

Press release

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New study shows sporting gender gap has closed among older teenagers

Teenage girls aged 15-16 are now more likely than older boys to play sport, reveals new CHILDWISE report.

Older girls have increased their participation in sport at school and outside, according to new data analysing how many hours per week children spend playing sport.

“The gender gap is narrowing. The difference in the amount of sport played at school is minimal at age 15-16 compared to previous years - boys do 1.4 hours a week, vs 1.2 hours for girls,” said Simon Leggett, research director at CHILDWISE.

“The trend for more older girls to participate in sport, both in and outside school, continues this year, suggesting that years of campaigning to raise the profile of women’s sport, and encourage young women and girls into physical activity, may finally be paying off.”

“Despite an overall decrease in children’s participation in sport, older girls have closed the gap on boys the same age. They are now more likely than older boys to do sport at all, especially at school, and just as likely to take part outside of school.”

“It could be that the increasing number and popularity of fitness accounts / stars on Instagram and the growing market in athletic clothing is helping sport to seem part of everyday life for older girls and increasing their participation.”

The 2018 CHILDWISE Monitor is a comprehensive annual report looking at 5 to 16-year-olds media consumption, purchasing and social habits as well as key behaviour. More than 2000 children in schools across the United Kingdom completed in-depth online surveys for the report.

Half of girls aged 15-16 say they don’t do enough sport at school compared to two in five boys.¹ This is the reverse of last year’s findings.²

Findings of the report also include...

- Children age 5-16 spend just over two and a half hours a day watching programmes, video and short clips (2.6 hours, 2.5 hours last year).
- Most children now use devices other than a traditional television set to watch video content.
- YouTube remains the top way of watching on-demand content.

¹ 52% girls compared to 39% of boys in 2018.

² 2017 CHILDWISE Monitor report found that 43% of girls this age wanted to do more sport at school, compared to 50% of boys.

- Children age 9-16 spend an average of 2.7 hours online a day. This has dropped over the last three years and is down from 2.9 hours last year. However, this fall could be a consequence of children being less able to determine which of their routine activities are carried out online or offline.
- Children are taking to virtual reality with 25% having mobile VR equipment at home, 11% with Playstation VR, 10% have Oculus Rift and 6% have HTC Vive
- Binge watching content is a growing habit.

CHILDWISE is an independent market research agency specialising in children and young people. CHILDWISE has a programme of published independent research and also conducts research for government agencies, charities, broadcasters, publishers and brands www.childwise.co.uk

The Monitor Report 2018 covers... children and their media; TV viewing; music; reading ; cinema; children's equipment; money; purchasing; sports & activities; health & wellbeing and social awareness.

Editorial notes: For more information or to interview a member of the CHILDWISE research team please contact Liz Hollis 07880 680302 liz@lizhollis.co.uk CHILDWISE website www.childwise.co.uk