

Open search panel



Search

Search the Insight Hub...

Cancel

- [Insights](#)
[Rangahau](#)
- [Events](#)
[Hui](#)
- [Partnerships](#)
[Rangapū](#)
- [Impact](#)
[Whakaaweawe](#)
- About
Mō Mātou
 - [Overview](#)
 - [History](#)
 - [Support](#)
- [☆ 0 Saved](#)

[☆ 0 Saved](#)

 EN 

- [Sign in](#)
- [Submit](#) 



Toggle navigation

[Submit](#) 

We're losing kids from sport; but you can change that

Theme:
Youth



Co-authored by Sport NZ

Significant national and international evidence supports the need for changes to youth sport.

The Keep up with the play campaign zeroes in on the issue of why teens are walking away from sport in increasing numbers. Evidence gathered over time in Sport NZ’s Active NZ national participation survey shows that when comparing 12-14 year olds with 18-24 year olds, hours per week engaged in physical activity drops from 12 to 5. In addition, the number of activities drops from 6.4 to 2.5 and weekly participation drops substantively from 98% to 75%.

Furthermore, Secondary School Sport census data shows that although school rolls have increased over the last three years, participation has dropped in inter-school sport. For Sport NZ this is disturbing because habits formed in the teen years transfer to the adult years. Basically inactive teens become inactive adults.

Although some of the drop-off can be attributed to the inevitable changes that occur during the teen years including motivation, contention on time and the impact of technology, there are other factors that exacerbate this decline.

Sport NZ says that years spent studying the subject, and examining overseas models, shows young people are best served when their needs are put first. And the main motivation for young people to play sport is to have fun (76%) followed by hanging out with family or friends (44%). The fact is that sport is seen by many teens as another way to have a cracking good time. And if the fun goes, because the pressure and time demands ratchet up, they’ll be likely to follow.

Though some parents might be tempted to let their kids specialise early in one sport, perhaps encouraged by a coach or club administrator, the statistics show this is probably a bad idea. Australian studies demonstrate that the transition rate from being identified as youth talent to becoming an elite athlete is less than 10%.


And it won’t necessarily be worth it. Over training and over playing can lead to injury and burn out in young players. ACC statistics have shown a 60% surge since 2008 in sports-related injuries in 10-14 year olds – double the increase of any other age group. There are a number of reasons for the spike, but a growing concern is that too much of one sport can be just as harmful as not enough exercise.


For those looking for a helpful guide, ACC encourages the one hour for every year guideline, where the amount of organised sport per week – both training and competition – should not exceed the child’s age. Exceeding recommended hours increases the odds of a ‘gradual onset injury’.


All in all, the stats are sobering. And though every parent wants to support their child becoming a star on the sports field, too much too soon may have just the opposite effect.

Active NZ shows that when comparing 12-14 year olds with 18-24 year olds, weekly participation drops substantively from 98% to 75% and the number of weekly activities drops from 6.4 to 2.5.

<https://sportnz.org.nz/resourc...>


Save this Insight


Print this Insight






Download Insight assets
For use in your own documents

Was this Insight helpful?





Share this Insight

-  [Facebook](#)
-  [Twitter](#)
-  [Email](#)
-  Copy this page's URL

 Save this Insight

 Print this Insight

 Download Insight assets



[Email this Insight](#)

 Close 'Download Insight Assets' modal

Download Insight assets


- [We're losing kids from sport; but you can change that.pdf](#)
- [We're losing kids.jpg 60KB JPG](#)

Was this Insight useful?



Similar Insights (39)


[A game of inequality: The reality of sporting dreams for young disabled people](#)

 Save insight

Youth

A game of inequality: The reality of sporting dreams for young disabled people


[Netball Smart - Injury Prevention Resources](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Netball Smart - Injury Prevention Resources

[Her Moves - Sport Ireland resources to inspire girls to be active](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Her Moves - Sport Ireland resources to inspire girls to be active


[Tatiana Raumati leads Māngere’s charge in Z Manu World Champs qualifier](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Tatiana Raumati leads Māngere’s charge in Z Manu World Champs qualifier


[Basketball: Getting girls court time comes with unique spin](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Basketball: Getting girls court time comes with unique spin


[Research: Obstacles faced by primary and intermediate school girls' when playing sport](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Research: Obstacles faced by primary and intermediate school girls' when playing sport

[Supporting Balanced Female Health](#)


 Save insight

Youth

Supporting Balanced Female Health

By Emma Evans - Sport New Zealand

[Sport NZ It's My Move: Tools and Resources](#)


 Save insight

Youth

Sport NZ It's My Move: Tools and Resources

By Emma Evans - Sport New Zealand

[Six Years On | Yeah! Girls NZC](#)


 Save insight

Youth

Six Years On | Yeah! Girls NZC

By Jess Davidson - New Zealand Cricket

[Whanake o te Kōpara case study - Dantaye Simpson](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Whanake o te Kōpara case study - Dantaye Simpson

By Merran Brockie-David - Women in Sport Aotearoa


[Thriving Through Sport](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Thriving Through Sport

[It's My Move Progress Report](#)


 Save insight

Youth

It's My Move Progress Report

By Emma Evans - Sport New Zealand

[PNGHS “Let’s Move it” programme video](#)


 Save insight

Youth

PNGHS “Let’s Move it” programme video

By Cheycoda Cocks - Sport Manawatu

[Letters from Rangatahi: Olympic Muses and Musings](#)

 Save insight


 Kura Netball Team

Youth

Letters from Rangatahi: Olympic Muses and Musings

By Ciccone Hakaraia-Turner - Netball New Zealand


[Move YO - Move, Stretch, Relax programme for young women and girls](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Move YO - Move, Stretch, Relax programme for young women and girls

