



Participation by Pacific Young People in Sports

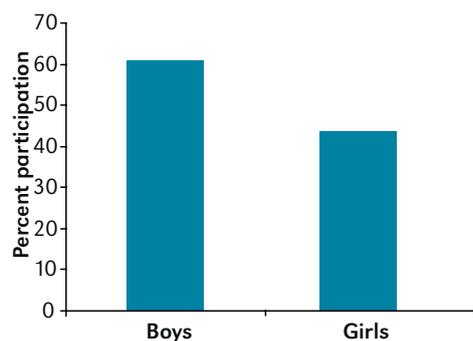
Almost half of all Pacific young people do not participate in sports. The participation rate is lower among girls, older students, and those from lower socio-economic levels. There is thus a need for a greater focus on increasing participation rates among these groups. For Pacific girls the main reasons for not participating in sports are social factors – feeling inadequate, shy or embarrassed, or not having friends in the sports teams. Providing sports experiences that increase skills and confidence and give opportunities to socialise with others may increase Pacific young people's participation in sports.

This fact sheet presents findings on sports participation by Pacific secondary school students in New Zealand. The findings are drawn from the Youth '07 national survey of secondary school students in New Zealand, carried out in 2007. The results given here are based on the 1,190 Pacific students surveyed – those who identified as Samoan, Cook Islands, Tongan, Niue, Tokelauan, Fijian or Other Pacific Peoples.

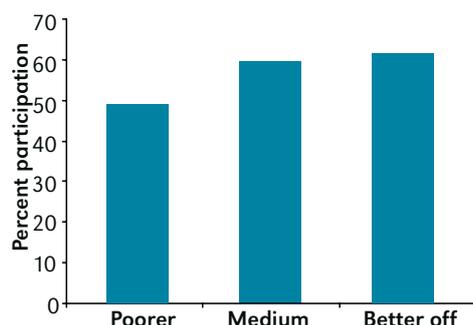
Physical activity is essential for maintaining physical fitness, maintaining a healthy body weight and preventing chronic diseases. Participating in sports provides an important opportunity for young people to meet their recommended daily activity requirements.



Sports participation of Pacific boys and girls



Sports participation of Pacific students from different socio-economic levels



How many Pacific students participate in sports?

- 53% of Pacific students participate in sports.
- Participation declines gradually with age.
- Pacific girls are less likely than Pacific boys to participate in sports.
- Pacific students from poorer neighbourhoods are less likely to participate in sports than those from better off neighbourhoods.

Why don't more Pacific young people participate in sports?

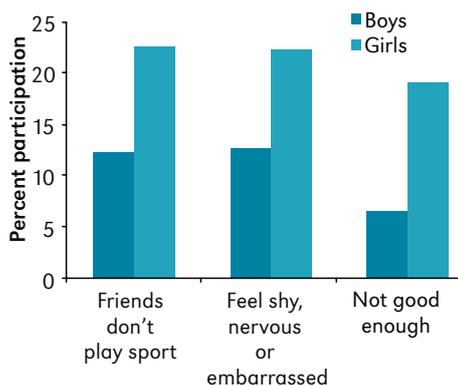
Almost half (47%) of Pacific students do not participate in any sporting activities outside of school time. The factors Pacific students reported that prevented or deterred them from participating in sports fall into three categories:

1. Factors outside their control, such as having other responsibilities (reported by 30% of the Pacific students who did not participate in sports), feeling that sports would require too much time (20%), sports costing too much (14%), not having access to transport (18%), parents not wanting them to play sports (13%), or the sports they were interested in not being available locally (13%).
2. Social factors, such as not having friends who participate in sports (reported by 18%), feeling that they were not good enough at sports (14%), or feeling shy, nervous or embarrassed (18%).
3. Lack of interest: 29% of the Pacific students who did not participate in sports reported that it was because they were not interested.

The barriers to participation in sports are different for girls and boys. For boys, the main reasons for not participating in sports were not being interested (28%), having other responsibilities (28%), sports taking too much time (19%) and not having access to transport (17%). The main reasons for girls not participating were having other responsibilities (31%), not being interested (28%), not having friends in sports (22%), and feeling shy, nervous or embarrassed (22%).

Girls are much more likely to be deterred from participation by social factors: their friends not participating (reported by 23% of the Pacific girls compared to 12% of the boys), feeling too shy, nervous or embarrassed to play sports (32% of girls compared to only 13% of boys); and not feeling good enough at sports (20% of girls compared to only 6% of boys).

Reasons for not participating in sports by both Pacific boys and Pacific girls



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