THE VALUE OF SPORT

—

MAIN REPORT

2017

SPORT NEW ZEALAND

> “New Zealand wouldn’t be New Zealand without sport and outdoor recreation.”

BACKGROUND

This report presents the findings of research commissioned by Sport NZ and undertaken by Angus and Associates over three stages to understand the value of sport and active recreation in New Zealand:

1. A literature review.
2. In-depth qualitative research with 42 New Zealanders and more than 60 other sport and recreation sector stakeholders.
3. Quantitative research involving a representative sample of the general public (1516 New Zealanders), 346 people working in the sport and recreation sector, representatives of 121 organisations operating in the sector and 178 other organisations (some of our largest corporates and many small and medium enterprises).

Further evidence from additional Sport NZ research, insights and evaluation have then been added where relevant. The findings are therefore based on a mix of evidence and perceptions that individuals, communities and the nation benefit from participation in sport and active recreation.

New Zealanders value sport and active recreation.

Survey results indicate that the great majority of the general public agree that physical activity through sport, exercise and recreation is valuable. Whether individuals are ‘active’ or not, whether they are ‘sporty’ or not, whether they even like sport or not, most New Zealanders see value in sport and active recreation.*

Evidence from a wide range of international and national sources support many of New Zealanders’ perceptions, confirming that sport adds value to the lives of individuals, communities and the nation.

Put simply, sport and active recreation creates happier, healthier people, better connected communities and a stronger New Zealand.

* To find out more about how New Zealanders participate in sport and active recreation see our Active NZ research.

HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN REDUCE RATES OF A RANGE OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS SUCH AS DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.

"It gives a young person a sense of worth, pride, a feeling of I can do things, it's not just about the elite."

– EDUCATION PROVIDER, AUCKLAND [1]

OVERVIEW

89%

Agree that being active **helps relieve stress and is good for mental health** [1]

64%

Agree with the statement **"I feel happier and better able to cope with everyday stress when I'm being active"** [1]

82%

Agree that sport and other physical activities help to **motivate people and to create a sense of purpose** [1]

OUTCOMES

Mental health conditions impact many New Zealanders' lives.

- In 2014, 16% of adults had been diagnosed with a common mental disorder (including depression, bipolar disorder and/or anxiety disorder).
- As a group, mental disorders are the third-leading cause of health burden (loss of life years due to mortality or years lived with disability) for New Zealanders.
- Women, Māori and Pacific and those living in the most deprived areas of New Zealand fare worse than other New Zealanders in some important mental health statistics.[3]

Quality sport and active recreation can positively impact mental health across the lifespan.

- Participation in quality physical activity and sport is an effective way to prevent and manage several mental health disorders (i.e. depression, anxiety, dementia). [5,6]
- Physical activity and sport has also been associated with indicators of better mental well-being (e.g. happiness, self-esteem, cognitive development). [2,7,3]
- Compared to non-exercisers, a greater proportion of those who engaged in some exercise were:
  - Classified as having the highest level of wellbeing (27% c.f 17%)
  - Experienced 'happiness' (24% c.f 17%) and 'high energy' (42.4% c.f 25.5%)
  - And fewer experienced 'depressed mood' (15% c.f 21%) [4]
- Regular aerobic exercise in midlife increases cognitive scores and significantly reduces the risk of dementia. [5]
- There is evidence of neuroprotective factors including larger hippocampus, grey matter. Volumes and improved brain connectivity among physically fit compared to unfit seniors. [5]
- Conservatively estimated, if physical inactivity was eliminated, 7.7% of dementia cases in New Zealand could be avoided. [6]
- New Zealanders who meet the physical activity recommendations through participation in sport are 58% more likely to score in the healthy range for mental wellbeing. [6]
- There is increasing evidence that sport and physical activity can improve self-confidence, self-esteem and physical self-perceptions, result in fewer depressive symptoms and improve overall cognitive and mental health in young people. [8, 9]
- Some evidence suggests that the impact on these factors may be greater for those participating in team sports, however the cause of this is not known. [9]
- Play may have crucially important functions for healthy mental development including formation and maintenance of friendships, self regulation of emotions and ability to cope with stress and anxiety.[10, 11]

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HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY REDUCES RATES OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SUCH AS CANCER, HEART DISEASE, TYPE 2 DIABETES AND OBESITY – AND IMPROVES LIFE EXPECTANCY.

