and sedentary lifestyles.

"Neighborhood and community parks are strongly associated with physical activity," Cohen said. "If girls (too young to drive) become more active when they live close to a public park, further research may show the same thing happening to others in a neighborhood."

The researchers found physical activity increased somewhat for girls within a mile of parks and showed the greatest increase among girls who lived less than one-half mile from a park.

The study is detailed in the November issue of the journal *Pediatrics*.

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