



Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



Teenage girls heading for
a lifetime of ill-health.

Using the school environment
to enhance health-related behaviours:
shared experiences and suggested
future approaches

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HOME » EDUCATION

Girls put off exercise for life by PE lessons

Schoolgirls are being put off exercise and sport by their PE lessons, suggests.

f 219 t 69 p 0 in 0 288 Email



Children need more exercise - especially girls, study says

COMMENTS (724)

By Nick Trigg

Health correspondent, BBC News



One girl told the BBC's Chris Page: "When I grow up I would love to be in the Olympics but I do not think I would be as good as Jessica"

Half of all UK seven-year-olds do not do enough exercise, with girls far less active than boys, a study suggests.

University College London researchers found just 51% of the 6,500 children they monitored achieved the recommended hour of physical activity each

News > UK > Home News

Lack of physical activity among girls leading to poor mental health and low aspirations, warn experts

New figures show boys aged between eight and 15 spend almost twice as much time doing sport activities as girls of same age

May Bulman Social Affairs Correspondent | @maybulman | Tuesday 30 January 2018 15:56 GMT | 0 comments

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Youth Sport Trust > News & Media > News > 2012 > 05 > Half of girls in the UK are put off physical activity by school sport and PE

Half of girls in the UK are put off physical activity by school sport and PE



02 May 2012

A new report by the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF), supported by the Youth Sport Trust, says that girls in the UK are not getting enough exercise - and that schools hold the key to encouraging girls to get active. The report, based on research carried out by the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University, shows that half of all girls (51%) are put off physical activity by their experiences of school sport and PE.

Links

Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation

Related Stories

Children and exercise
"Urgent need" to get

Physical activity for children and young people (5–18 Years)



BUILDS
CONFIDENCE &
SOCIAL SKILLS



DEVELOPS
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IMPROVES
CONCENTRATION
& LEARNING



STRENGTHENS
MUSCLES
& BONES



IMPROVES
HEALTH
& FITNESS



MAINTAINS
HEALTHY
WEIGHT



IMPROVES
SLEEP



MAINTAINS
MENTAL
HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Be physically active



