SPOTLIGHT ON PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG 18 TO 24 YEAR OLDS

Comparing Participation among Tertiary Students and Non-Tertiary Students

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Introduction

Background

University and Tertiary Sport NZ (UTSNZ) enables competition and workforce opportunities for tertiary students in sport. One of its aims is to encourage more New Zealand specific research into the value of sport in tertiary settings.

Following the release of the Active NZ survey report completed by Sport NZ, there is opportunity to shine a spotlight on participation among those aged 18 to 24 years and, in so doing, provide the university and tertiary sport sector (UTSNZ, member universities, partners and key stakeholders) with valuable data, evidence and information about this age group. To provide context on changes in participation between young people and adults, results for 18 to 24 year olds will be compared with results for 12 to 17 year olds. It is hoped the presentation of key findings will help provide a greater understanding of 18 to 24 year olds (a significant proportion of whom attend in tertiary education institutions) and their participation habits, as well as be a catalyst for further research.

Objectives

The overall aim is to obtain a deeper understanding of participation of those aged 18 to 24 years in New Zealand:

- compare participation of 18 to 24 year olds with 12 to 17 year olds to identify changes between these age groups
- compare tertiary students with non-tertiary students within the 18 to 24 year age group, to identify whether their participation patterns and their motivations and barriers to participation are similar or different.

Method

Data collection

This report is based on

- data collected from adults aged 18 to 24 years, through the redesigned Active NZ survey over a three-year period (between 5 January 2017 and 4 January 2020)

- data collected through the Active NZ Young People's survey over a one year period (between 5 January 2018 and 4 January 2019). This data is used when comparing 12 to 17 year olds with 18 to 24 year olds, as it is the most recent publicly-released data for 12 to17 year olds.

Margin of error (MOE)

All sample surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the measure of uncertainty arising from survey estimates because only a sample of the population is observed. Example: *A MOE ±4% means that if 50% of all respondents answer 'yes' on a particular question, you can be 95% sure of accuracy within plus or minus 4%. This means that the true population statistic (i.e. population proportion who answered 'yes' on that question) falls between 46% and 54%.*

The maximum MOE for the total sample and sub groups are shown alongside the base size for each.

Sample size	MOE
Total sample 18 to 24 years n=8,588	±1.1%
Tertiary students n=3,672	±1.6%
Non-tertiary students n=4,883	±1.4%
12 to17 year olds n=1,905	±2.2%
12 to 14 year olds n=1,087	±3.0%
15 to17 year olds n=818	±3.4%

Significance testing

Reported differences between the total result and sub-groups are statistically significant at the 95

percent confidence level. Significance testing means that the difference is a true difference statistically, and not due to random variation. Knowing that a difference is statistically significant does not mean the difference is important, and only meaningful differences have been commented upon.

Key definitions

Respondents

People who took part in the Active NZ survey 2017-2019, aged 18 to 24 years.
Young people who took part in the Young People NZ survey 2018, aged 12 to 17 years.

Participants

People who have been physically active in play, exercise, active recreation, sport or physical education in the past seven days, excluding any physical activity undertaken for work or chores. Participation can include physical activity undertaken to get from one place to another (active transport) if the respondent considers the primary purpose to be for sport or active recreation.

Non-participants

People who have not been physically active in play, exercise, active recreation sport or physical education in the past seven days.

Play, active recreation, and sport

The terms play, active recreation and sport are used throughout this report for simplicity. However, participation is multi-faceted. Play and active recreation are terms used by Sport New Zealand to capture participation in activities not considered to be sport, for example, playing with friends or alone, dance and tramping. Sport can be undertaken in an organised structure, for example, in a competition or tournament, or informally outside an organised structure. Sport is associated with being competitive, but individuals differ in their degree of competitiveness, irrespective of how they participate.

Weekly participation

Refers to being physically active in play, exercise, active recreation, sport or physical education (for young people) at least once in the past seven days.

Tertiary students

People aged 18 to 24 years who are currently enrolled in either a part-time or a full-time tertiary education programme.

Non-tertiary students

People aged 18 to 24 years who are currently not enrolled in any tertiary education programme. They have either full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid jobs, are looking after their home and family or are beneficiaries.

Young people (YP)

Respondents aged from 5 to 17 years.

Adults

Respondents aged 18 years plus.

1.0. Participation

Active NZ uses three indicators to report participation in play, active recreation and sport:

- weekly participation: being active at least once in the past seven days
- average number of hours spent participating in the past seven days
- average number of sports and activities participated in the last seven days.

