

# PE & School Sport Survey 2023

Youth Sport Trust/You Gov

23<sup>rd</sup> -24<sup>th</sup> March 2023

# About the PE & School Sport Survey:

The Youth Sport Trust is a children's charity founded in 1995 to harness the power of play and sport in children's education and development. Our vision is a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits of play and sport.

Not only is physical activity, PE, play and sport vital for the future health of the nation but it is also a critical tool to improve mental, social and emotional wellbeing and positive academic outcomes for young people.

To inform the annual Youth Sport Trust PE and School Sport Report and the launch of National School Sport Week, we commissioned YouGov Plc to conduct research into the current attitudes and views of the GB population, and parents specifically on the importance of sport and play. This report provides a summary of the key findings from these studies.

# Survey details:

- For the parent survey: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4549 adults, of which 1,033 parents of children aged 18 and under. Fieldwork was undertaken between 23rd – 24th March 2023. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- For the GB survey: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2310 adults, of which 566 parents of children aged 18 and under. Fieldwork was undertaken between 23rd-24th March 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

## **All data in this report relates to the views of parents of children aged 18 or under, unless otherwise stated**

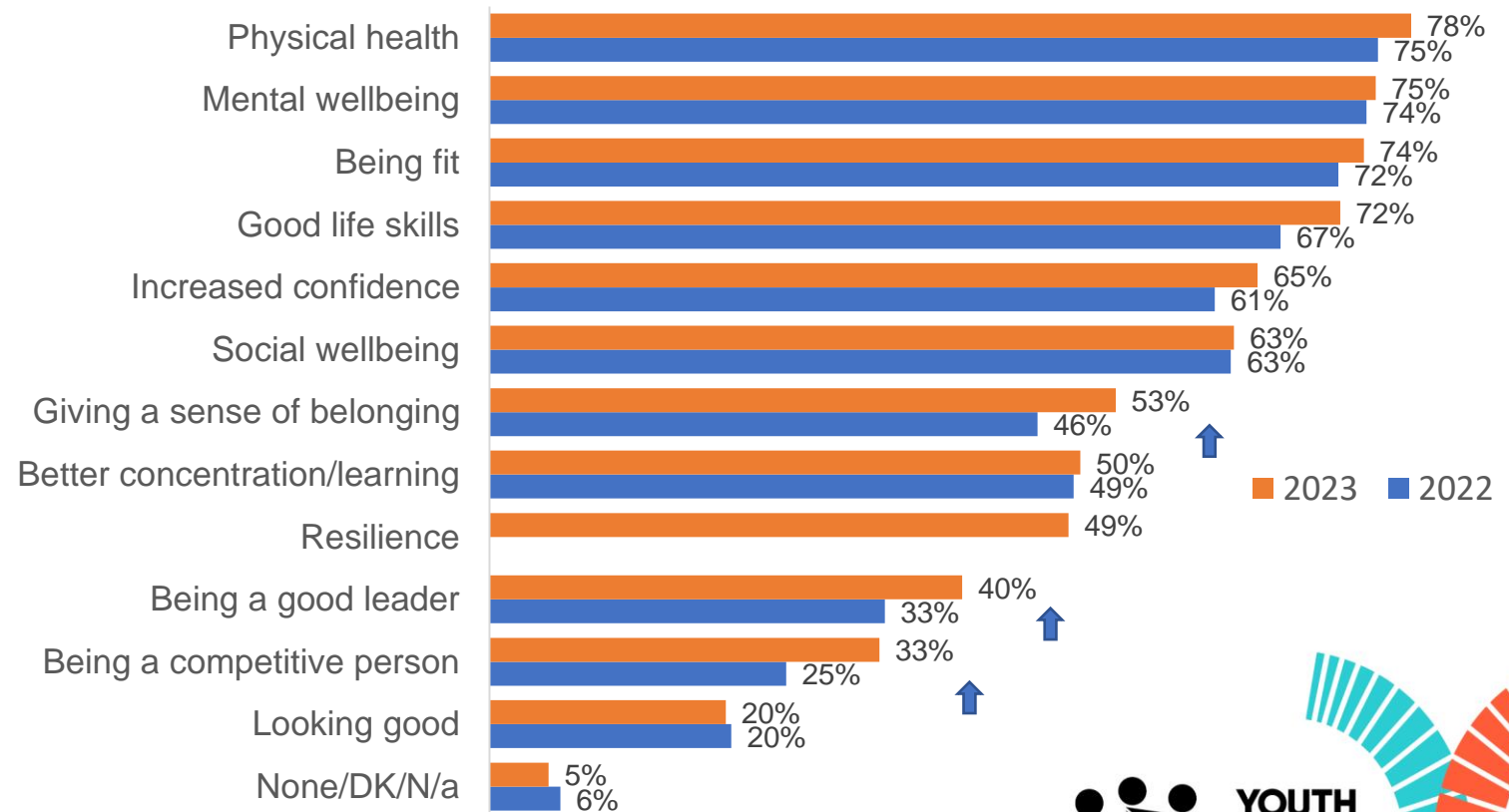
This report makes comparisons to previous YouGov research from 2022:

- For the 2022 parent sample: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 4523 adults, of which 1,069 are parents of children aged 18 and under. Fieldwork was undertaken between 28th - 30th March 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- For the 2022 GB survey: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2184 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 28th - 29th March 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

# Parents recognise the benefits of play and sport for children

- 4 in 5 parents (83%\*) believe that sport and play are important parts of every young person's education and development, two thirds say that physical activity is important to them as a family (66%\*\* ) and a similar number (63%\*\* ) say they encourage their children to be active and play sport.
- We know from last year's survey\*\*\* that parents recognise the benefits of sport and play to young people, including children's physical health, fitness, mental wellbeing, life skills, confidence, social wellbeing and resilience.
- This year\*, we've also seen significant increases in the number of parents who say that sport and play gives a sense of belonging to children, that it helps them be good leaders and that it helps them be competitive too.

