YST GIRLS ACTIVE

REASONS TO BE ACTIVE

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Why is Girls Active Needed?

Advocacy

Convincing others that girls should be physically active is essential to the long-term success of Girls Active. You need allies to make change. Good advocacy recognises the need for change and, more importantly, promotes the benefits of that change.

Recommended activity levels

The UK Chief Medical Officers (CMO) recommend that children and young people aged 5-18 years should:

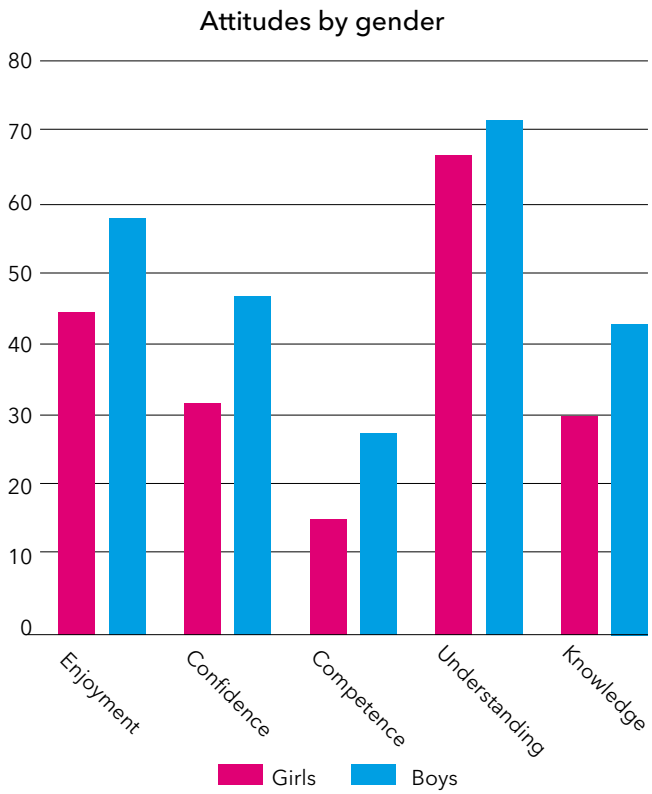
Move more: be active for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week.

Get strong: develop movement skills and build muscle and bone strength.

Sit less: reduce time being sedentary.

They also emphasise that **some activity is good; more is better!**

Where we are now



The Sport England Active Lives Children and Young People Survey (2019)[1] shows that:

- **participation** – at all ages, girls are less active than boys
- **attitudes** – girls have lower levels of confidence and enjoyment than boys.

The Youth Sport Trust Time for Change research (2019)[2] also shows that:

Girls' enjoyment of PE declines as they get older.

Year 3 – **63%**

Year 7 – **41%**

Year 11 – **17%**

23%

of secondary-age girls do no sport or physical activity outside of school

Less-active girls have lower wellbeing than more-active girls.

55%

of less-active girls feel happy.

75%

of more-active girls feel happy.

Both surveys show that girls do understand the importance of being active – but this needs to be turned into tangible, everyday benefits to motivate girls to overcome their challenges.

Girls Active helps girls to find their reasons to be active.

Reasons to be active

The Youth Sport Trust Girls Active survey (2020)[3] shows the top three motivators for secondary-age girls to be active are to:

- **have fun**
- **be healthy**
- **spend time with friends.**

#FunFriendsFeelGood

Women in Sport[4] research shows that girls place huge importance on emotionally safe and supportive spaces, where they can take part without fear of judgement. Friendships are critical to girls' engagement in physical activity – and can be positive or negative.

Girls Active supports girls to be **positive peer influencers** to help other girls to be active.

Girls Active supports teachers to **consult and listen** to discover what helps girls to be active.

Building **positive relationships** – between girls and between teachers and girls – is at the heart of getting Girls Active.

Benefits for all

The benefits of girls being physically active need to be advocated to all, not just the girls. Effective advocacy matches the message to the audience's goals. For example, girls being involved in Girls Active helps to meet the priorities of the following groups:

Senior leaders

- Improves physical health, leading to improved **attendance.**
- Improves mental health, leading to greater readiness to **learn.**
- Decreases bullying between girls, leading to increased **safety.**
- Develops character and life skills, leading to higher **achievement.**

#ActiveGirlsAchieve

PE colleagues

- Builds relationships, leading to **positive lessons**.
- Promotes peer-support, leading to improved **group work**.
- Recognises different interests, leading to greater **motivation**.
- Promotes wider skills and talents, leading to **self-improvement**.

#FitForLife

Parents

- Reduces likelihood of illness, leading to good **physical health**.
- Reduces anxiety, leading to **positive moods**.
- Builds personal and social confidence, leading to greater **happiness.**
- Develops skills, interests and talents, leading to **future success**.

#HealthyHappyBright

Remember! Advocacy is not just your role. Involve the girls in promoting the benefits of being physically active to their peers and other people.

"It has made me confident to try things in other lessons back at school, not just in PE"

Year 6 girl, St Breock Primary School

"It is amazing and it's made me feel fitter and feel good about myself as I've been more active than I was before. The best bit is it's very enjoyable and fun!"

Post-16 girl, Slated Row School

1. https://www.sportengland.org/news/active-lives-children-and-young-people-survey-academic-year-201819-report-published
2. https://www.youthsporttrust.org/system/files/Girls%20Active%20%20Time%20for%20Change%20research%20report.pdf
3. https://www.youthsporttrust.org/system/files/Girls%20Active%20National%20Report%202019-20%20Secondary_0.pdf
4. https://www.womeninsport.org/research-and-advice/our-publications/reframing-sport-for-teenage-girls-building-strong-foundations-for-their-futures/