Be physically active

Spread activity
throughout
the day

All activities
should make you
breathe faster
& feel warmer

Aim for
at least
60
minutes
everyday



Include muscle
and bone
strengthening
activities
**3 TIMES
PER
WEEK**



Sit less

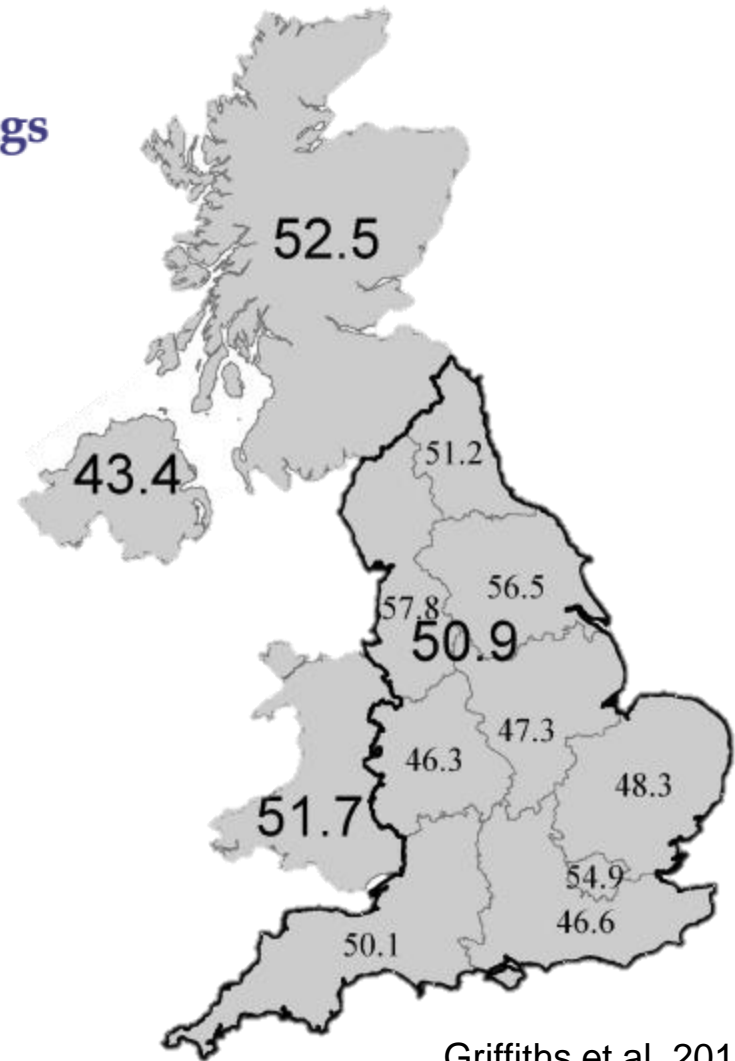


Move more

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate
at least 60 minutes of physical activity everyday

UK Chief Medical Officers' Guidelines 2011 **Start Active, Stay Active:** www.bit.ly/startactive

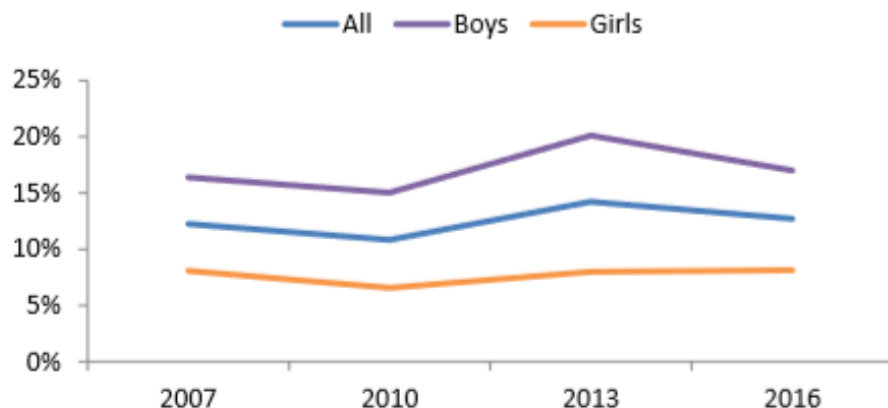
- Across the UK, only half of 7 year olds (50.8%) were achieving the recommended 60 minutes per day
- Girls (38%) were less active than boys (63%)
- Children in Northern Ireland were least likely to meet the recommendations



