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Children and physical activity – why bother?

Why bother?

- ✓ Benefits of being a physically active child
- ✓ Physical activity recommendations and current levels of activity
- ✓ How to engage children in physical activity

Active Children



Physical benefits

Academic benefits

Psychosocial

Physical benefits



- ✓ Less likely to be overweight
- ✓ Reduced CVD risk factors
- ✓ Musculoskeletal benefits

Academic benefits

The Effects of Physical Activity and Physical Fitness on Children's Achievement and Cognitive Out...

Fedewa, Alicia L.; Ahn, Soyeon

Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport; Sep 2011; 82, 3; ProQuest Education Journals

pg. 521

Psychology

Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport

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Physical Education, Recreation and Dance

Vol. 82, No. 3, pp. 521-535

The Effects of Physical Activity and Physical Fitness on Children's Achievement and Cognitive Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis

Alicia L. Fedewa and Soyeon Ahn

It is common knowledge that physical activity leads to numerous health and psychological benefits. However, the relationship between children's physical activity and academic achievement has been debated in the literature. Some studies have found strong, positive relationships between physical activity and cognitive outcomes, while other studies have reported small, negative associations. This study was a comprehensive, quantitative synthesis of the literature, using a total of 59 studies from 1947 to 2009 for analysis. Results indicated a significant and positive effect of physical activity on children's achievement and cognitive outcomes, with aerobic exercise having the greatest effect. A number of moderator variables were also found to play a significant role in this relationship. Findings are discussed in light of improving children's academic performance and changing school-based policy.

- 59 studies, children aged 5-16
- Range of academic tests
- Experimental and cross-sectional studies

Results

- All physical activity programmes increased outcomes
- Aerobic exercise best
- Higher fitness, higher the results
- Highest in primary school
- Small group activities best
- >3 times a week better results
- Physically disabled and those with a learning difficulty improved most

Psychosocial (potential)



- ✓ Reduced depression
- ✓ Reduced anxiety
- ✓ Increase self-esteem

Children's views of P.E.:

This is not fun

I'm not good enough

I will let the team down

This will hurt

It will make my asthma worse

Children's views of adapted physical activity programme:

**The more times I
came the more
confident I got**

**I feel fitter and
happier**

**I like people
what come
to the
sessions**

**It's fun,
energetic, it
tires you out
and it's healthy**

**I've made lots
of new
friends**

Physical activity

for children and young people (5-19 years)

Improves ✓
Sleep

Develops ✓
Co-ordination

Improves ✓
Health &
Fitness

Maintains ✓
Healthy
Weight

Improves ✓
Concentration
& Learning

Strengthens ✓
Muscles
& Bones

Builds ✓
Confidence
& Social Skills

Makes ✓
You feel
good

Aim for
at least
60
minutes
everyday

Sit less
move
more

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer



Play



Run/walk



Bike



Active travel



Swim



Skate



Sport



PE



Skip



Climb



Workout



Dance

Include muscle and bone strengthening activities

3 Times per week

For further information about local opportunities
to be active please visit:

www.yorkshiresport.org/get-active/

 **EverybodyActive**

Physical activity

for early years
(birth-5 years)

