### Barriers and Facilitators of Physical Activity Participation in Adolescent Girls

Physical activity (PA) levels differ by gender among adolescents. Globally, 84.7% of adolescent girls and 77.6% for boys do not meet World Health Organization recommendations for PA, which are at least an average of 60 min/day of moderate- to- vigorous intensity PA. Many studies have shown that participation of girls in PA and sports decreases throughout adolescence, endangering their current and long-term health. A recent review of the literature identified some of the barriers and facilitators of participation in physical activity by adolescent girls in three domains:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Barriers</strong></th>
<th><strong>Facilitators</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of time</td>
<td>- Weight management</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Perceived lack of competence</td>
<td>- Perceived competence or skill level</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Discomfort during and after PA</td>
<td>- Health benefits</td>
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<td>- Increased social and family obligations</td>
<td>- Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Preference for other leisure activities</td>
<td>- Support from family, peers and teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lack of support from family, peers, and teachers</td>
<td>- Opportunities to socialize</td>
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<td>- Costs of participation in available opportunities</td>
<td>- Accessibility and availability of recreational facilities</td>
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<td>- Safety concerns in neighbourhood outdoor areas and environment</td>
<td>- Opportunities to try new types of PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Input from girls on preferred activities and formats of delivery</td>
<td>- Influence of media on social norms</td>
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**Adolescents who do not meet World Health Organization recommendations for PA (at least an average of 60 min/day moderate-to-vigorous intensity PA)**

- **Girls**: 84.7%
- **Boys**: 77.6%
Policy implications

Evidence-based policies to ensure a gender-responsive approach are necessary to improve participation of adolescent girls in PA and sports.

Whole-of-school approaches to link the school curriculum with the broader school environment and the local community can be applied in practice to increase the participation of adolescent girls.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM
- Involve girls in development of the physical education (PE) curriculum.
- Include girls' preferences in the PE curriculum.
- Develop PE curriculum that is non-competitive and flexible.
- Promote active breaks.
- Increase extracurricular opportunities for a PA.
- Ensure resources and materials to deliver gender-responsive PA-promotion strategies.

TEACHERS
- Provide evidence-based training and continued professional development.
- Increase physical literacy of pupils at earlier ages.
- Develop strategies for training parents and peers to support PA.

FAMILY AND PEERS
- Encourage participation of girls in PA and sports.
- Provide positive reinforcement for continuing participation.

ENVIRONMENT
- Provide opportunities for participation of the family in PA and sports.
- Increase access to recreational PA facilities.
- Promote active commuting to and from school.
- Create safe neighbourhoods, sidewalks and cycling paths.
- Facilitate dialogue about gender norms related to PA and sports.
- Improve coordination among the education, health and local sports sectors.

REFERENCES:
https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(18)30323-2/fulltext

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