Key findings:

- Participation peaks among young people between ages 12 to 14, declines between ages 15 and 17 and then declines more sharply from age 18.
- Participation levels are very similar among tertiary students and non-tertiary students in the 18 to 24 year age group.

1.1 Participation: all young people and adults

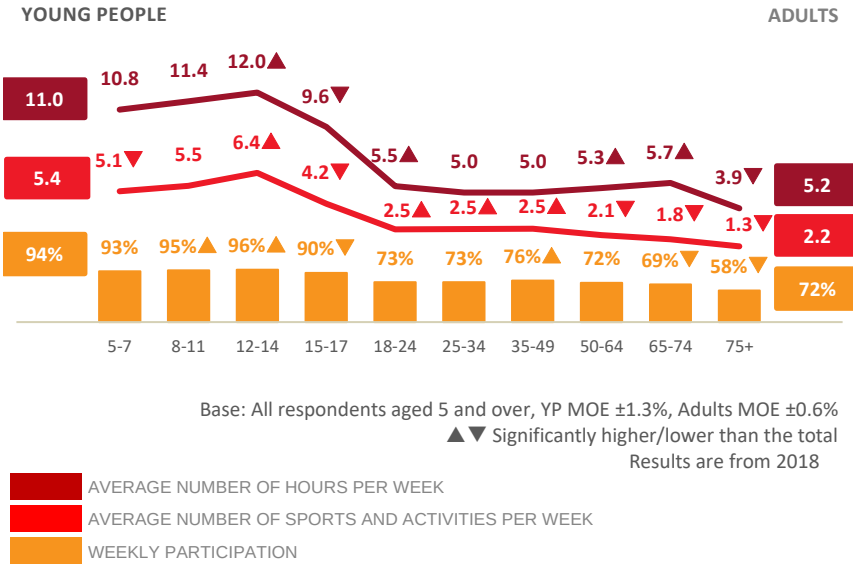
Figure 1 shows participation results for all young people and adults on the three key participation measurements, as context for the spotlight on 18 to 24 year olds.

Each week, 94 percent of young people and 72 percent of adults participate in play, active recreation and sport.

Young people spend an average of 11.0 hours participating in 5.4 sports and activities.

Adults spend an average of 5.2 hours participating in 2.2 sports and activities.

Figure 1. Weekly participation



Base: All respondents aged 5 and over, YP MOE ±1.3%, Adults MOE ±0.6%
▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the total
Results are from 2018

- Weekly participation levels peak between ages 12 and 14 (96 percent) before declining between ages 15 and 17 (90 percent) and then dropping more sharply at entry to adulthood between ages 18 and 24 years (73 percent).
- Weekly participation plateaus between ages 18 and 64 (between 72 percent and 76 percent) before declining at age 65 (69 percent for those between ages 65 and 74 and 58 percent for those aged 75 and older).
- Those between ages 12 and 14 have the highest level of participation, spend the most hours being active and participate in the highest number of sports and activities in any given week.
- All three indicators drop after age 12 to 14 to a lower level between ages 15 and 17, before dropping more sharply between ages 18 and 24. All three then remain relatively stable throughout the adult years with a more marked decline only after age 74.

1.2 Participation changes from college years to young adulthood

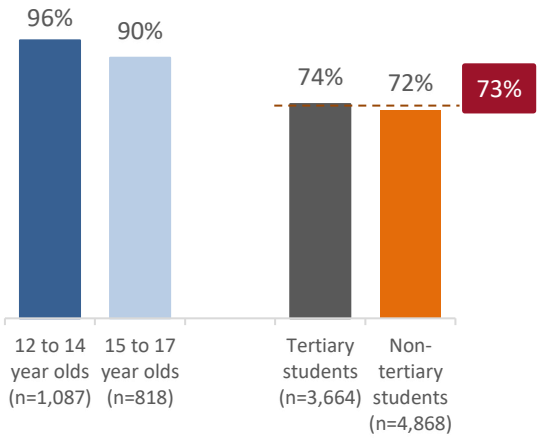
Weekly participation decreases strongly after age 15 to 17. There is a slight drop in participation between ages 12 to 14 and 15 to 17, but a more marked drop among those aged 18 to 24.

Participation does not vary by involvement in tertiary study: 74 percent of tertiary students participate weekly compared with 72 percent of non-tertiary students.

There is a slight gender difference in participation, with this being more pronounced among tertiary students than non-tertiary students:

- Weekly participation levels are higher among male tertiary students than female tertiary students (78 percent compared with 72 percent).
- Levels of weekly participation among non-tertiary students are more similar (74 percent males compared with 71 percent females).

