



Young People in 2000

*The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire
results for 42,073 young people between the ages of 10 and 15*

7 Exercise and Sport

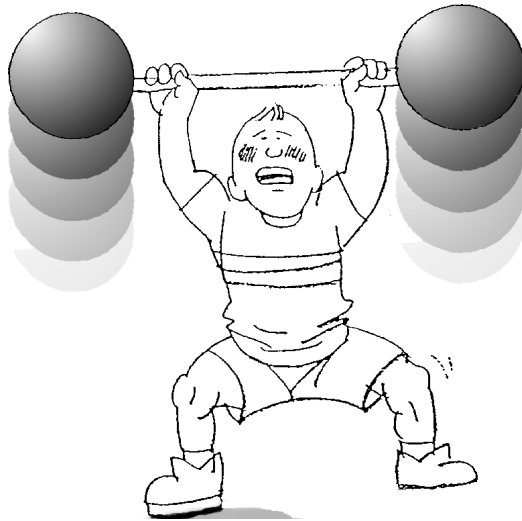
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2001

7 Exercise and Sport



There is widespread concern at what appear to be generally low levels of physical activity in the daily life of young people. If, as has been suggested, the four-year-olds starting in our primary schools will have a life expectancy in excess of a hundred years, then we need to ensure that they have a healthy respect for the role that physical fitness plays in their quality and enjoyment of life. The questions in this section cover physical activity, perceived fitness, and which sporting activities (if any) young people took part in out of school time.

Question

E2	How much do you enjoy physical activities?	94
E1	Sports and activities participated in during the past 12 months outside school	95–98
E3	How fit do you think you are?	99
E4	How many times last week did you exercise and have to breathe harder?.....	100

Enjoying sport

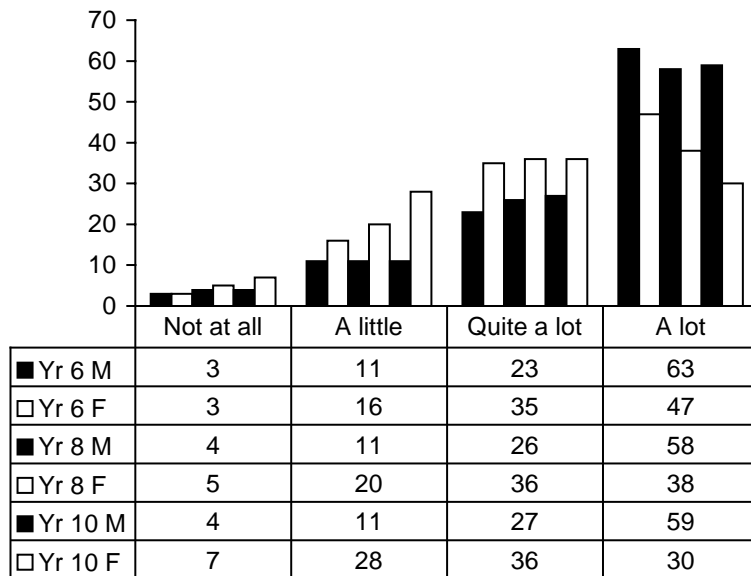
47% of the Year 6 females enjoy physical activities *a lot*

How much do you enjoy physical activities? (E2) (Pri.19)

1. There is a large gender difference: far fewer females in each year group report liking sport *a lot*.
2. The difference is especially marked in Year 10, half as many females as males say they enjoy physical activity *a lot*.
3. Nevertheless, 80% of primary school pupils and over 60% of the older groups enjoy sport *quite a lot or a lot*.

Comments

1. The gender difference is already distinct in Year 6 but the gap becomes wider as the age of the pupils increase.
2. Is it uncool for females in secondary schools to show an interest in sport?
3. Does the changing room experience for females play a role in the rapid decline in an interest in physical activity? Many schools have found that by installing shower curtains in their changing rooms they have seen a positive effect on the interest their female students show for PE.
4. There is also a call for PE specialists to look into the provision of the types of activity that will appeal to the groups involved. Basketball is seen to have some success with female students, what other activities might be similarly attractive to them?