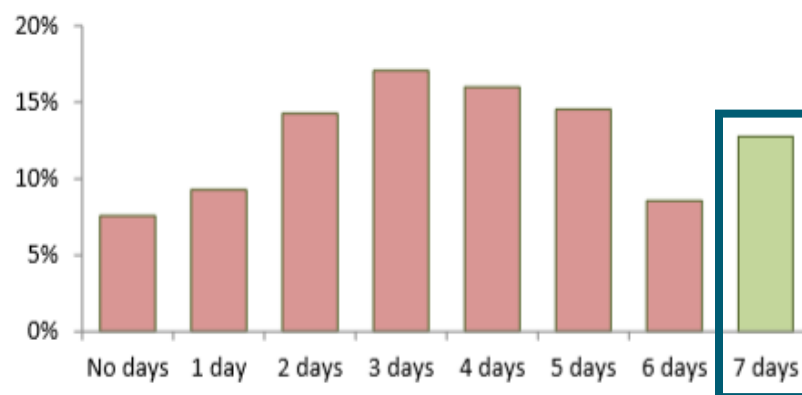
Griffiths et al, 2013

Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2016

Proportion of young people doing 60 minutes every day

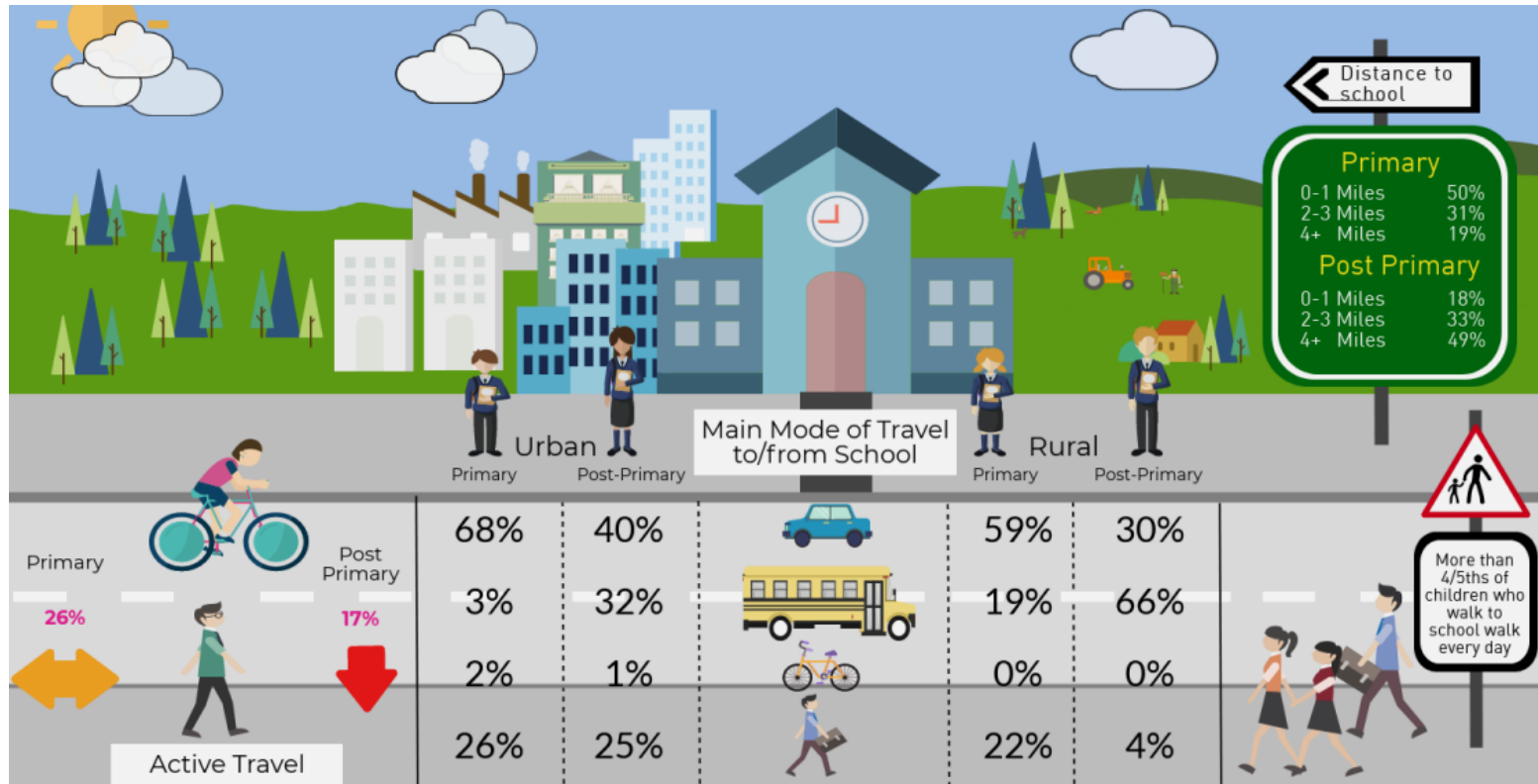


Number of days young people do 60 minutes of physical activity



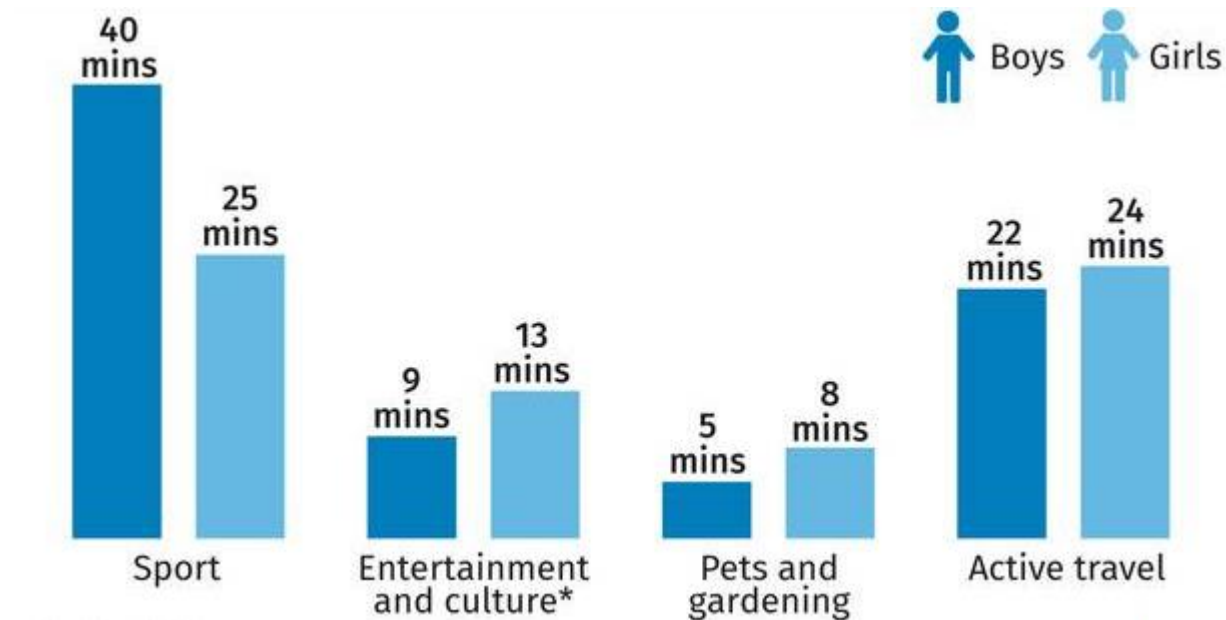
Department of Health, 2017

Method of travel to/from school by pupils in Northern Ireland 2016/17



Department of Infrastructure and NISRA, 2017