Figure 2. Weekly participation



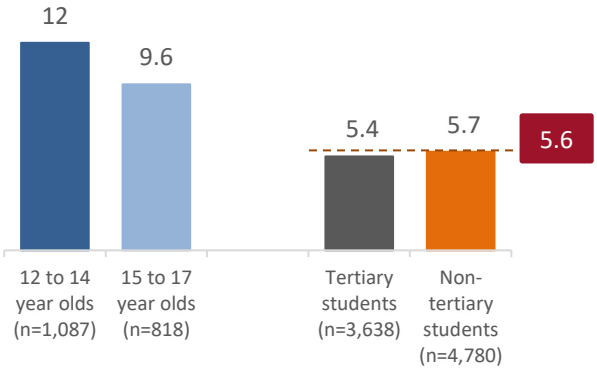
Base Adults: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,563) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary is significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary
The red box and dotted line show result for all 18 to 24 year olds

The average hours per week spent participating peaks between ages 12 and 14. The drop between this age group and 15 to 17 year olds is relatively small, but there is a sharp decline (by 42 percent) in average hours per week spent by young adults, from 9.6 hours on average between ages 15 and 17 to 5.6 hours between ages 18 and 24.

The average time tertiary and non-tertiary students spend participating is very similar. Again, this indicator also has a slight gender difference, with males spending more time per week participating (both among tertiary and non-tertiary students).

- Male tertiary students participate in sport and activities for an average of 6.0 hours, while females participate for an average of 5.0 hours.
- Male non-tertiary students spend 6.6 hours on average and females 4.9 hours.

Figure 3. Average number of hours per week

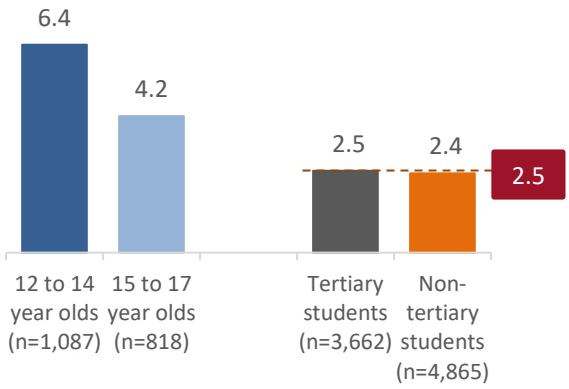


Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,447) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary is significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary
The red box and dotted line show result for all 18 to 24 year olds

There is a drop in the average number of sports and physical activities participated in as young people age.

On average, tertiary and non-tertiary students participate in the same number of sports and activities per week. For this indicator, there is no difference by gender.

Figure 4. Average number of sports and activities per week



Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary is significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary
The red box and dotted line show result for all 18 to 24 year olds

2.0. How 18-24 year olds participate

This section explores how young adults participate in physical activity and identifies whether there are any differences in how tertiary and non- tertiary students participate:

- participation in competition
- participation through events
- gym and paid membership
- use of technology while participating
- sports and activities participated in
- sports and activities they would like to try.

Key findings:

- After age 15 to 17, participation in competitive sports and activities almost halves.
- Among 18 to 24 year olds, the more prevalent activities are those able to be carried out individually and non-competitively, including walking, jogging and individual workouts.
- Many 18 to 24 year olds participate through gym membership and/or other paid memberships.

2.1 Participation in competitive sports and activities

Twelve to 17 year olds are around twice as likely to participate in competitive sports and physical activities as young adults between ages 18 to 24 years. There is a relatively small drop off when young people between ages 12 and 14 are compared with 15 to 17 year olds, but then participation in competition almost halves (from 32 percent to 18 percent among 18 to 24 year olds).

There is also a tripling in the proportion that does not participate in a given week between these two age bands (from 10 percent to 29 percent).

However, the proportion who participate, but only in non-competitive sports and activities, remains steady across the three age bands shown in the table following.