Valid responses	
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6384
Yr 6 F	6308
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5582
Yr 8 F	6272
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5983
Yr 10 F	6670

Participation in active sports (1)

Riding a bicycle still remains the most popular activity for all groups

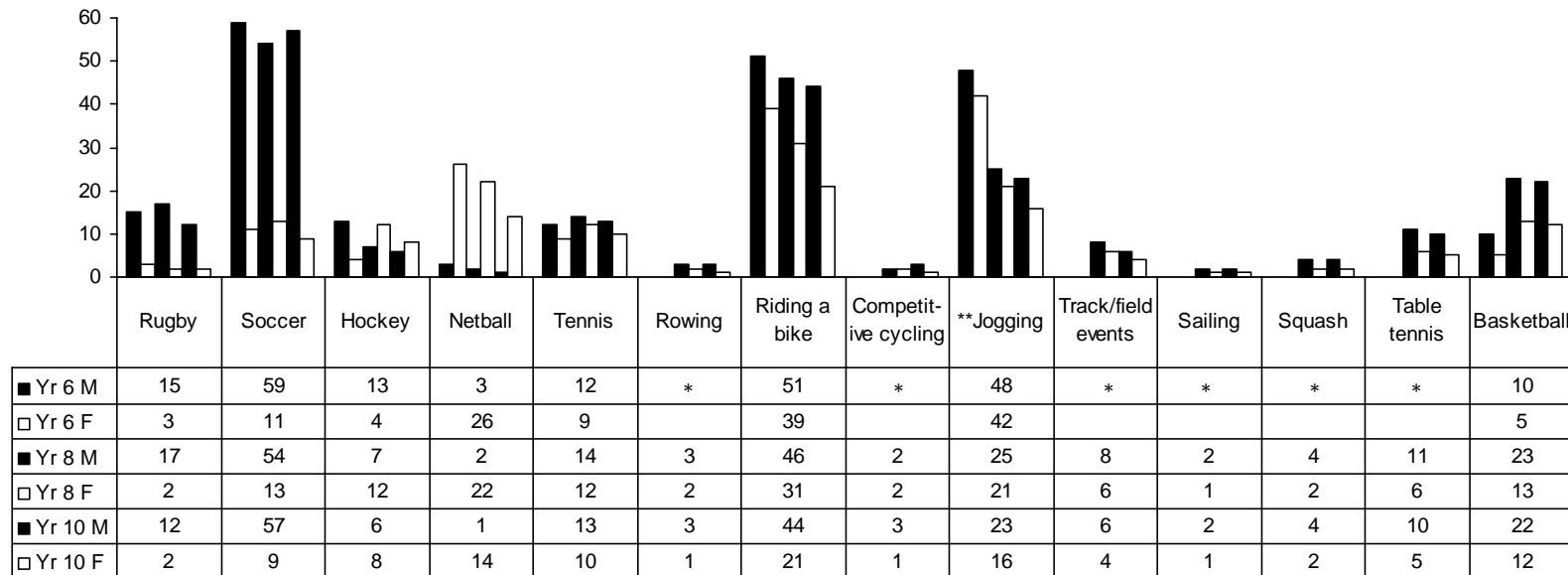
Sports and activities participated in, at least weekly, during the past 12 months outside school (E1) (Pri.21)

The responses to this question have been divided into three pages.

1. These figures should be seen in the context of the figures on the two following pages.
2. *Riding a bicycle* still remains a popular activity for all groups.
3. *Jogging/Running for exercise* involves all groups but the levels are not maintained.

Comments

1. These sports and activities are carried out in the pupils' own time or in school clubs and not in school lessons.
2. With the exception of basketball there is a decline in all the activities for the older females.
3. It is interesting to see the figures for females interested in soccer. In America and Canada, girls' soccer leagues have proved a great success.