OVERVIEW

92%

Agree that being active **keeps people physically fit and healthy.** [1]

85%

Agree that being active **keeps their children physically fit and healthy.** [1]

91%

State **'health and fitness' as their primary reason for taking part.** [2]

OUTCOMES

The incidence of non-communicable disease is increasing in New Zealand.

- Physical inactivity is the fourth biggest risk factor for non-communicable diseases, accounting for three million deaths globally in 2010. [5]
- Māori and Pacific adults and children have higher rates of most health risks and conditions.
- Adults living in the most socioeconomically deprived areas have significantly higher levels of, and are seeing the largest increases in most health risks.
- Pacific adults and children have the highest rates of obesity with 67% of adults and 30% of children classified as obese. [4]

The human and economic cost of physical inactivity is high.

- Conservatively estimated, physical inactivity cost New Zealand's healthcare system over $200m in 2013 [7], and if eliminated could avoid New Zealanders:
  - 7.9% of heart disease cases
  - 9.8% of type 2 diabetes cases
  - 13.1% of breast cancer cases
  - 14.1% of colon cancer cases
  - 12.7% of deaths [6]

Sport and physical activity can reduce rates of many physical health related disorders and improve health outcomes as a result.

- Significant studies have identified relationships between physical activity and reducing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and obesity related disorders. [3]
- Regular physical activity results in similar outcomes for children including improved cardiovascular fitness, decreased risk of type 2 diabetes, improved bone health, and maintaining a healthy weight. [8]
- There is at least moderate evidence of physical activity having beneficial impacts on rates of breast cancer, colon cancer, osteoporosis and stroke. [3]

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HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN DEVELOP IMPORTANT LIFE SKILLS INCLUDING TEAMWORK, SELF-CONFIDENCE AND LEADERSHIP.

> It gives you knowledge about how to work in a team."
>
> – STUDENT, LOWER HUTT [2]

OVERVIEW

84%

Agree that many **essential life skills are learned playing sport.** [1]

88%

Agree that sport and other physical activities provide **opportunities to achieve and help build confidence.** [1]

68%

Agree that being active gives **their children opportunities to achieve and helps build confidence .** [1]

> A lot of guys have gained employment because of who they play for, because it's on their CV. It shows that they are committed, dedicated."
>
> – COACH [3]

OUTCOMES

Physical activity and sport support the development of essential life skills in young people.

- Regular participation in sport, particularly team sport, is associated with improved social skills, social integration, competence cooperation and teamwork. [4]
- Baseline data from Play.Sport found that the majority of students think that sport and active recreation gives them the opportunity to learn important life skills, including opportunities to work in a team (79%), learn how to be a leader (59%) and fair play (84%).[2]

The opportunity to gain new skills is a key driver for becoming a sport volunteer.

- Around 25% of volunteers state the opportunity to gain new skills as their motivation – this is higher for 16 to 24-year-olds (36%) [5]
- 22% of 16 to 24-year-old volunteers stated their motivation was to improve their employment opportunities. [5]

Participation in sport has been linked with greater employability in graduates. This correlation is stronger for those who volunteer.

- Sport at university was associated with greater employability compared with attending the gym, or not engaging in sport – this effect was greater for graduates who take part in sport and volunteering.
- Employers listed a a wide range of attributes developed through sport including teamwork, communication skills, motivation, competitiveness and resilience. [6]

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HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CAN IMPROVE COGNITIVE FUNCTION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

OUTCOMES

There is a positive association between quality physical activity and cognitive function.

- There is a positive relationship between physical activity and children's cognitive control, planning, concentration, attention, reasoning ability and on task behaviour. [1]
- The developing brain is particularly responsive to exercise, and doing more physical activity in childhood can have positive impacts on development of the structure and function of the brain and therefore cognitive function, including:
  - Regions such as the hippocampus, which is involved in memory
  - The prefrontal cortex, which is involved in our ability to think, reason and commit purposeful action based on thought not impulse
  - Increased formation of synapses between neurons, increasing the ability of different parts of the brain to talk to each other
  - Increased levels of brain growth factor [1,2,3]
- There is evidence that inactivity can have the opposite effect, negatively impacting on aspects of cognition including memory, multi-tasking and the ability to stay focused.[4]

Quality physical activity can contribute to improved academic outcomes for children.