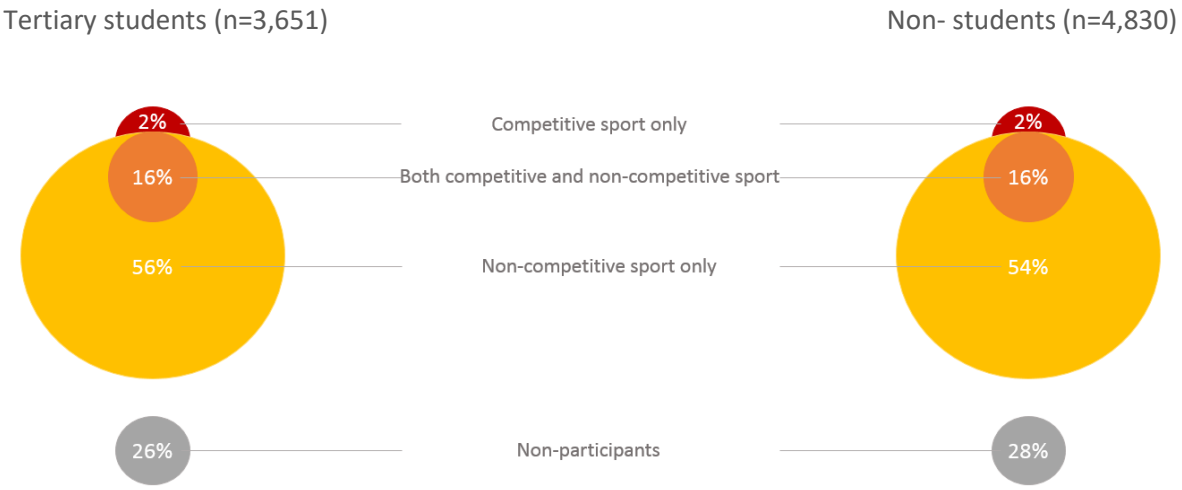
Figure 5. Type of participation

Participation in competition	12 to 14 years (n=1,086)	15 to 17 years (n=814)	Total 18 to 24 years (n=8,510)
Competitive sports and activities	38%	32%	18%
Non-competitive sport or activities only	58%	58%	57%
Non-participants	4%	10%	27%

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%

Similar participation levels in competitive sports and activities are apparent among tertiary and non-tertiary students, with 18 percent of tertiary and 19 percent of non-tertiary students saying they do a competitive sport or activity.

Figure 6. Type of participation



Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,510) MOE ±1.0%
▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the other subgroup

2.2 Gym membership or paid for participation

Among all respondents aged 18 to 24 years, 39 percent have a gym membership. Significantly more tertiary students have a gym membership than non-tertiary students. A difference is also seen in the proportion of tertiary students who have paid for physical activity by a membership fee in the past seven days as well as in the proportion who have undertaken physical activity for free.

Figure 7. Gym membership or paid for participation

	18 to 24 years (n=8,505)	**Tertiary students** (n=3,651)	**Non-tertiary students** (n=4,825)
Gym membership	39%	45%▲	35%▼
Paid per visit or concession card *in the last 7 days*	18%	18%	19%
Paid for physical activity by a membership fee *in the last 7 days*	33%	36%▲	31%▼
Done free physical activity *in the last 7 days*	66%	68%▲	65%▼

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,505) MOE ±1.0%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary students

By gender

- There are no gender differences when gym membership is considered.
- There is a gender difference when the proportion who paid for physical activity by a membership in the last seven days. This is seen among tertiary students (41 percent of males and 33 percent of females) and non-tertiary students (34 percent of males compared with 28 percent of females).

2.3 Participation through events

Participation in running/walking events in the last 12 months drops with increasing age. The incidence of participation in events is similar among tertiary and non-tertiary students, with around one in three participating in this way at least once over a 12 month period (35 percent of tertiary compared with 32 percent of non-tertiary students).

- A slightly higher proportion of tertiary than non- tertiary students have participated in sports tournaments over the last 12 months (16 percent compared with 13 percent).

Figure 8. Event participation (last 12 months)

Events	12 to 14 year olds (n=1,087)	15 to 17 year olds (n=818)	18 to 24 year olds (n=8,449)	18 to 24 year old tertiary students (n=3,634)	18 to 24 year old non-students (n=4,815)
Sports tournament*	-	-	14%	16%▲	13%▼
Running/walking events *(anything up to 10ks, e.g. fun runs)*	23%	15%	13%	13%	13%
Endurance running/walking events *(anything longer than 10ks, e.g. half marathon)*	5%	5%	4%	5%	4%
Participated in at least one event	-	-	33%	35%	32%

**'Sports tournament' not asked for young people. Therefore results for 'Participation in at least one event' aren't comparable between young people and adults, so has been left out of this table.*

Base Adults: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,479) MOE ±1.1%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary students

By gender

- When comparing event participation among tertiary students by gender, the proportion who participated in at least one event in the last 12 months is higher among males than females (38 percent compared with 32 percent). Also, a higher proportion of males participate in sports tournaments than females (20 percent compared with 13 percent).
- A similar pattern is apparent for non-tertiary students: a higher proportion of males than females have participated in an event in the last 12 months (35 percent compared with 30 percent) and in a sports tournament (17 percent compared with 9 percent).