Builds ✓
Relationships
& Social Skills

Encourages ✓
Movement &
Co-ordination

Contributes to ✓
Brain Development
& Learning

Improves ✓
Sleep

Develops ✓
Muscles & Bones

Maintains ✓
Health & Weight

Aim for at least
3
Hours
across everyday

Every movement counts

Active children
are healthy,
happy, school
ready and
sleep better



**Sit less
move
more**

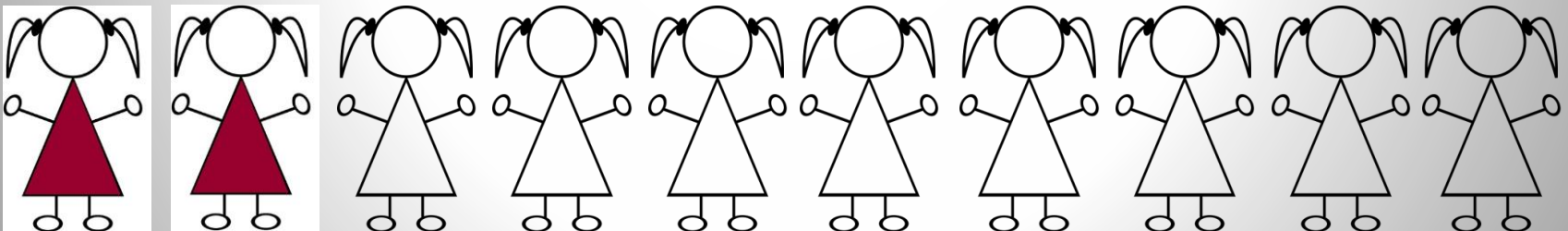
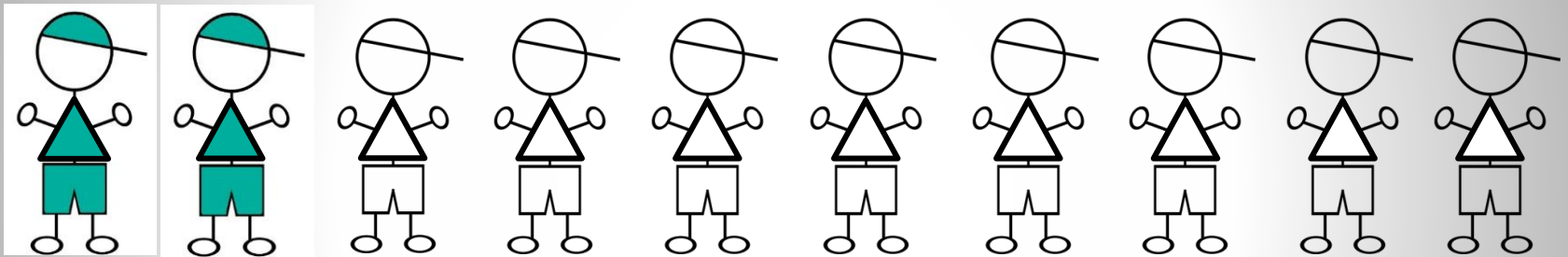
For further information about local opportunities
