

# Parents Survey 2024

## PE and School Sport Report

Youth Sport Trust / YouGov  
6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024

# About the PE & School Sport Report

The Youth Sport Trust is a children's charity founded in 1995 to harness the power of play and sport in children's education and development. Our vision is a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits of play and sport.

Not only is physical activity, PE, play and sport vital for the future health of the nation but it is also a critical tool to improve mental, social and emotional wellbeing and positive academic outcomes for young people.

To inform the annual Youth Sport Trust PE and School Sport Report, we commissioned YouGov Plc to conduct research into the current attitudes and views of the GB population, and parents specifically, on the importance of sport and play. This report provides a summary of the key findings from the parent's survey.




All figures in this report, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,033 parents of children aged 18 and under within Great Britain. Fieldwork was undertaken between 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+). All data in this report relates to the views of parents of children aged 18 or under, unless otherwise stated.



# British parents prioritise their child's wellbeing

The wellbeing of their child is the priority of parents when choosing a school. Parents view wellbeing as more important than academic attainment.



**43%** of parents  
are concerned about their  
child's mental health


- Pupil wellbeing at school was the biggest influencing factor for choice of secondary school and second for primary schools, after location.
- Nearly three quarters (**73%**) of parents agreed that schools should measure the wellbeing of pupils just as they do with academic progress.
- Two thirds (**66%**) of parents believe that the wellbeing of pupils is more important than their academic attainment

Source: YST/YouGov Plc, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> (2024), PE and School Sport Survey, weighted and are representative of all GB parents of children aged 18 or under (aged 18+); Sample size: 1,003 adults.

# British parents recognise the benefits of sport and play

Almost all parents (98%) agree that sport and play helps young people in some way, in particular their physical health, fitness, mental wellbeing, life skills, confidence, social wellbeing and resilience.

92%



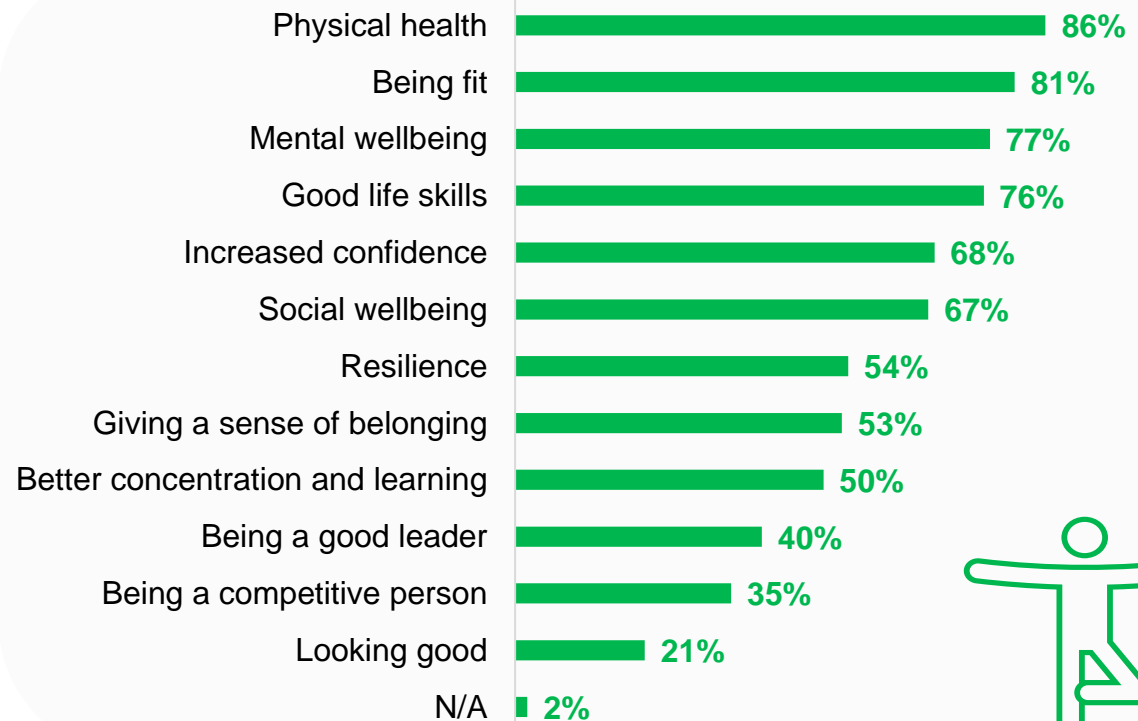
of parents also believe that sport and play are important parts of every young person's education and development.