2.4 Use of technology

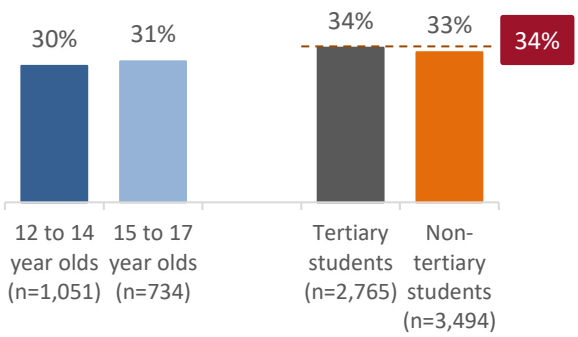
Close to one in three uses technology while being physically active. Technology can be Fitbits, smartphone apps, pedometers etc.

There is no difference in use of technology when comparing different age groups.

Among both tertiary and non-tertiary students, the incidence of using technology while being physically active is higher among females than males.

- Among tertiary students, 39 percent of females compared with 29 percent of male students do so.
- Among non-tertiary students, 37 percent female compared with 29 percent of male students do so.

Figure 9. Use of technology (last 7 days)



Base Adults: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=6,277) MOE ±1.4%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,785) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary
The red box and dotted line show result for all 18 to 24 year olds

2.5 Sports and activities participated in

The types of sports and activities participated in change with increasing age.

There is a decline in participation in almost all sports and activities among 18 to 24 year olds when compared with younger age groups. Some team sports show a steep decline; for example, basketball, rugby and cricket have an over 70 percent decline in participation when 15 to 17 year olds and 18 to 24 year olds are compared.

Figure 10. Sports and activities participated in by age

	12 to 14 years old (n=1,087)	**15 to 17 years old** (n=818)	**18 to 24 years old** (n=8,558)
Running/Jogging	71%	56%	36%
Swimming	31%	17%	9%
Cycling	31%	19%	7%
Football/Soccer/Futsal	25%	16%	5%
Basketball	21%	14%	4%
Netball	17%	9%	4%
Rugby	11%	10%	3%
Cricket	9%	5%	1%
Tennis	7%	5%	2%

Base Adults: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%

The more individual and non-competitive activities like walking, jogging and individual workouts are the most popular activities among 18 to 24 year olds. Looking at the top 10 sports and activities 18 to 24 year olds participate in, there are some differences between tertiary and non-tertiary students.

- Overall, walking is the most popular activity among both groups, followed by running/jogging and individual workouts using equipment.
- The level of participation in the top three is slightly higher among students than non-tertiary students.

Figure 11. Top 10 sports and activities participated in 18 to 24 year olds

	Total (n=8,555)	**Tertiary students** (n=3,672)	**Non- students** (n=4,883)
Walking	57%	60%▲	55%▼
Running/Jogging	36%	38%▲	34%▼
Individual workout using equipment	33%	36%▲	31%▼
Playing games	12%	11%	12%
Group fitness class	11%	11%	10%
Gardening	8%	6%▼	9%▲
Swimming	9%	9%	10%
Cycling	7%	7%	7%
Pilates/Yoga	7%	8%▲	6%▼
Dance/dancing	6%	7%	6%

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non- students

As shown in figure 12, there are some large variations in the top 10 sports and activities 12 to 17 year olds participated in, when compared with top 10 sports and activities 18 to 24 year olds participated in.

Figure 12. Top 10 sports and activities participated in 12 to 17 year olds

	12 to 14 year olds (n=1,087)	**15 to 17 year olds** (n=818)	**18 to 24 year olds** (n=8,555)
Running, jogging or cross country (net)	71%	56%	36%
Games (e.g. four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball) / Playing games (e.g. with kids)	49%	22%	12%
Walking for fitness	35%	34%	57%
Playing (e.g. running around, climbing trees, make-believe)*	33%	12%	-
Swimming	31%	17%	9%
Cycling (Net)	31%	19%	7%
Football/ Soccer/ Futsal (Net)	25%	16%	5%
Playing on playground (e.g. jungle gym)*	24%	5%	-
Trampoline*	21%	8%	-
Scootering*	15%	3%	-

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
*sports and activities not asked in the Active NZ questionnaire for adults

2.6 Sports and activities tertiary students would like to try

- Tramping is the activity with highest levels of interest among both sub groups.
- Each activity is of interest to similar proportions of tertiary and non-tertiary students, but with a slightly greater proportion of tertiary students expressing interest in some activities.