* Options not available for Year 6

** *Jogging* appears as *Running for exercise* for Year 6

Available sample	
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6511
Yr 6 F	6391
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	7180
Yr 8 F	7548
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	7034
Yr 10 F	7409

Participation in active sports (2)

Swimming remains a popular activity particularly with younger people

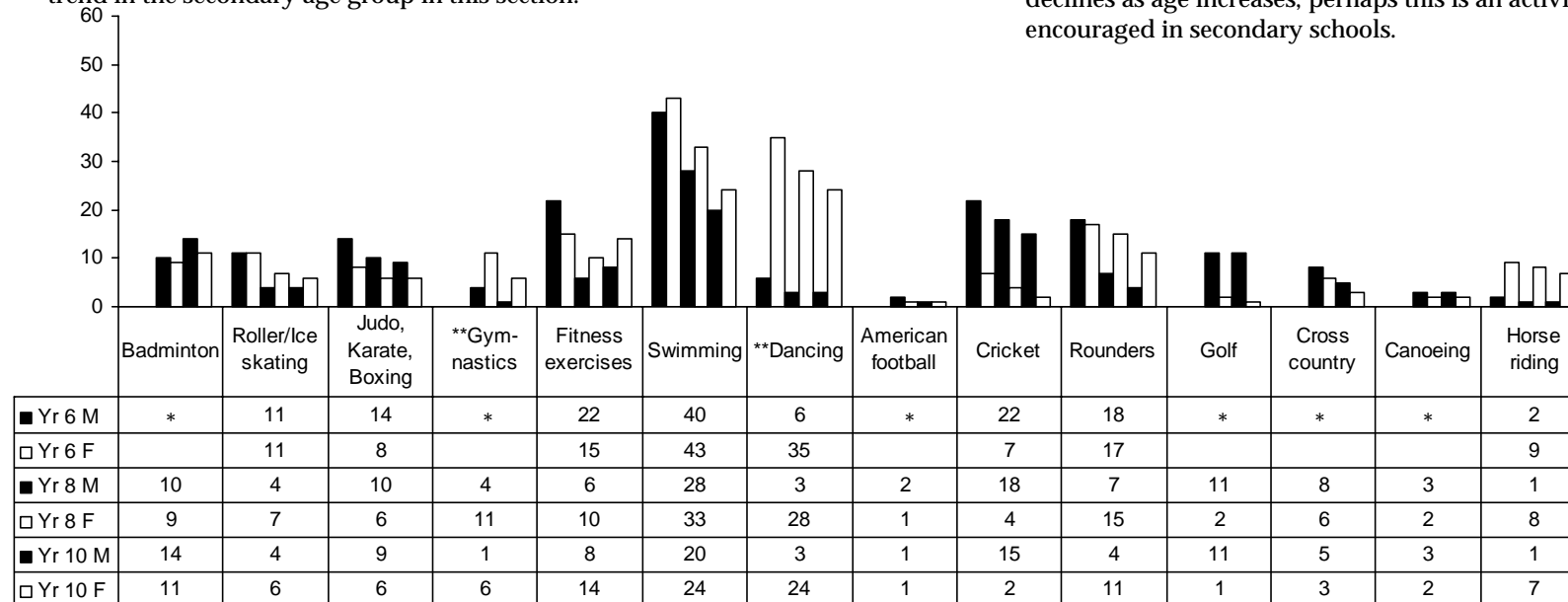
Sports and activities participated in, at least weekly, during the past 12 months outside school (E1) (Pri.21)

The responses to this question have been divided into three pages.

Comments

1. *Swimming* is the most popular activity with all age groups and genders in this section.
2. We imagine that the fitness exercises are perceived differently between primary and secondary school pupils.
3. *Badminton* and *fitness exercises* are the only activities that show an upward trend in the secondary age group in this section.