[Flow on Effect: Anna Peterson talking menstruation and being active](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Flow on Effect: Anna Peterson talking menstruation and being active

[Flow on effect: Sophie Watson \(EONZ\) on how to be a menstrual ally](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Flow on effect: Sophie Watson (EONZ) on how to be a menstrual ally

[Flow on Effect: Fern Taiapa on breaking down the stigma around menstruation](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Flow on Effect: Fern Taiapa on breaking down the stigma around menstruation

[Flow on Effect: Clare Morgan on Sustainability: understanding what is good for body and planet](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Flow on Effect: Clare Morgan on Sustainability: understanding what is good for body and planet

[Governance: Ariana Reweti completes Basketball New Zealand Board Internship](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Governance: Ariana Reweti completes Basketball New Zealand Board Internship

[Venus Williams is stunned 45 per cent of girls are dropping out of sports over body confidence issues](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Venus Williams is stunned 45 per cent of girls are dropping out of sports over body confidence issues

[IWG: Jess Davidson - Yeah! Girls Activators – building a new workforce for youth female cricket](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

IWG: Jess Davidson - Yeah! Girls Activators – building a new workforce for youth female cricket

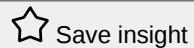
[ReSport partners with Sport Northland for the Positive Puberty Participation Initiative](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

ReSport partners with Sport Northland for the Positive Puberty Participation Initiative

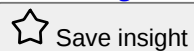
[Harbour Sport Girls Motion Programme](#)



Youth

Harbour Sport Girls Motion Programme

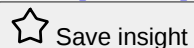
[Celebrating Champions of Change: Kylie Heihei](#)



Youth

Celebrating Champions of Change: Kylie Heihei

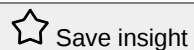
[Team sports help vast majority of young girls feel more confident, says report](#)



Youth

Team sports help vast majority of young girls feel more confident, says report

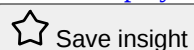
[Balanced female health handbook for adults supporting young people in community sport.](#)



Youth

Balanced female health handbook for adults supporting young people in community sport.

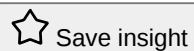
[Webinar replay: Supporting Sporty Girls for coaches or administrators](#)



Youth

Webinar replay: Supporting Sporty Girls for coaches or administrators

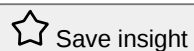
[What's Your Little One Made Of? Creating a new generation of male allies for girls in sport](#)



Youth

What's Your Little One Made Of? Creating a new generation of male allies for girls in sport

[How Erika Fairweather went from kayaking with dolphins to swimming for gold](#)



Youth

How Erika Fairweather went from kayaking with dolphins to swimming for gold

[Rangatahi just want to have fun!](#)

☆ Save insight

 Young women from the Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association with First Step Outdoors staff, after a river trip.

Youth

Rangatahi just want to have fun!

By Robyn Cockburn - LUMIN

[Managing the Physical Load of Female Athletes](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Managing the Physical Load of Female Athletes

[Creating an Environment for Youth to Flourish](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Creating an Environment for Youth to Flourish

By Charissa Barnham - Sport New Zealand

[IWG: Lavenia Yalovi & Maria Rarawa - Football for Development Programme Insights on Gender Equality](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

IWG: Lavenia Yalovi & Maria Rarawa - Football for Development Programme Insights on Gender Equality

[Make Space for Us](#)

☆ Save insight

Youth

Make Space for Us

[IWG: Florence Gitau - Using the platform of football to promote Employment and Entrepreneurship opportunities for slum girls and young women in male dominated Sports industry- Critical lessons from 'Breaking the Barriers' \(BTB\) project in Kenya](#)

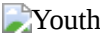
☆ Save insight

Youth

IWG: Florence Gitau - Using the platform of football to promote Employment and Entrepreneurship opportunities for slum girls and young women in male dominated Sports industry- Critical lessons from 'Breaking the Barriers' (BTB) project in Kenya

[Developing A Brand For Young Women's Initiatives: HERA Goddess](#)


 Save insight



Youth

Developing A Brand For Young Women's Initiatives: HERA Goddess


By Briana irving - Aktive - Auckland Sport & Recreation
[Empowering Young Female Leaders - Whanake o te Kōpara & the Emotional Culture Deck](#)

 Save insight

Youth

Empowering Young Female Leaders - Whanake o te Kōpara & the Emotional Culture Deck

By Sarah Leberman MNZM - Women in Sport Aotearoa
[WOTK Alumnae Kylie Heihei - My Leadership Journey](#)

 Save insight






Youth

WOTK Alumnae Kylie Heihei - My Leadership Journey

Our Partners

-  Sport NZ
-  NZ Foreign affairs and trade
-  US Embassy NZ

[Women in Sport Aotearoa Insight Hub | Ngā Wāhine Hākinakina o Aotearoa](#)

-  [Facebook](#)
-  [Instagram](#)
-  [Linkedin](#)
-  [TikTok](#)
-  [YouTube](#)

- [Contact](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Privacy policy](#)
- [Terms of use](#)

© 2025 Women in Sport Aotearoa

Subscribe to our newsletter

Receive the latest news, events and insights as we publish them.

Name:

Email:

[Subscribe](#) 



Close panel

Subscribe to our newsletter

Our weekly email delivering the latest insights as we publish them, tailored to your tastes.

First name:*

Email:*

Preferences

Select those that apply to you to help us customise your Insight Hub experience.

Insight Themes

- ☒ All
- ☒ Leadership
- ☒ Social Change
- ☒ Active Lives
- ☒ High Performance
- ☒ Visibility and Voice

Insight Content Types

- ☒ All
- ☒ Research
- ☒ Case studies
- ☒ News stories
- ☒ Toolkits

Subscribe now 