to be active please visit: www.yorkshiresport.org/get-active/

 **EverybodyActive**

Physical activity among children

Health Survey for England 2012

Around two in ten children aged 5-15 years meet the government recommendations* for physical activity (boys 21%, girls 16%)



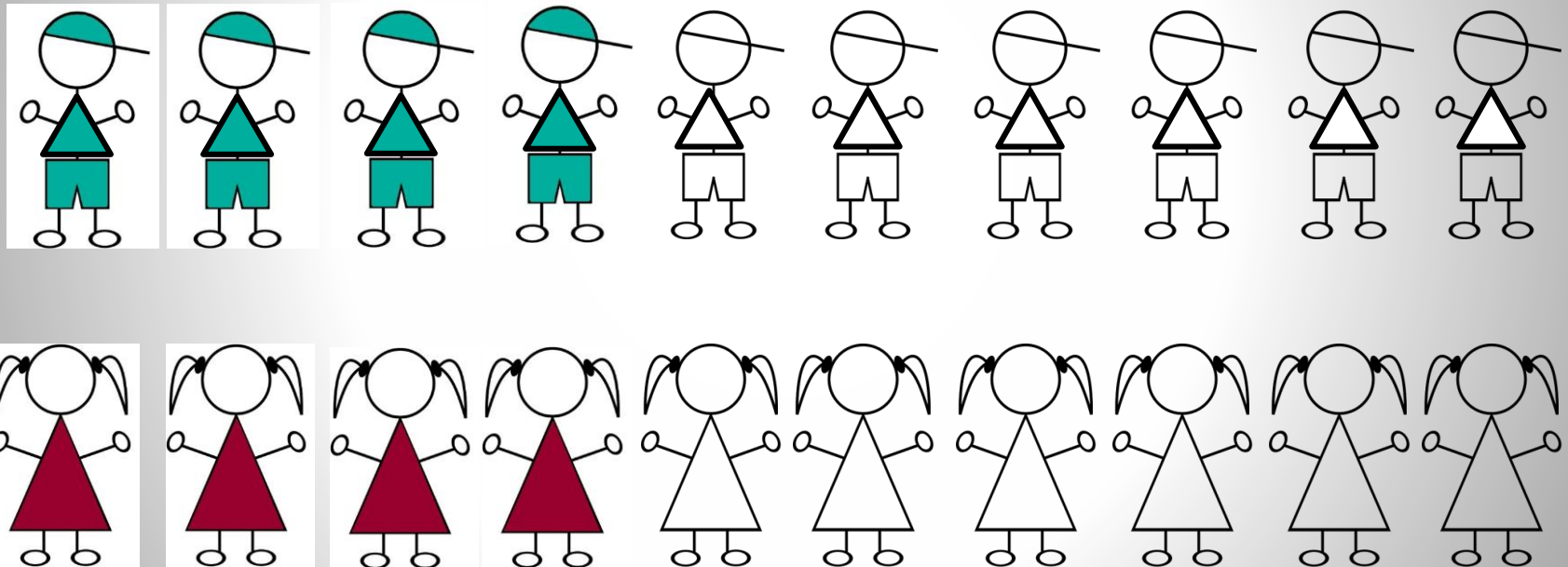
*Child recommendations for physical activity in CMO report 2011 – one hour moderate activity per day
HSE reports at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity on all seven days in the last week