## Sport & play helps young people's..



All data based on parents of children aged 18 and under

\* YouGov, GB survey - March 2023

\*\* YouGov Parents survey - March 2023

\*\*\* YouGov, GB survey - March 2022



## However, there are challenges..

- Almost three quarters of parents (72%\*) are concerned that young people today are not getting enough physical activity, with 77%\* concerned that young people are spending too much time sitting and not being active. A further 45%\*\* are currently concerned about their children's mental health

### Digital distractions

- Over 3 in 5 (62%\*\*) feel that digital distractions, such as TV, computer games and phone time are contributing to their children spending less time being active.
- Digital devices seem also to be affecting social interaction with almost 4 in 5 parents (78%\*) concerned that young people are spending too much time online and not enough time with each other in person.

### Cost of Living pressures

- Cost of Living pressures are impacting children's' mental health and opportunities to be active. This is particularly true for those from lower income families:
  - Half (51%\*\*) of parents say that challenges associated with the cost of living increases have made it more difficult to be active as a family (56% C2DE vs.47% ABC1)
  - almost half (47%\*\*) say that it has had a negative impact on the number of opportunities their child(ren) have to be physically active and take part in sport (52% C2DE vs. 43% ABC1) and
  - almost 4 in 10 (39%\*\*) say that cost of living increases have had a long-term negative impact on their child(ren)'s wellbeing (44% C2DE vs. 37% ABC1)

# Most parents remain unaware of how much activity their child(ren) should be doing

- The Chief Medical Officers (CMO) recommend that young people (aged 5-18) should be active, defined as participating in 'moderate-to-vigorous physical activity' (MVPA), for an average of at least 60 minutes every day.
- However, Sport England's Active Lives Children and Young People survey 2021-22, found that less than half of children (47%) are active for 60 minutes or more, with 30% doing less than 30 minutes.
- From our survey, we saw that
  - Only 43%\* of parents think that children should be active for 60 or more minutes (which is unchanged from last year\*\*)
  - Worrying, almost half of parents (48%\*) believe that children should be active for 30 minutes a day or less.

# Schools have a role to play in achieving 60 active minutes..

- The Government's Childhood Obesity Plan's guidelines recommend that children and young people should get 30 minutes of their daily 60 active minutes during the school day.
- Most parents seem to concur with this as around three quarters of all parents saying that they thought schools are recommended to provide at least 30 minutes of MVPA a day (73% thought this for primary schools and 74% for secondary schools\*).
  - Looking just at parents of primary school age children, this figure rises to 77%\* who think that primary schools are recommended to provide at least 30 mins, with the same number (77%\*) of parents of secondary school age children who think that their secondary school are recommended to provide 30 minutes or more.



# Parents recognise the role schools can play in helping children be active

- Almost 2 in 3 parents (65%\*) think that pupil's wellbeing is likely to be better in schools which prioritise sport, physical education (PE) and physical activity. This is a significant increase on 2022 (55%\*\*\*\*).
- Additionally, there's been a rise in parents saying that they would be more inclined to choose a school with a focus on PE and sport (from 13%\*\*\*\* to 18%\*\*)
- 83%\* of parents also believe that cuts to PE, sport and breaktimes in schools are likely to have a negative impact on pupil's wellbeing.
- Given this, it is not surprising that parents are calling for a focus on PE and activity in schools
  - 4 in 5 parents (82%\*) believe that schools should be ensuring that every pupil is physically active for at least 30 minutes a day whilst in school
  - 78%\* believe that schools should provide at least 2 hours a week of PE to every pupil
  - 69%\* believe that PE should be a core subject on the national curriculum and
  - 59%\*\* of parents currently believe their child(ren)'s school plays a vital part in helping them to achieve 30 minutes a day

All data based on parents of children aged 18 and under

\* YouGov, GB survey - March 2023

\*\* YouGov Parents survey – March 2023

\*\*\* YouGov, GB survey – March 2022

\*\*\*\* YouGov Parents survey – March 2022





# ‘Play for fun, play for 60’

- Our survey has shown that parents recognise the benefits of their children being active and are keen that children do more. Over a third of parents (34%\*\* ) believe that children should get more time for sport and play during the school day with 29%\*\* calling for more time for sport and play in extracurricular time and 44%\*\* want to see more time for sport outside of school too. Alongside this, parents are keen that children also enjoy being active (92%\* say that sport and play should be fun).
- Over half of parents (51%\*\* ) are now saying they would support a national campaign to promote the importance of 60 active minutes (up from 2022 when 45%\*\*\*\* offered support) and almost a third (31%\*\* ) said that they like to see their school make a pledge to get children more active in school
- In response, the YST are asking for families, schools and partners to #PlegetoPlay as part of YST National School Sports Week 2023. The week, running from 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June will have the theme of ‘play for fun, play for 60’, focusing on ensuring that all children are active for 30 minutes a day in school and 30 minutes outside to reach the CMO recommended 60 minutes a day.

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