1. American football is becoming more popular in this country with new clubs forming. Martial Arts are receiving increased interest at the moment, so it will be interesting to observe any increase in these figures over the next few years.
2. Dancing remains popular with females across the age range. Although it declines as age increases, perhaps this is an activity that could be further encouraged in secondary schools.



* Options not available for Year 6

** *Gymnastics/Dancing* appears as one item for Year 6

Available sample		
Yr 6 M	(10-11 yrs)	6511
Yr 6 F		6391
Yr 8 M	(12-13 yrs)	7180
Yr 8 F		7548
Yr 10 M	(14-15 yrs)	7034
Yr 10 F		7409

Participation in active sports (3)

20% of the Year 10 females do not participate in any active sports

Sports and activities participated in, at least weekly, during the past 12 months outside school (E1) (Pri.21)

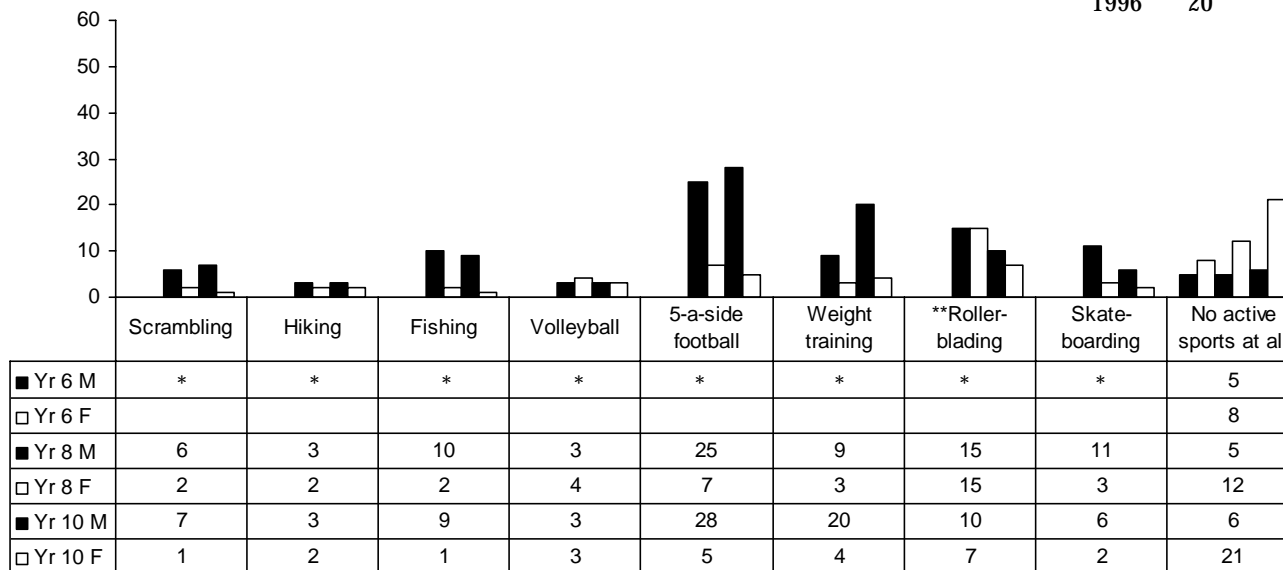
The responses to this question have been divided into three pages.

1. At least 20% of the Year 10 females and 10% of the Year 8 females do not participate in any active sport on a weekly basis.
2. The considerable increase in popularity of weight training for the older males is against the general trend of decreasing involvement.
3. Rollerblading is popular, with 15% of the Year 8 pupils, both male and female.