Figure 12. Top 10 sports and activities would like to try

	Total (n=8,540)	Tertiary students (n=3,668)	Non-tertiary students (n=4,873)
Tramping	28%	31%▲	26%▼
Pilates/Yoga	23%	26%▲	21%▼
Snow sports	23%	25%▲	21%▼
Cycling	18%	18%	18%
Swimming	16%	17%	15%
Group fitness class	16%	17%▲	15%▼
Canoeing/Kayaking	15%	15%	14%
Boxing	14%	15%▲	13%▼
Individual workout using equipment	13%	14%	13%
Fishing	12%	10%▼	12%▲

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,572) MOE ±1.0%
▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the other subgroup

3.0. Motivations to participate

This section investigates what motivates young adults to participate in physical activity and identifies whether there are any differences between tertiary and non- tertiary students.

Key findings:

- The influence of different motivators is more strongly related to age rather than to whether or not a young adult is studying.
- Doing an activity for the purpose of physical wellbeing or to lose/maintain weight increases with age.
- Doing an activity for fun, or for social enjoyment through spending time with family and friends, decreases with age.
- Doing an activity to learn or practise a new skill also decreases with age.
- Doing an activity for physical wellbeing is the most prevalent motivation among both tertiary students and non-tertiary students.

Figure 13. Top motivations

		12 to 14 year olds (n=1,051)	15 to 17 year olds (n=734)	18 to 24 year olds (n=5,429)	Tertiary students 18 to 24 years old (n=2,397)	Non-tertiary students 18 to 24 years old (n=3,032)
1.	Do an activity for physical wellbeing *(Adults)* For fitness/health *(Young people)*	49%	58%	66%	66%	65%
2.	Do an activity for fun	77%	61%	36%	38%	35%
3.	Do an activity to lose or maintain weight or look good	9%	15%	30%	30%	29%
4.	Do an activity for emotional wellbeing *(e.g. To relax or unwind)*	-	-	26%	27%	25%
5.	Do an activity to spend time with family and friends	50%	34%	25%	25%	26%
6.	Does an activity to learn or practise a new skill	29%	20%	9%	9%	9%

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=5,429*) MOE±1.3%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,785) MOE ±2.3%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary students
*Base size is smaller due to changes made to the questionnaire in Q3 2019

4.0. Barriers to participation

This section considers the barriers to participating more in physical activity.

Key findings:

- Over four in five young adults would like to be participating more than they do currently, including 84 percent of tertiary students.
- The average number of barriers identified, preventing greater levels of participation, increases with age.
- Tertiary students identify more barriers on average than non-tertiary students.
- The most common barrier among all age groups is being too busy with other commitments. This is mentioned by 67 percent of tertiary students.
- Struggle for motivation, followed closely by fatigue or lack of energy, are the next most commonly mentioned barriers among all age groups.

Of all 18 to 24 year olds, 81 percent would like to be doing physical activity than they do currently (compared with 73 percent of 15 to 17 year olds). This increases to 84 percent among tertiary students.

Figure 14, above the heavy line, shows the ten most frequently mentioned participation barriers for 18 to 24 year olds. The additional barriers listed below the line are those that are identified less frequently but where there are significant differences when comparing tertiary with non-tertiary students.

Figure 14. Barriers to participation

Barriers	12 to 14 year olds (n=1,087)	15 to 17 year olds (n=818)	18 to 24 year olds (n=8,570)	Tertiary students (n=3,669)	Non-students (n=4,870)
Other commitments are taking priority / Too busy	41%	50%	63%	67%▲	60%▼
I struggle to motivate myself	16%	25%	40%	41%▲	39%▼
I am too tired or don't have the energy	20%	28%	36%	36%	36%
I prefer to spend my time on other interests/hobbies	12%	14%	24%	24%	24%
I've got out of the habit	-	-	23%	27%▲	21%▼
The activity of my choice is too expensive	10%	10%	22%	26%▲	19%▼
I have no one to do it with / My friends aren't physically active	6%	7%	18%	19%	18%
I'm not fit enough	10%	13%	18%	19%	17%
The activity of my choice doesn't fit my routine / Can't fit it in with other family member's activities	8%	6%	16%	18%▲	14%▼
I don't have the equipment I need	11%	13%	16%	17%	15%
I have no transport to get to places / Too hard to get to training, games or competitions	12%	13%	10%	11%▲	9%▼

I don't like other people seeing me being physically active	4%	7%	10%	11%▲	8%▼
I haven't got the skills/don't know how to / I don't know how to	2%	3%	9%	10%▲	8%▼
I don't want to fail	5%	7%	7%	8%▲	7%▼
I am injured from an injury caused by sport, exercise or recreational physical activity	4%	7%	6%	7%▲	6%▼
I find physical activity boring	3%	4%	5%	6%▲	5%▼
Mean number of barriers	2.74	3.13	4.0	4.3▲	3.8▼

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,570) MOE ±1.0%
Base YP: All respondents 12 to 17 years old (n=1,905) MOE ±2.2%
▲▼ Tertiary students significantly higher/lower than non-tertiary students

‘

5.0. Attitudes towards participation

In this final section, we consider attitudes to physical activity. Because attitude statements are worded differently in the Active Survey for adults and the young people's version, we are unable to provide comparisons in this section.