Average time spent per day by 8 -15 year olds on activities



* Physical activities, such as visiting historical sites, parks or playgrounds

Office of National Statistics, 2018

Correlates, motives and barriers for health in teenage girls

Enjoyment

Family support

Self-efficacy

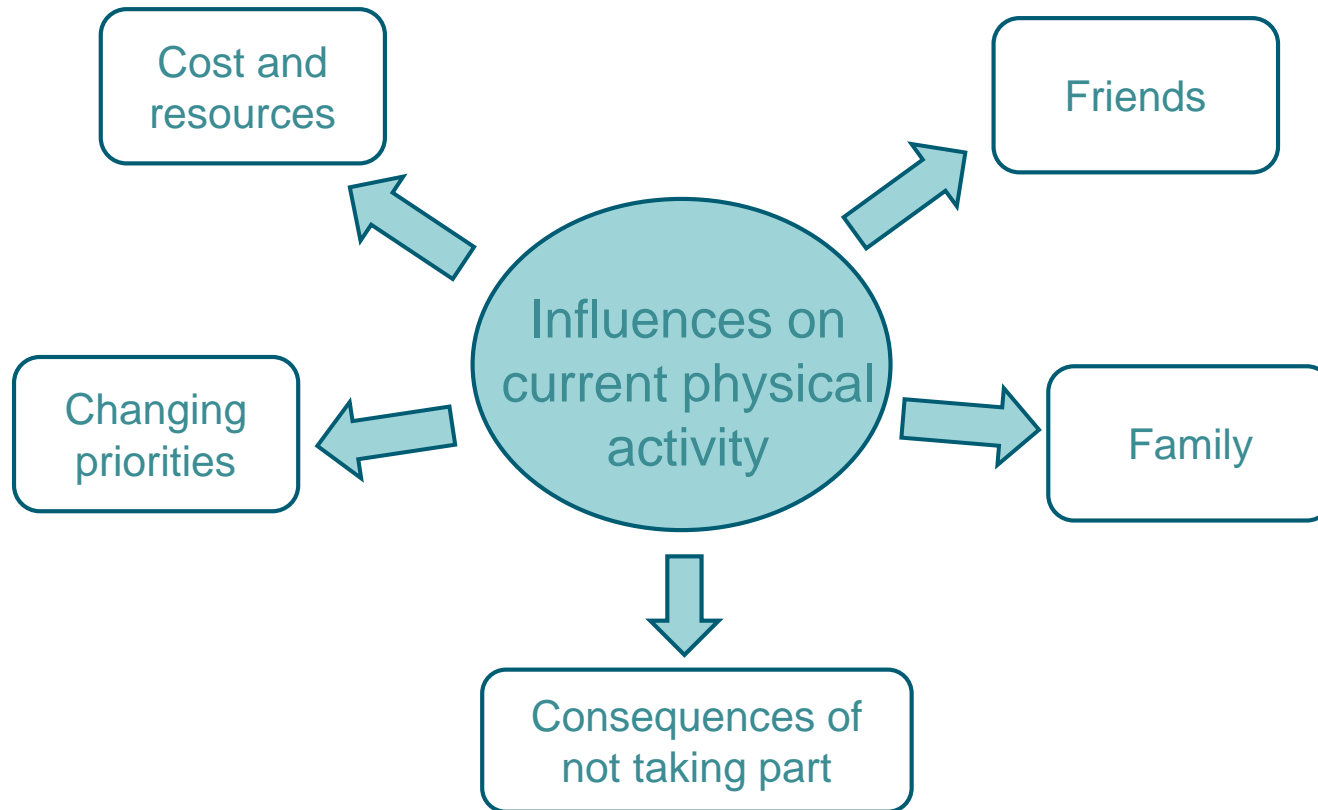
Peer support

Physical self-perceptions

Perceived competence

Biddle et al, 2011

Correlates, motives and barriers for health in teenage girls



Carlin et al, 2015

Friends and Family