Comments

1. Comparing the Year 10 female *no active sports at all* data for the past nine years gives the following percentages:

1992	19	1997	19
1993	18	1998	14
1994	18	1999	20
1995	23	2000	21
1996	20		



* Options not available for Year 6

** Rollerblading appears as Roller/ice skating for Year 6

Available sample		
Yr 6 M	(10-11 yrs)	6511
Yr 6 F		6391
Yr 8 M	(12-13 yrs)	7180
Yr 8 F		7548
Yr 10 M	(14-15 yrs)	7034
Yr 10 F		7409

Participation in 'pub/club' sports

These social games are played by at least a quarter of the males

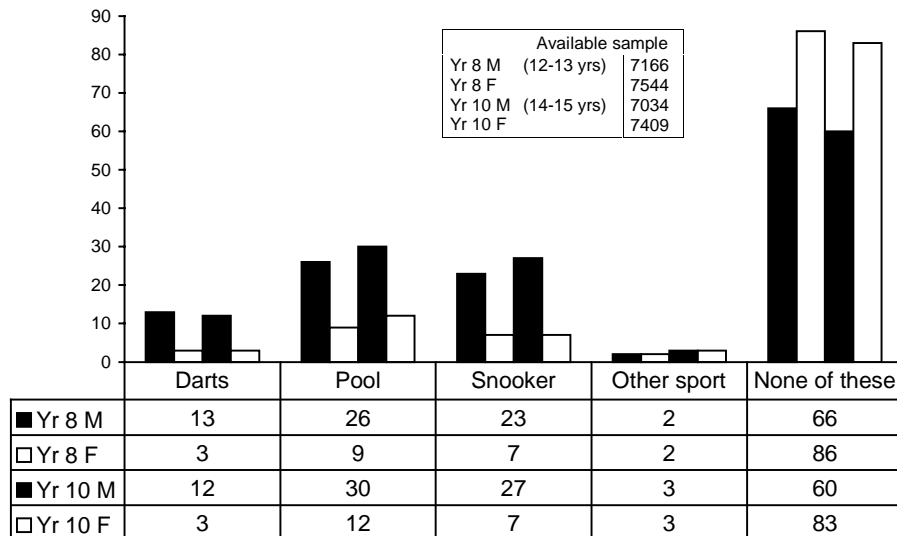
Sports and activities participated in, at least weekly, during the past 12 months outside school (E1)

Comments

1. There is a distinct gender difference seen in the data for these options.
2. 10% of the males play darts on a weekly basis and over 20% of them regularly play snooker and pool.

1. Are these activities being pursued within a pub setting, or at a youth club, or do these youngsters have access to pool tables etc at home? We can see that among Year 10 males that the more often they take part in these games, the more often they have drunk alcohol in the previous week:

Mean number of days drinking alcohol last week for different frequencies of 'pub and club' sports.



	Pool	Snooker	Darts
Never or hardly ever	1.0	1.1	1.0
Once or twice in a month	1.1	1.2	1.2
Weekly	1.2	1.2	1.3
Twice a week or more	1.5	1.4	1.5

2. These highly social games, like many computer games, also require hand and eye co-ordination skills, as well as some strategic thought.

Personal fitness

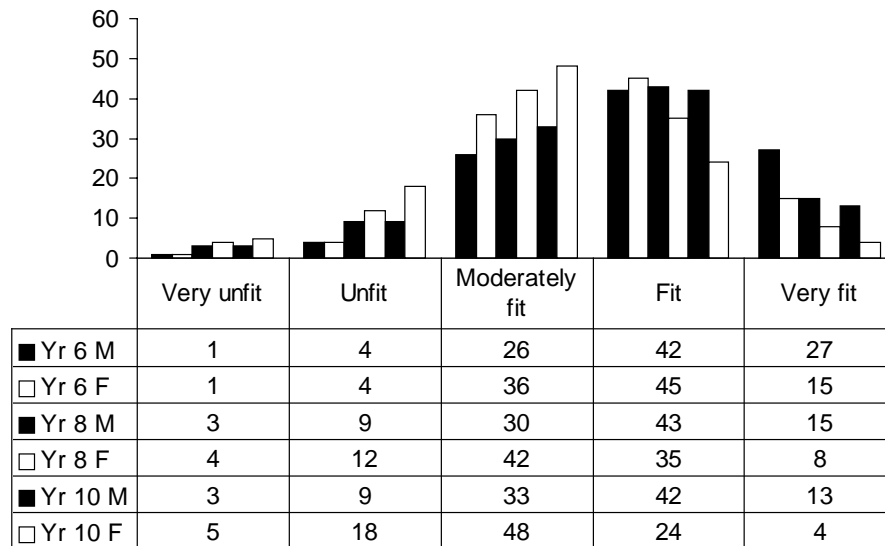
Up to 45% of pupils in Year 6 think they are *fit*

