

February 2026



**YOUTH  
SPORT  
TRUST**

# Key facts about...

## Physical activity and puberty for girls



For more facts, please visit [here](#) to access the Youth Sport Trust's Knowledge Bank.

When secondary-aged girls were asked what worries them most about participating in PE or school sport when they have their period, the most common responses included: being in pain/uncomfortable (69%) and worrying about leaking (61%) (Youth Sport Trust, 2025).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

When secondary-aged girls were asked what the school could do to help them in PE when they have their period, the most common responses included: greater flexibility to participate to their ability at the time (40%); greater understanding/empathy shown by teachers (38%); better options for PE kit (33%) (Youth Sport Trust, 2025).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

More secondary-aged girls from Ethnically Diverse Communities report having their period as a barrier compared with White British girls (Youth Sport Trust, 2025).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

More secondary-aged girls with SEND report a lack of confidence and a dislike of other people watching them as a barrier to being more active at school, compared with secondary-aged girls without SEND (Youth Sport Trust, 2025).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

UK Teachers report that lessons on the menstrual cycle are predominantly delivered within personal, social, health and economic or science subjects. Over half of the lessons focus on the biology (56%) or provision of menstrual products (40%) rather than lived experiences (14%) (Brown et al., 2024).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

80% of teachers felt receiving training would be beneficial to improve menstrual education in schools (Brown et al., 2024).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

Cultural factors within populations were also highlighted as additional possible reasons for a lack of menstrual cycle education in schools (Brown et al., 2024).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

As girls age, Black girls in particular often have less time and flexibility to engage in sport because of family responsibilities, cultural commitments and studying (Women in Sport, 2024)

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*

Disabled teenage girls experience many of the same barriers as non-disabled teenage girls, such as lower confidence (49%), finding sport or exercise hard (32%), not liking others watching them (52%), or feeling judged by others (54%) (Access Sport, 2024).

*Click [here](#) for the full report.*