Physical inactivity among children

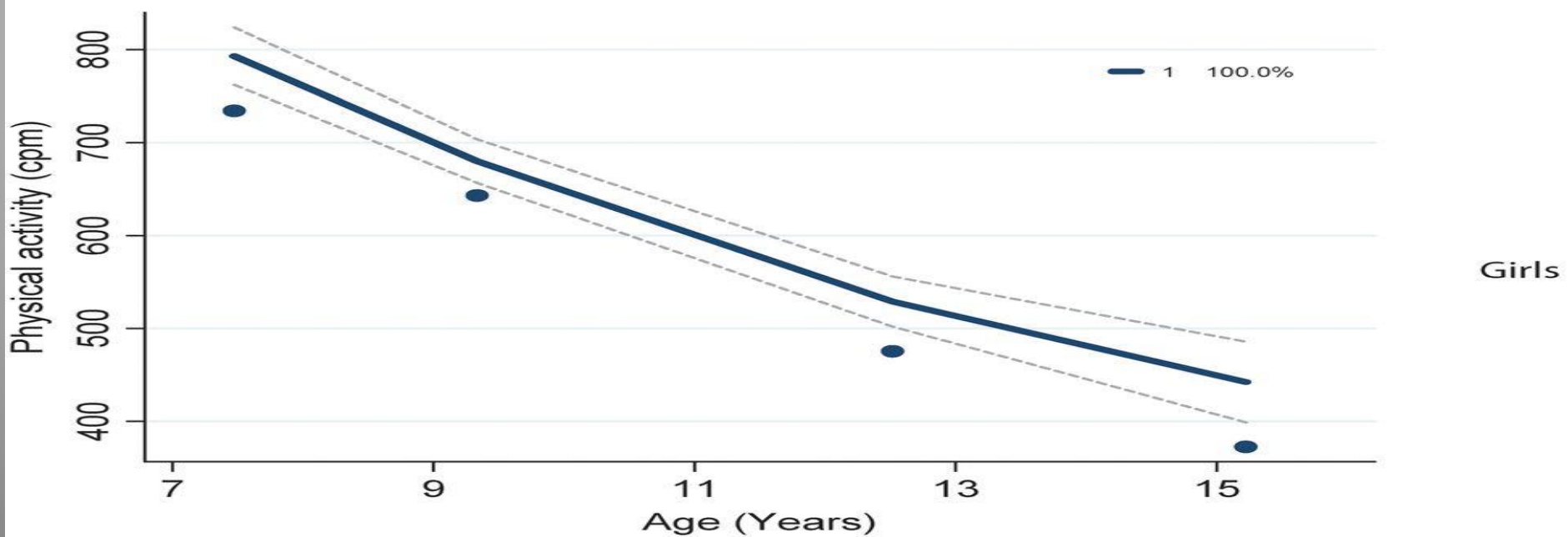
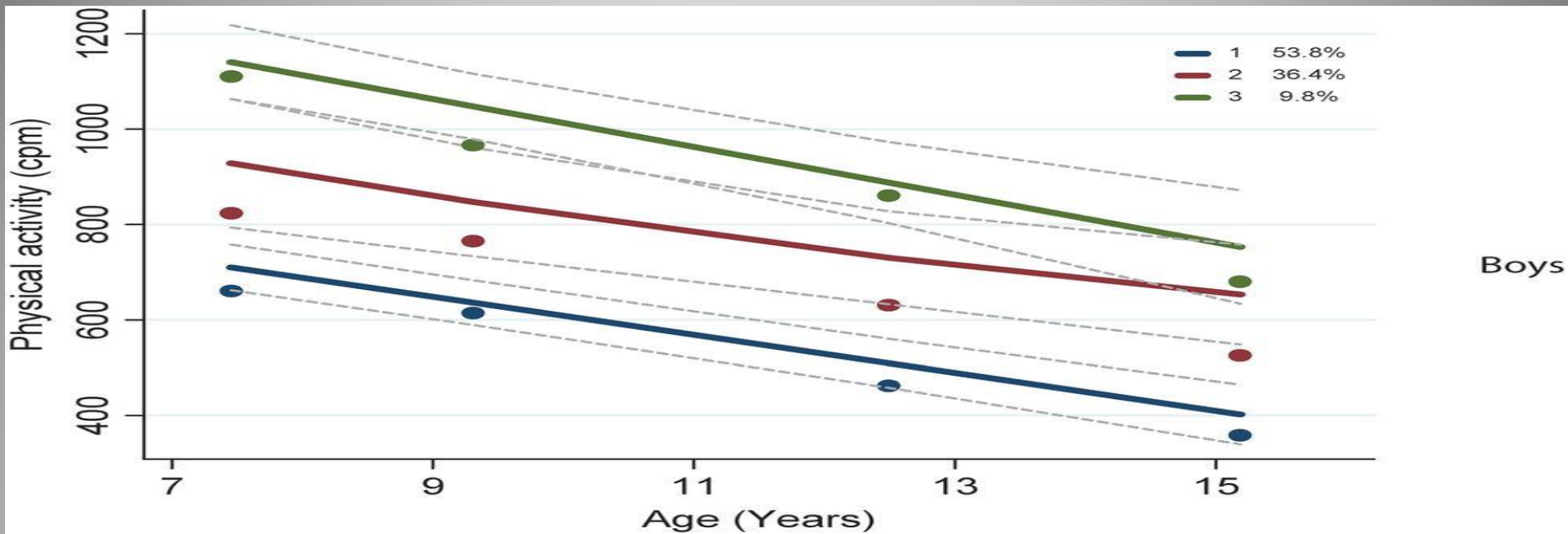
Health Survey for England 2012

Around four in ten children aged 5-15 years are physically inactive*

(boys 39%, girls 45%)

