



London Youth Rowing's Active Row programme encourages 11-to-18-year-olds in 70 schools across 12 priority boroughs to be active

Dec 09, 2021 14:43 GMT

Covid-19 continues to impact young Londoners as survey highlights importance of physical activity and sport

Covid-19 continues to negatively effect the activity levels of children and young people across the capital as [new Sport England data](#) demonstrates that getting active is more important than ever.

Results from the Sport England's [Active Lives Children and Young People Survey for the 2020/21](#) academic year provided further evidence that active

children have higher levels of mental wellbeing.

The insight illustrates the role that sport and physical activity plays in supporting future generations at a time when levels of loneliness and poor mental health are on the rise.

In addition to improving mental wellbeing, we also know that active children do better at school in attainment and achievement, demonstrating a dual benefit of increasing activity levels.

In London, where figures were broadly in line with the national average, 44% of children and young people hit the recommended average of 60 minutes or more of activity every day.

Nearly a quarter (23%) completed an average of 30-59 minutes a day, considered fairly active, with 33% falling into the inactive category of doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity every day.

A limited level of borough-level data is available, due to a lack of respondents, though there are concerns over a significant increase (11%) in inactive children and young people in Sutton.

There remain large inequalities between different London boroughs with Wandsworth seeing 63% of young people meeting guidelines for activity compared to just 23% in Tower Hamlets.

The new findings also revealed existing inequalities have been exacerbated (e.g. the least affluent families remain the least active) and there's been a drop in activity levels for boys that brings them in line with girls' activity levels.

Specialist Advisor for Children and Young People, Gary Palmer, said:

“With covid-19 restrictions throughout much of last Autumn and Winter, it is no surprise to see that this has had a significant impact in the activity levels of children and young people in London.

“London Sport has used Sport England Tackling Inequalities funding to

provide activities and DfE's Opening School Facilities to create safe community hubs for young people but there is clearly more work to be done.

“We must use this data to address specific challenges amplified during the pandemic like mental health through physical activity and provide more fun, enjoyable activities for young people who are less likely to be active.”

London Sport's Senior Project Officer, Megan Bevis, added:

“This data provides vital insights into the levels of physical activity of our young people and the huge benefits that physical activity and sport provides them physically and mentally.

“I'd strongly urge the hundreds of schools across London who are contacted to take part in the Sport England Active Lives survey each term to complete them at the earliest opportunity.

“The results from these surveys can help shape London Sport's future investment and allows us to target our efforts to the areas which need it most.”

Sport England Chief Executive, Tim Hollingsworth said:

“The results of this survey are worrying for all of us – but we should also recognise that were it not for the commitment and efforts of so many people across the sport, physical activity and education sectors, as well as the parents, carers and children themselves, the impact of the pandemic on activity levels would have been even worse.

“What the survey highlights most of all is how much there is now to do to achieve our aim of building a nation where every child has access to the benefits of playing sport and living an active life.

“It's up to all of us to work together to ensure we provide the best possible opportunities to children and young people, both in the weeks and months ahead and when we emerge from the pandemic.”

For more information on London's Active Lives data for Children and Young

People, [click here](#). See the full report from Sport England [here](#).

About London Sport

London Sport aims to make London the most physically active city in the world. Supported by the Mayor of London and Sport England, our target is to get Londoners more physically active.

For more information on London Sport, visit www.londonsport.org

Contacts



Andrew Lawton

Press Contact

Communications Manager

andrew.lawton@londonsport.org

07398 215 076

07398 215 076



Press Office

Press Contact

media@londonsport.org