“My like sister and my like mum are always like pushing, my mum like pushes me to do like different sports...”

“...see I don't really do that much, but I'd say it's like say my friends are doing stuff I'd go do it with them.”

Carlin et al, 2015

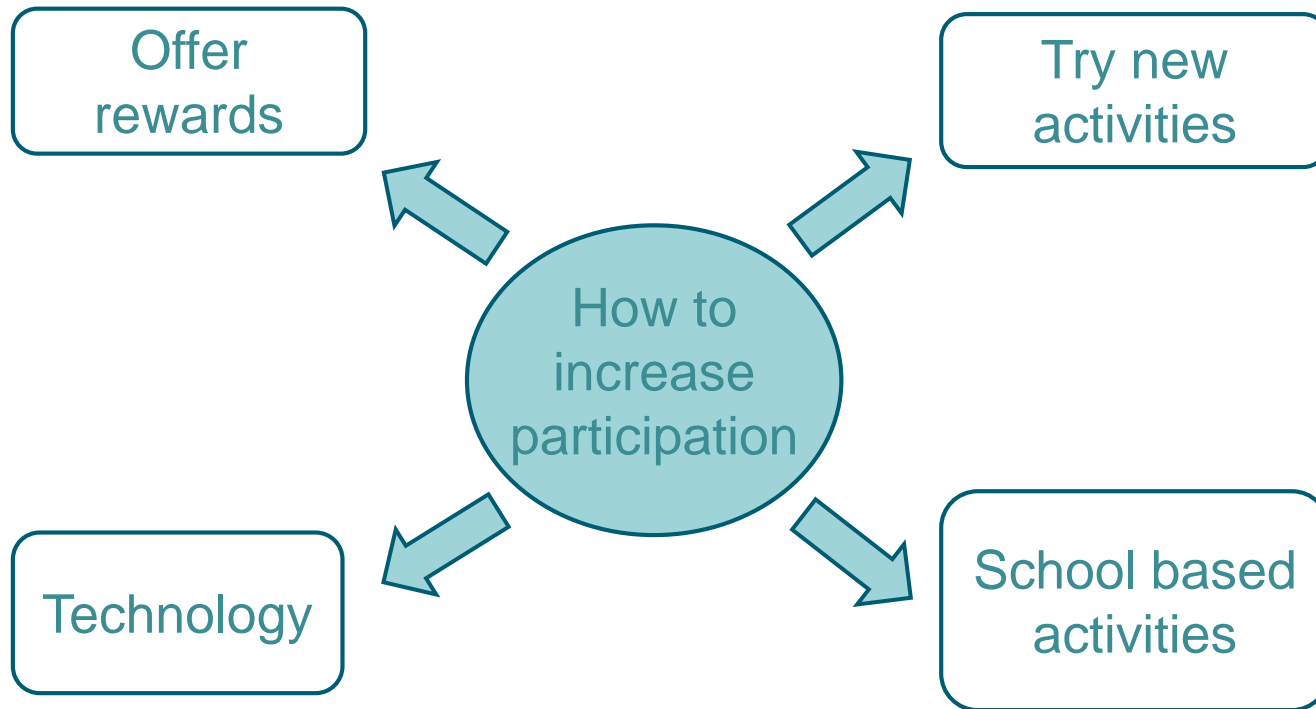
Cost and Access to Resources

“...if there wasn't any clubs around you that you wanted to take part in and you were too far away, like petrol and all that, the time to get there and things like that.”