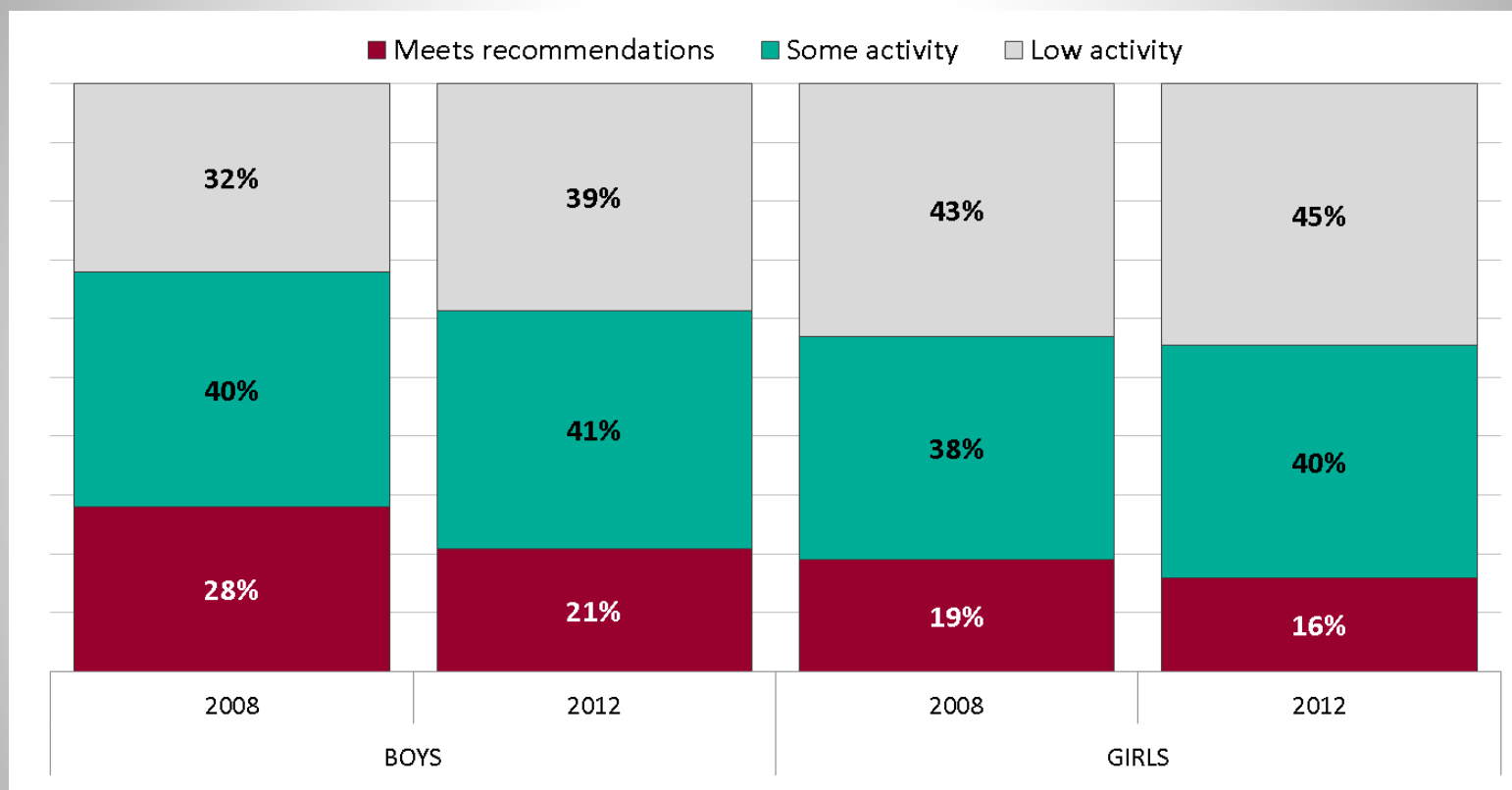


*Fewer than 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity on each day or 60 minutes or more on fewer than seven days in the last week



Trends in physical activity

Children aged 2-15years; Health Survey for England 2008-2012



Low activity: <30 minutes of MVPA on each day, or MVPA of 60+ minutes on less than seven days in the last week