- There is a positive association between physical activity and higher test scores, improved reading, mathematics skills and a positive orientation towards achievement. [1,2,3,4,9,10]
- There is evidence that children can spend more time being physically active and less time in the classroom without having an impact on academic achievement. [1]
- Evidence suggests achieving a threshold intensity of physical activity may be necessary for learning benefits, and a higher level of physical activity (moderate to vigorous intensity) is related to better cognitive performance. [5,6]
- There is a positive association between sport participation and higher academic performance, attendance rates and less lateness and stand downs. [7]
- The Sport in Education programme found using sport as a context for learning and engagement in eight New Zealand schools (deciles 1-8) resulted in improved attendance rates, decreased behaviour incidents, higher retention rates, increased engagement levels and task or assignment completion, and improved NCEA results. [8]

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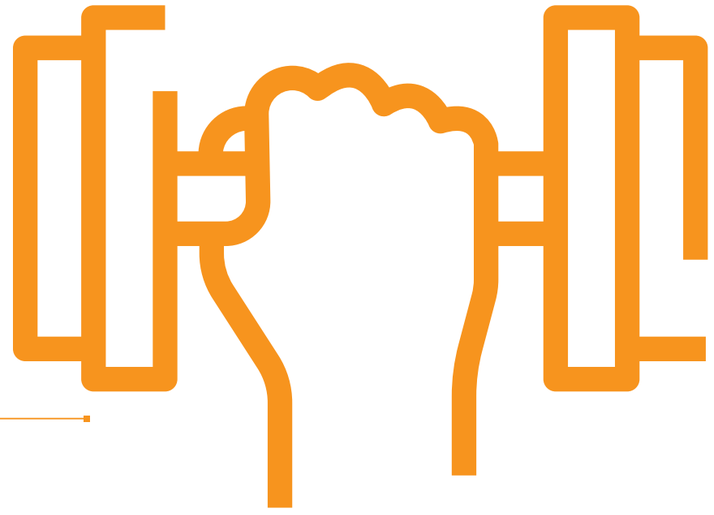
HAPPIER, HEALTHIER PEOPLE

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY EARLY IN LIFE IS POSITIVELY ASSOCIATED WITH MAINTAINING ACTIVE AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS LATER IN LIFE.

OVERVIEW



88%

Agree that sport helps children **develop important physical skills** that are needed later in life.[1]

OUTCOMES

Physical activity as a child helps develop physical, psychological and social competencies that enable long-term participation in physical activity and sport.

- The time spent participating in quality youth sport and physical activity opportunities is a critical variable in explaining adult participation. Young people who participate more frequently in a variety of activities, particularly outside of school, and who have greater cardiorespiratory fitness, are more likely to be active in adulthood. [2,3,4]
- Regular participation as a child increases an individual's 'sport capital' – the stock of physical, psychological and social attributes and competencies linked to a greater likelihood of life-long participation, positive attitudes and behaviours associated with being physically active. [5,6]
- Positive experiences with sport and physical activity in childhood and adolescence have a positive influence on motivation to be active in later years. [6]
- Cardiovascular fitness in adolescence has been found to be predictive of cognition in middle age. More specifically, more exercise done during adolescence was associated with higher likelihood of professional success later in life. [6]
- Physical inactivity and sedentary behaviours in childhood can lead to poor health later in life.[6]

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BETTER CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

BETTER CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

NEW ZEALANDERS FEEL THAT OUR HIGH PERFORMANCE ATHLETES AND TEAMS IGNITE INTEREST IN SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION.

OVERVIEW

83%

Agree that high performance athletes and teams **inspire others to succeed** in their own sport and physical activities.[1]

80%

Agree that high performance athletes and teams have a **positive impact on participation.**[1]

83%

Agree that high performance athletes and teams help to **ignite interest in sport and physical activity.**[1]

OUTCOMES

Young New Zealanders are influenced by high performance athletes and teams when choosing how they participate in sport and active recreation.

- 34.5% of boys and 21.5% of girls 10 to 15-years-old identified that famous sport personalities influenced them when they choose what sport or active things they do (ranked 3rd and 5th respectively in terms of influence).
- 25.2% of boys and 14.0% of girls 10 to 15-years-old identified 'a famous sports team' influences them when they choose what sport or active things they do (ranked 4th and 7th respectively).[2]

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BETTER CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL NETWORKS AND BUILD A SENSE OF BELONGING FOR PARTICIPANTS.

> Sport clubs provide social connection and community – club rooms are full of pictures which contain friends, family etc... providing a link to the community."
>
> – CULTURAL ORGANISATION, WELLINGTON [1]

> I thought I'd just come and give back to this community where I'm from."
>
> –SENIOR PLAYER [2]

> Participating in the programme has helped remove insecurities and given new migrants confidence in the New Zealand Community. It has made them feel 'wanted', and that New Zealand is an inclusive country that welcome and supports migrants from all ethnicities."[6]

OUTCOMES

A sense of belonging is important to New Zealanders' feelings of wellbeing.