“You're more likely to do a sport that you don't have to pay lots for... 'cause then you can try it and if you don't like ... but if you have to buy stuff for it then you feel like it's a waste of money.”

Carlin et al, 2015

Correlates, motives and barriers for health in teenage girls



Carlin et al, 2015

Opportunities to try new activities

“...if they weren’t all sports... because some people don’t like always like do a particular sport because you have to actually be good at it.”

“Something different; like not Camogie or football because you can do that anywhere, just join like a team...”

Carlin et al, 2015



More opportunities within school to be more active

“... you could like do stuff with your friends, like “aw are you going to go to it” and then loadsa people would go... like out of school, I would tend to go on the internet or something.”

“It would give you a chance to relax in the middle of the day, relax before the final classes...”

Carlin et al, 2015

Promoting physical activity within the school setting

- Schools represent a key environment for promoting health related behaviours
- The school setting has the potential to overcome health inequalities, as all children and adolescents are able to participate irrespective of socioeconomic status



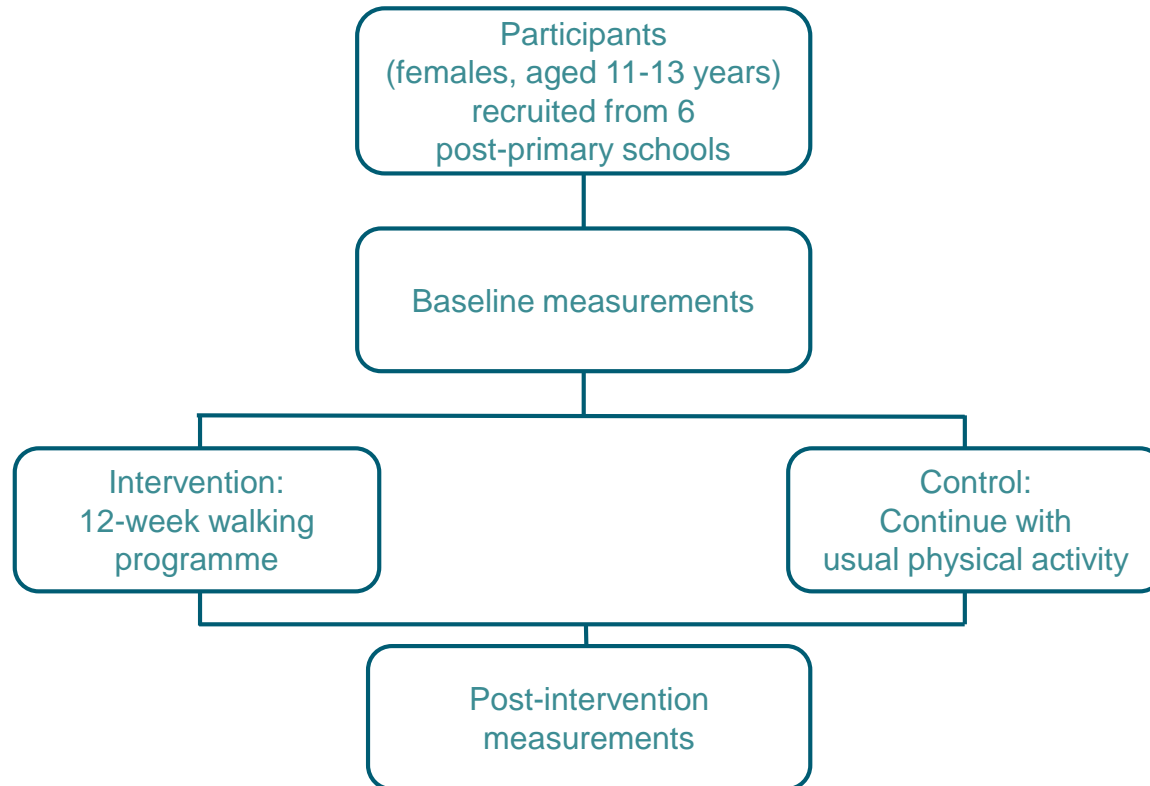
Walking to promote physical activity in adolescents