Key findings:

- Young adults have very positive attitudes concerning physical activity and its health benefits.
- Tertiary students have slightly more positive attitudes to physical activity when compared with non-tertiary students.
- Positive attitudes are not necessarily translating into behaviour, with most expressing that they know they should be doing more physical activity than they are currently.
- When tertiary students are compared with non-tertiary students, peers appear to play a relatively more influential role in encouraging participation, while family appears to play a relatively more influential role for non-tertiary students.

Most 18 to 24 year olds have positive attitudes toward physical activity and its benefits for health and wellbeing. Recognition of its importance for physical health (85 percent agree) is slightly stronger than recognition of its importance on mental or emotional health (79 percent). Tertiary students are slightly more likely to agree on the contribution of physical activity to physical and mental health.

A higher proportion of tertiary students agree that they keep active due to the encouragement of their friends and family ('people in my life encourage me to take part in physical activities', 'I keep physically active because my friends or family want me to').

On the other hand, a higher proportion of non-tertiary students agree that 'being physically active together is an important part of our family life'. This might simply reflect different living circumstances, possibly with a smaller proportion of tertiary students still living at home.

Figure 15. Agree with attitudes towards participation

Percentage who agree a lot/a little with each statement	**Total** (n=8,558)	**Tertiary students** (n=3,672)	**Non-tertiary students** (n=4,883)
I understand why taking part in physical activity is good for me	94%	96%▲	92%▼
Doing some physical activity is better than nothing	91%	94%▲	90%▼
Being physically active is very important for my physical health	85%	87%▲	83%▼
I want to take part in physical activities	81%	83%▲	79%▼
I usually drink plenty of water when I'm physically active	80%	82%▲	78%▼
Being physically active is very important for my mental or emotional wellbeing	79%	81%▲	78%▼
I know I should do more physical activity	77%	80%▲	75%▼
Working hard to improve my skills and performance is important to me	67%	69%▲	66%▼
People in my life encourage me to take part in physical activities	63%	67%▲	60%▼
I choose physical activity that suits my mood at the time	61%	63%▲	60%▼

I have the chance to do the physical activities I want	59%	62%▲	58%▼
Sport and other physical activities give me motivation and a sense of purpose	58%	60%▲	57%▼
I usually warm up before, and stretch my muscles after, doing physical activity	54%	57%▲	52%▼
I make a point of breaking up long periods of sitting by getting up to walk around	54%	56%▲	52%▼
When I can't do as much physical activity as I would like I get irritable and edgy	45%	47%▲	44%▼
I grew up with a physically active family	45%	51%▲	41%▼
Being physically active together is an important part of our family life	39%	32%▼	44%▲
I keep physically active because my friends or family want me to	18%	22%▲	15%▼

Base: All respondents 18 to 24 years old (n=8,558) MOE ±1.0%
▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the other subgroup

6.0. Discussion

In this report, the differences in participation in sport and physical activity are investigated between tertiary students and non-tertiary students aged between 18 and 24 years. Comparisons are also made between young people aged 12 to 17 years and adults aged 18 to 24 years. This analysis shows that a decline in participation occurs after the age of 14 years, but particularly from the age of 18 onwards. The differences between tertiary students and non-tertiary students within the 18 to 24 year age group are comparatively minor.

We can see that participation peaks between ages 12 and 14. Among this age group, the most common motivation for participation is fun and, associated with this, sport and physical activities are enjoyed as a way to spend time with family and friends. Nearly four in ten are competing in some way.

While these motivations remain relatively prevalent among 15 to 17 year olds, participating for physical wellbeing is almost as prevalent as participating for fun. Instead of participating in an average of 6.4 different activities in a week, 15 to 17 year olds participate in a narrower range (4.2 activities).
More barriers are identified by this age group than the younger group. There is only a relatively small drop in the proportion that competes (from 38 percent to 32 percent).

Changes are even more evident between the ages of 15 to 17 years and 18 to 24 years. There is a large drop off in the average time spent participating each week and the range of activities participated in narrows further (2.5 on average). The proportion competing each week almost halves, reflected also in reducing proportions participating in team sports. Fun drops away as a reason for participating, with being motivated for physical wellbeing becoming far more prominent. Participation for weight management or for physical appearance also increases. Perceived barriers to participation increase; this age group identifies four barriers on average that apply to them.