70%



of parents say they encourage their children to be active and play sport

## How does sport and play help young people?



Source: YST/YouGov Plc, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> (2024), PE and School Sport Survey, weighted and are representative of all GB parents of children aged 18 or under (aged 18+): Sample size: 1,003 adults.

# British parents see challenges for activity levels

Parents see barriers to physical activity in their child(ren)'s school, and they see challenges in the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and digital distractions.



## School-related challenges

- Less than half (**42%**) of parents feel that their child gets the right amount of time for sport and play during PE lessons
- Only half (**52%**) of parents feel that their child gets the right amount of time for sport and play at school extra-curricular time, e.g. lunchtime, after school clubs
- Nearly a fifth (**18%**) of parents disagree that the PE kit is affordable for them as a family
- **14%** of parents feel that the PE kit is a barrier for their child's participation in PE and physical activity at school



## Cost-of-living crisis

- Nearly half (**48%**) of parents believe that the cost-of-living increases crisis have had a negative impact on the number of opportunities their child has to be physically active, play and take part in sport.
- **40%** of parents feel that the cost-of-living increase has had a long-term negative impact on their child's wellbeing.
- **48%** of parents agree that the challenges associated with the cost-of-living increases make it more difficult for them to be active as a family



## Digital distractions

- **83%** of parents are concerned that young people are spending too much time online and not enough time with each other in person.
- **70%** of parents agree that digital distractions mean their child is spending less time being active.

Source: YST/YouGov Plc, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> (2024), PE and School Sport Survey, weighted and are representative of all GB parents of children aged 18 or under (aged 18+): Sample size: 1,003 adults.

# British parents are unaware of activity guidelines

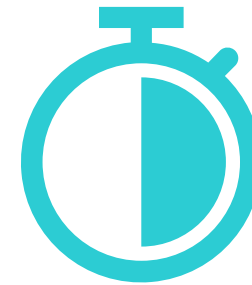
Most parents (81%) are concerned that young people are not getting enough physical activity, however the majority are unaware of the Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines for young people.

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The **Chief Medical Officers (CMOs)** recommend that young people (aged 5-18) should be active, defined as participating in 'moderate-to-vigorous physical activity' (MVPA), for an average of **at least 60 minutes every day**.



Only **31%** of parents believe that children should be active for **at least 60 minutes** a day



Worryingly, **62%** of parents believe that children should be active for **30 minutes or less** a day

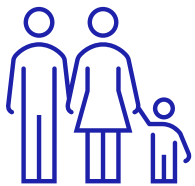
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# Schools have a role to play to support activity

British parents agree with the Government's guidelines that schools need to provide physical activity during the school day and over a third would want their child's school to make a pledge to get children more active in school.



The **Government's Childhood Obesity Plan guidelines** recommend that children and young people should get **30 minutes** of their daily 60 minutes of physical activity **during the school day**.



Most parents seem to concur with the Childhood Obesity Plan, as **64%** of parents think that primary schools and **72%** believe that secondary schools are **recommended to provide 30 minutes of activity a day**.

## Parents recognise the role schools can play in helping children be active...

- **85%** of parents are concerned that cuts to PE, school sport and breaktimes in schools are likely to have a negative impact on pupils' wellbeing.
- **21%** of parents would be more inclined to choose a school which has a strong focus on PE and school sport.

## ...and are calling for a focus on PE and activity in schools

- **85%** believe that schools should be providing at least 2 hours of PE a week and ensure every pupil is active for 30 minutes a day.
- **67%** of parents agree that PE should be a core subject on the national curriculum
- **39%** of parents would like to see their child's school making a pledge to get children more active in school.

Source: YST/YouGov Plc, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> (2024), PE and School Sport Survey, weighted and are representative of all GB parents of children aged 18 or under (aged 18+); Sample size: 1,003 adults.



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