- People with strong connections to family, friends and those living within supportive communities are doing the best – 62% who feel close to their communities are 'awesome' (used to describe the highest levels of wellbeing).[3]

The opportunity to socialise is central to many people's decision to participate in physical activity and sport.

- 52.9% indicated that social reasons were their main reason for taking part.[4]

Evidence suggests that participation in sport and physical activity can help to develop feelings of belonging and inclusion particularly for new migrant populations.

- In 2015, the most common social group or club for new migrants to belong to was a sports club or group (26%), followed by a religious group (21%).[5]
- The Connect2Sport programme provided anecdotal evidence of sport programming leading to feelings of belonging for new migrants. Nearly all participants felt that taking part in the programme had helped them feel more at home in New Zealand.[6]

84%

Of respondents agree that sport and physical activity bring people together and promote a sense of belonging. [1]

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BETTER CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

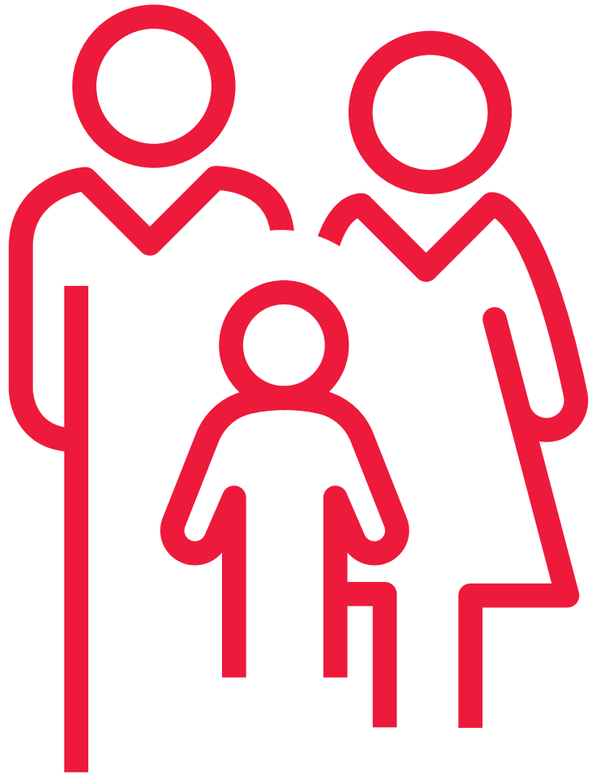
SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BRING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER, CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND CURB ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOURS.

> "It's lifted the profile of the area, lifted the aspirations of the kids. You can't put a dollar figure on that."
>
> – COMMITTEE/GOVERNANCE [2]

OVERVIEW

73%

Agree that sport and other physical activities help **build vibrant and stimulating communities.** [1]



70%

Agree with the statement **'high performance sport brings communities together.** [1]

77%

Agree that sport and physical activities help **instil a sense of pride in our communities.** [1]

OUTCOMES

There is a link between sport participation, improved social capital, feelings of social cohesion and community identity.

- Because sport acts as a conduit to bring individuals within communities together, to make friends and to develop networks, it also presents an opportunity to develop social capital. [3]
- There are strong associations between national levels of sport club memberships and levels of social trust and wellbeing. [3,4]
- Evidence suggests that the bridging impact of sport participation does not occur organically and is dependent on providing equitable and safe options that are inclusive of the whole community regardless of gender, ethnicity or deprivation level. [5,6]
- Some evidence suggests that sport and recreation in youth may also result in increased levels of community involvement as an adult. [7]
- 35% of volunteers state their reason for volunteering is to contribute to their community. [9]

Sport and recreation programming can reduce the incidence of antisocial behaviour.

- Higher levels of social capital have been found to be correlated with a number of desirable outcomes, such as lower crime rates. [3]
- Evidence suggests that it is the connection with supportive individuals or groups within the structured community sport and recreation programmes, that encourages the development of a number of 'protective factors' which may reduce antisocial behaviour. [8]
- Improving local sport and recreation facilities such as local parks can improve participation levels and community pride, while reducing perceived instances of antisocial behaviour within a community. [5, 10]

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A STRONGER NEW ZEALAND

A STRONGER NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALANDERS BELIEVE SPORT AND ACTIVE RECREATION AT BOTH COMMUNITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE LEVELS STRENGTHENS OUR NATIONAL PRIDE AND FUELS OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY.