Tertiary students aged 18 to 24 years are very similar to non-tertiary students aged 18-24 years in their behaviours, motivations and barriers and attitudes. Perhaps the most noteworthy difference is that they are more likely to identify more barriers to participation than non-tertiary students (4.3 compared with 3.8).

Some implications for university and tertiary sports sector are:

- If initiatives are taken, by Sport NZ or any other group, to address the drop in participation between ages 15 to 17 and 18 to 24, these initiatives will also be relevant for tertiary students.
- The drop in participation at ages 18 to 24 years will at least be partly explained by the loss of the support structures that facilitate and encourage participation while at school.
- However, some of these structures exist at tertiary institutions also (e.g. facilities such as gyms and playing fields at place of study, sports teams based around the institution). Therefore, it is perhaps surprising that participation among tertiary students is no higher than non-tertiary students.
- Many barriers are cited to increasing participation, despite a desire to do so. Qualitative research to understand how these barriers manifest in a tertiary study context, and what the sector could do to help overcome these barriers, would be valuable.

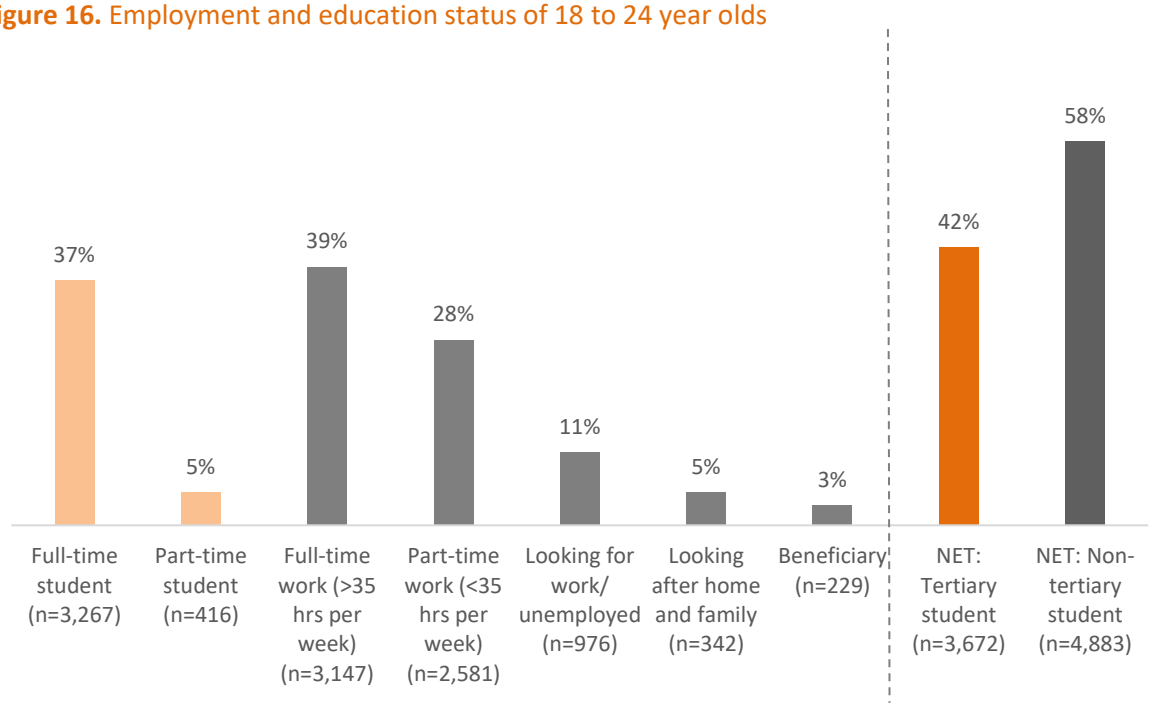
APPENDIX: Employment and education status

This section profiles the employment and education status of the 18 to 24 year age group.

As shown in figure 16 below:

- Fourty-two percent of the 18 to 24 year olds are tertiary students; 37 percent are full-time students and 5 percent are studying part-time.
- Fifty-eight percent of 18 to 24 year olds are non- students. They are currently not enrolled in any tertiary education programme. Thirty-nine percent have a full-time job (paid or unpaid), while 11 percent are looking for work or are currently unemployed.

Figure 16. Employment and education status of 18 to 24 year olds



Base: All respondents aged 18 to 24 years (n=8,588, MOE ±1.0%)
Results are from 2017-2019