How fit do you think you are? (E3) (Pri.20)

1. More Year 6 males assess themselves as *very fit* than any of the other groups.
2. Over 20% of the Year 10 females describe themselves as *unfit* or *very unfit*.
3. Perceived fitness declines with age in males and females.

Comments

1. The higher self-assessment of the males is consistent with their higher participation in sporting activities.
2. Do the females see themselves as less fit than the males because they participate in less physical activity or indeed are they less fit than the males?
3. This subjective method of assessing fitness may not seem very rigorous, but individual physiological measurements, in conjunction with similar data-collection, have shown good agreement. We can also show links within the survey data we hold to their general levels of activity.



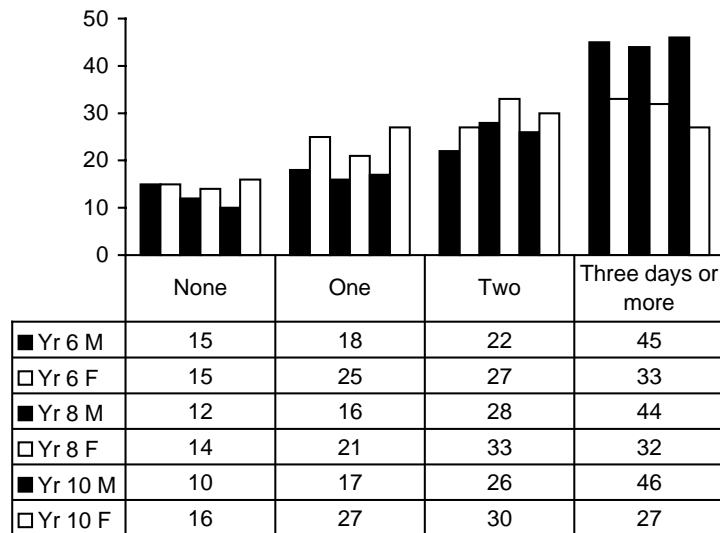
Valid responses	
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	4708
Yr 6 F	4625
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5605
Yr 8 F	6278
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5991
Yr 10 F	6682

Aerobic exercise

More than 10% of all groups never exercise

How many times last week did you exercise and have to breathe harder? (E4) (Pri.22)

- Over 80% of all groups had exercised to this level *at least once last week*, but again the gap is seen to widen between males and females among the frequent exercisers as they increase in age.



Valid responses	
Yr 6 M (10-11 yrs)	6409
Yr 6 F	6309
Yr 8 M (12-13 yrs)	5532
Yr 8 F	6189
Yr 10 M (14-15 yrs)	5920
Yr 10 F	6561

Comments

- The data suggest that up to 46% of males, and up to 33% of females, are exercising vigorously three times or more.
- We have increasing opportunities for youngsters to adopt sedentary lifestyles: many youngsters today have seemingly endless choices for the time they spend watching television with the increased viewing options available on satellite TV, they even have televisions in their rooms; or they spend time playing computer games; and indeed the popularity of surfing the Internet is increasing on a daily basis. But how much do young people depend on parents/carers for permission and support to be active?
- Are we observing the collection of mini time-bombs where youngsters are choosing leisure options that are likely to have a detrimental effect to their general health and fitness in the years to come?
- The question has in mind the old recommendation of exercising vigorously for at least 20 minutes a time, three times a week. Current recommendations are more likely to suggest *daily* exercise.