



Sport England Secondary Teacher Training Programme

Attitudes and behaviours of the most and least active secondary school students and staff - summary

Overall, boys are more active than girls, physical activity level declines from Year 7 to 11, particularly in girls. Those from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and disabled students report doing less physical activity than their white and non-disabled peers.

Sample size

	Students		Staff		
	Number	Days active > 30 mins	Role	Number	Days active > 30 mins
Female	7,355	3.84	PE	196	4.19
Male	5,594	4.21	SLT	156	2.94
Other	203	3.75	Other	1121	2.96
Prefer not to say	480	3.61	SLT & PE	24	4.13
Total / average	13,632	3.98		1,497	3.13

The students

Students who are more active are:

- Generally happier (happiness score: 7/10 compared to their least active counterparts 5/10);
- More physically literate evidenced by being more confident (76% v's 38%), enjoy taking part (87% v's 54%) in physical activity and PE, perceiving themselves to be good at PE (63% v's 36%) and having a better understanding of why activity is important, the benefits it has and how to get involved in comparison to those who are less active;
- Want to learn the necessary information required for GCSE / A level PE, and how to lead / organise physical activities for others;
- More likely to be motivated to compete or challenge themselves physically.

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Students who are least active:

- Are less likely to recognise / seek out opportunities to be physically active during the school day nor to recognise when the school and their teachers are promoting physical activity and encouraging them to be active;
- Cite the following barriers to activity; lack of confidence, feeling self-conscious and not having found an activity they like;
- More likely to be motivated by social reasons i.e. spending time with friends and family.

The staff

Those members of staff (PE, SLT, other and SLT & PE Staff) who are most physically active:

- Have a more positive perception of sport and physical activity as a vehicle for driving student wellbeing;
- Are more likely to agree that within their job role they have a responsibility to discuss and promote physical activity to students;
- Are more likely to be a role model to encourage physical activity within the school;
- Encourage inactive students to become more active.

More active PE staff find it easier to engage inactive students in PE / sport lessons than their less active counterparts.

Senior leaders with a background in PE are similar to PE staff in their attitudes and behaviours and should be treated as PE staff for the purpose of analysis.

The learning

- Less active students do not go out and look for opportunities to be active, therefore, these opportunities must be signposted appropriately or embedded discreetly in their existing structure.
- Identifying the correct activity and the reason why individuals may want to participate are important to encourage enjoyment and engagement. This highlights the importance of knowing your students and providing the opportunity for them to have a say in what they do and how.
- Interventions to encourage physical activity should not be limited to students, increasing the level of activity of staff could improve the engagement and experience of less active students.
- The need to, where possible, get engagement from a member of SLT who does not have a background in PE should be emphasised.

For further information:

For further information about the content of this summary, please contact

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