> "I think it gives New Zealand a big profile which is really good. I think it has a beneficial effect for trade. If New Zealand's winning the yachting then the light goes on our trade."
>
> – MALE, CHRISTCHURCH [1]

> They have a sense of pride that they're playing for the Porirua Club where they grew up. I can't emphasise enough the sense of pride that people in Porirua have about Norths [rugby club]."
>
> – LOCAL MEDIA [2]

76%

Agree that **sport and physical activities** help instil a sense of pride in our country.[1]

OUTCOMES

83%

Agree that **high performance sport** helps instill a sense of pride in our country.[1]

86%

Agree with the statement '**high performance sport** gives New Zealand positive international exposure'.[1]

83%

Agree that **high performance sport** contributes to our national identify as New Zealanders'.[1]

1. Angus & Associates (2017). Better Understanding the Value of Sport.
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A STRONGER NEW ZEALAND

THE SPORT AND OUTDOOR RECREATION SECTOR MAKES SIGNIFICANT DIRECT AND INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEW ZEALAND ECONOMY.

> People would do better in their jobs for instance, because they're happier and more motivated and driven and better stamina as well, as far as working goes."
>
> – MALE, AUCKLAND [1]

OVERVIEW

68%

Agree that sport and other physical activities generate **economic benefits for communities.**[1]

72%

Agree that sport and other physical activities **generate economic benefits for New Zealand.**[1]

68%

Agree that high performance sport makes a **valuable contribution to New Zealand's economy.**[1]

OUTCOMES

The sport and recreation sector's contribution to GDP is significant and growing.

- The sector contributed $4.9 billion, or 2.3% of GDP, in the 2012/13 financial year.[2]

Sport plays a critical role in international and domestic tourism.

- For 47% of all international participants, the World Masters Games 2017 was their first trip to New Zealand and 70% rated their likelihood to recommend New Zealand as a holiday destination as a 9 or 10 out of 10.[3]
- In 2015, 29% of recent migrants identified recreation and leisure activities as their main reasons for coming to New Zealand.[4]

The number of people employed in the sector is large and growing.

- 53,904 people were recorded in the 2013 Census as employed in sport and recreation industries or occupations, an increase of 11.5% on the 2006 Census. [2]

Volunteering is a part of many New Zealanders lives and their contribution to the economy is large.

- Active NZ 2013/14 recorded that 28.1% of adults had volunteered at least once over the previous year.[5]
- These volunteers contributed 67.7 million hours of volunteered time over 12 months with an estimated market value of $1.03lb.[2]

Evidence suggests that participation in sport and active recreation can reduce absenteeism, presentism and ultimately contribute to a more productive workforce.

- The New Zealand Treasury estimates that the cost of lost output because of absenteeism is $0.929b.[6]
- Active workers work on average 1.8 days more than their inactive counterparts.[2]
- It was estimated that the Australian sport sector improved productivity from a healthier workforce by $12b per year.[7]

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A STRONGER NEW ZEALAND

HOSTING MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS CAN CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIES, AS WELL AS IMPROVING HOST CITY FEELINGS OF PRIDE AND DEVELOPING THE SKILLS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS.

OVERVIEW

Hosting major sporting events has significant economic benefits for New Zealand.

- The Rugby World Cup was estimated to have resulted in short-term expansion of the national economy to around $1.730b, sustaining the equivalent of 22,890 extra jobs for one year. [1]
- The World Masters Games 2017 added $63m to GDP. [2]

Major sporting events increase exposure and can improve perceptions of host cities.

- There is some evidence linking hosting of major sporting events with improving the perception of a host city with local residents and externally.[2]
- 85% of public attendees at the World Masters Games 2017 agree that the event was well delivered and enhanced their pride in the city (Aucklanders only) – this figure increased for participants (91%). [2]

Involvement with major sports events provides New Zealanders the opportunity to develop various skills and expertise.

- 78% of volunteers agreed that the World Masters Games 2017 provided them with learning and development opportunities as a sports volunteer.
- 88% of volunteers agreed that participating in the World Masters Games had increased their interest in volunteering at future sports events. [2]

1. Dalziel, P. (2015). The Economic Value of Sport and Outdoor Recreation to New Zealand: Updated Data. AERU, Lincoln University.
2. World Masters Games. (2017). 2017 World Masters Games Auckland New Zealand. Post Event Report.

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