- Most 'natural' form of physical activity
- Convenient, requires no specialist skills to participate, socially acceptable and no economic cost to the individual



Morris and Hardman, 1997; Shultz et al, 2011

The **WISH** study: Peer-led **W**alking In **ScH**ools



Carlin et al, 2018

The WISH study: Peer-led Walking In ScHools

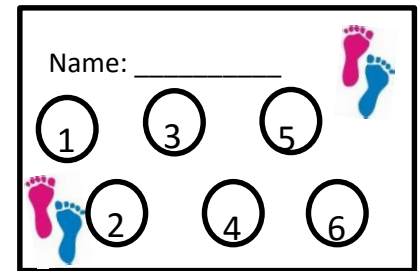
12-week school based brisk-walking program

Walks (15 mins) delivered throughout the school day

- Facilitated by 'Walk Leaders'

Walks were performed at a moderate intensity

Provided with reminders and reward stamps for each walk completed



Carlin et al, 2018

The WISH study: Peer-led Walking In ScHools

Findings

- ↑ levels of light intensity physical activity across the school day by approximately 8 minutes/day
- ↓ levels of sedentary behaviour
- No change in moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Demonstrated that a novel low-cost intervention was feasible and positively changed physical activity behaviour in the short-term

Carlin et al, 2018

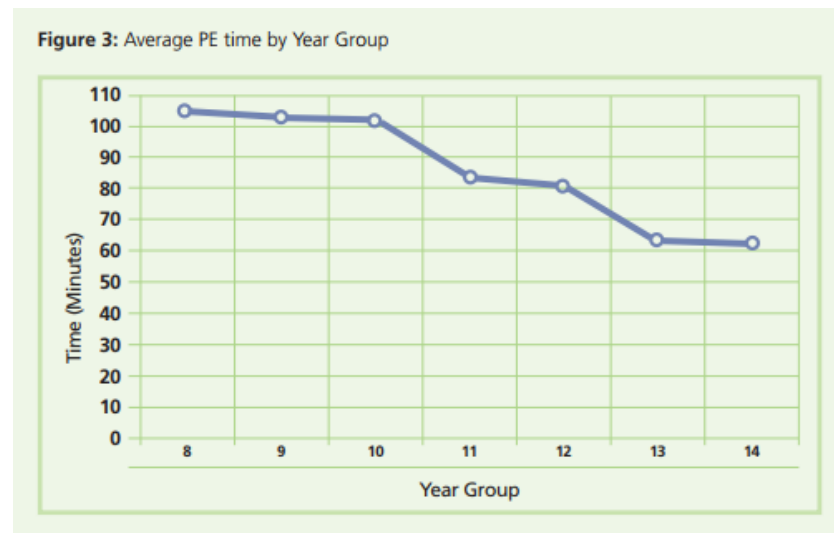


Evaluation of the WISH study

- Participants themselves felt that schools provided an ideal location where they could be more active
- They identified challenges of trying to be active within the school setting
- Girls felt they were disadvantaged when it came to the provision of extra-curricular sporting options
- Enjoyed the convenience of walking as an activity and the social opportunities the intervention provided

The role of schools in promoting physical activity

- Only 9% of participating post-primary schools delivered the recommended 2 hours or more each week of physical education