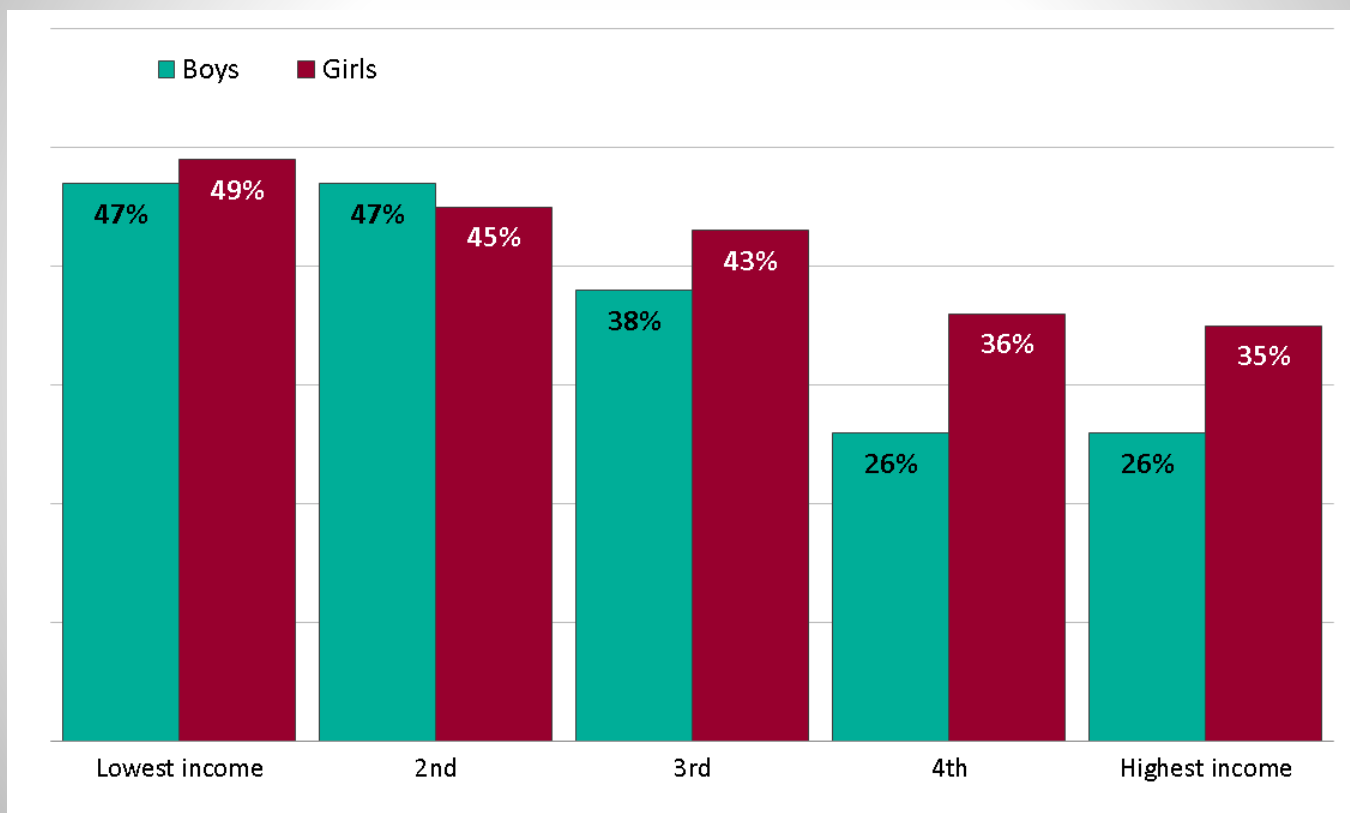
Some activity: 30-59 minutes of MVPA on all seven days in the last week

Meets recommendations: At least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous (MVPA) on all seven days in the last week