Sport NI, 2010

Feasibility of delivering interventions within the school setting

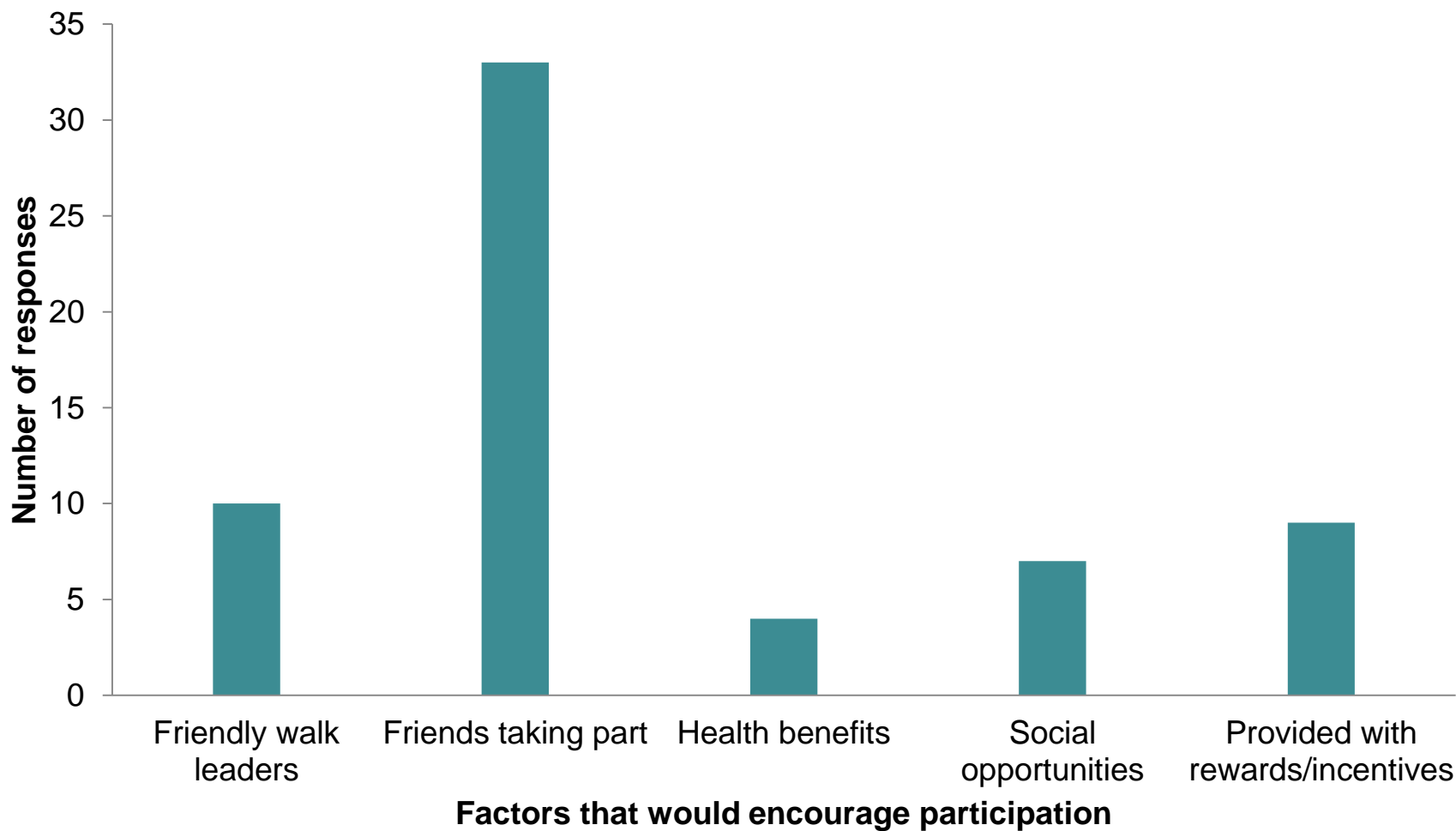
- Specialist staff (i.e. PE teachers) were tasked with the implementation of extra-curricular activities across all responding schools
- Non-specialist staff (i.e. non-PE teachers) were also responsible for the implementation in over half of responding schools (55.9%)

Staffing

Time

Interest from
pupils

Carlin et al, Unpublished data



Carlin et al, Unpublished data

Feasibility of delivering interventions within the school setting

- 58.3% of schools agreed that walking would be an effective means of promoting physical activity
- Practical issues - safety, supervision and suitable ratios of staff-to-pupils, time and lack of suitable environment for walking

Girls aged
11- 16 years

Girls aged
16+ years

‘Non-sporty’
pupils

Carlin et al, Unpublished data

Conclusions

- There is a strong health case for promoting physical activity, healthy eating and other positive health-related behaviours in adolescents
- Interventions, such as the WISH study, provide novel low-cost opportunities to promote positive health-related behaviours in this population and extend these behaviours into adulthood



Recommendations

Support the implementation and robust evaluation of interventions designed to increase and sustain the participation of girls in physical activity

Promote peer-led approaches to physical activity in adolescents given the importance of peers to this age group

Promote walking amongst adolescent girls in a school setting



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Queen's University
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