MVPA = moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity

Physical inactivity by household income^a

Children aged 2-15years; Health Survey for England 2012



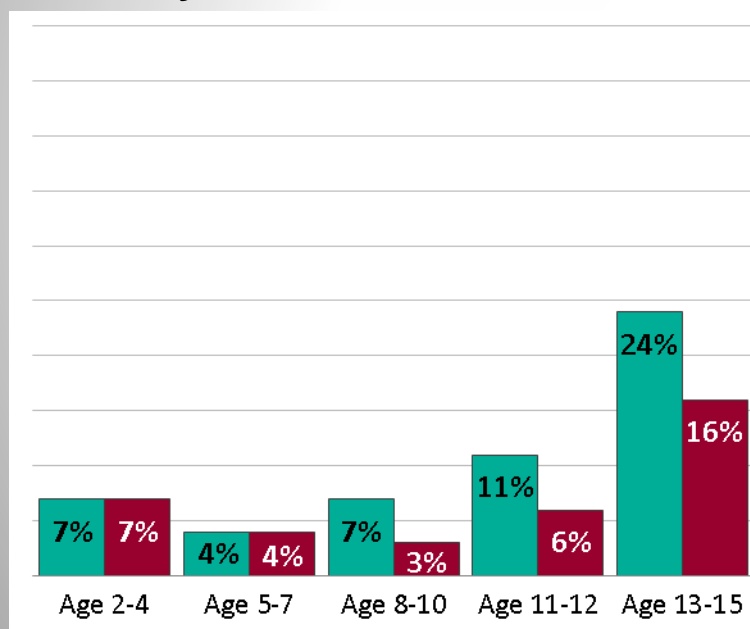
^a Equivalised household income is a measure that takes account of the number of people in the household. For this analysis, households were split into five equal-sized groups banded by income level (income quintiles). Physical activity levels were compared between these groups

Time spent sedentary in leisure time

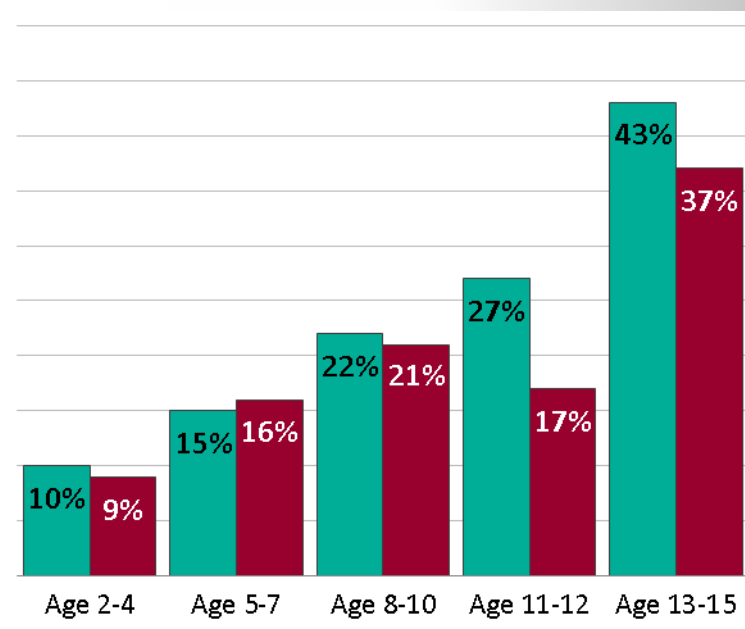
Children aged 2-15 years; Health Survey for England 2012

Proportion of children who spent six or more hours being sedentary per day by age group

Weekdays



Weekends



Boys Girls

Current activity levels and fitness

- ✓ KS1 – average 102 min a week
- ✓ KS2 – average of 114 min a week
- ✓ 67% children below the recommended fitness levels
- ✓ By age 15 a child is 5x more likely to be unfit than obese
- ✓ Physical activity – in particular high intensity predicts fitness

Why do children participate?

- Children participate:
 - Enjoy
 - Feel competent
 - Not forced to compete
 - Feel supported by others



How to engage

- ✓ Opportunity to socialise with friends
- ✓ Variety of activities
- ✓ Include children in decision making on what activities to include
- ✓ Energy levels – self-determined

Engaging children

- ✓ Positive relationship with programme leaders and other pupils
- ✓ Opportunity to work with and for others
- ✓ Culture of play

School roles

- Encourage parents and carers to get involved in physical activities with their children
- Staff should act as role models
- School physical activity policy

Key Messages – implications for practice

- ✓ Promote participation not excellence
- ✓ Promote social skills not just physical skills
- ✓ Show respect and compassion for children not strict discipline
- ✓ Emphasise fun not weight loss or health
- ✓ Provide appropriate choice of clothing and changing facilities
- ✓ Positive experience during activity
parents/instructors/teachers influence this

Why bother?



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