

Junior Participation

Participation in sport and physical activity is fundamental to the health and development of our children and youth. It provides the foundation for a healthy lifestyle and is associated with a range of benefits throughout life including social interaction, increased attentiveness, confidence, health and overall wellbeing. At the same time, we know that being inactive is a cause of many health problems such as obesity and diabetes which have increased in recent years.

Physical activity behaviour patterns are determined early in life and active children are likely to become active adults. Junior participation in sport and physical activity has an important role in ensuring the future health and wellbeing of the Australian population.

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Organised physical activity includes organised sport and dancing. Organised sport is defined as sports which are played or trained for outside of school hours organised by a school, club or association.¹

Children's participation in organised physical activity²

In 2006, approximately 184,600 (69.6%) Western Australian children aged 5 to 15 years were involved in organised sport and/or dancing outside of school hours in the past 12 months. Of these 172,900 (65.2% of Western Australian children) were involved in organised sport. Note that children can be involved in both organised sport and dancing.

Children's participation in organised physical activity in 2006 by sex³

In 2006, the proportion of Western Australian children aged 5 to 14 years who participated in organised sport outside of school hours in the past 12 months was higher for males than females. However, when organised dancing is included the rates were similar for males and females.

In 2006 more than one-fifth (22.8%) of Western Australian girls aged 5 to 14 years participated in organised dancing in the past 12 months.

Rates of participation in organised sport and/or dancing by sex: children aged 5 to 14 years, Western Australia – 2006 ^(a)

	Organised sport (%)	Organised sport and/or dancing (%)
Males	68.5	69.4
Females	61.8	69.9
Total	65.2	69.6

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Junior Participation

Children’s participation in organised physical activity over time⁴

Between 2000 and 2006, there was no significant increase in the participation rate of children aged 5 to 15 years in organised sport and/or dancing in Western Australia. Nationally, there was a slight increase in this period.

Rates of participation in organised sport and/or dancing: children aged 5 to 14 years, Western Australia, 2000–2006 ^(a)

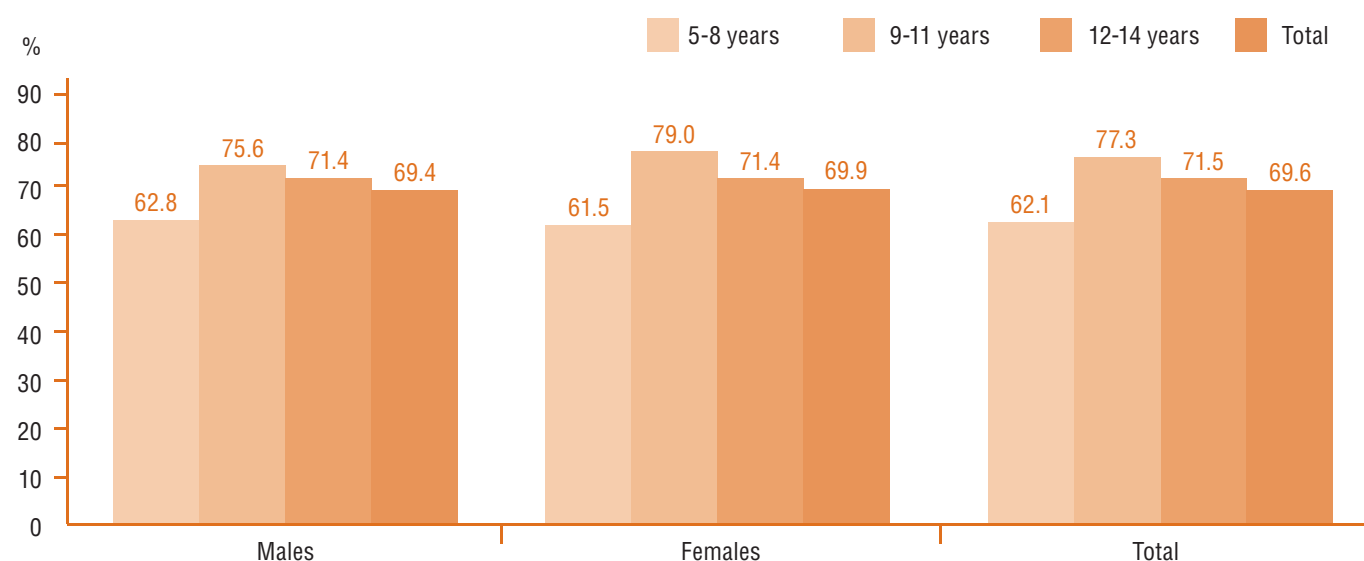
Year	Western Australia (%)	Australia (%)
2000	67.3	64.0
2003	71.8	66.7
2006	69.6	67.9

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Children’s participation in organised physical activity by age

In 2006, Western Australian children aged 9–11 years were the most likely to have participated in organised sport and/or dancing outside of school hours in the past 12 months (77.3%). This was for both males and females.⁵

Participation in organised sport and/or dancing by age and sex: children aged 5 to 14 years, Western Australia – 2006 ^{(a) 6}



(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

In 2006, the average time that Western Australian children aged 5 to 14 years participated in organised sport and/or dancing was 5.4 hours in the two week survey period. This was higher for girls (5.9 hours) than boys (4.9 hours).⁷

In 2006, the average number of times that Western Australian children participated in organised sport and/or dancing in the past 12 months was 77.4 times. It was higher for girls (83.7) than boys (71.4).⁸

Junior Participation

Most frequently played organised sports⁹

In 2006, the organised sports that were most frequently played outside of school hours by Western Australian children aged 5 to 14 years were swimming (14.6%), Australian rules football (13.3%) and netball (10.4%). The most popular sport for boys was Australian rules football and for girls netball.

Most frequently played organised sports for boys aged 5 to 14 years: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

Organised Sport	Participation rate (%)
Australian rules football	25.3
Swimming	14.3
Soccer (outdoor)	13.1
Cricket (outdoor)	10.5
Tennis	9.3

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Most frequently played organised sports for girls aged 5 to 14 years: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

Organised Sport	Participation rate (%)
Netball	21.2
Swimming	14.8
Basketball	9.3
Gymnastics	6.1
Tennis	5.6

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

NON-ORGANISED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Participation in non-organised physical activity¹⁰

As well as organised physical activity, non-organised physical activities make an important contribution to children's physical activity. Popular activities include bike riding, skateboarding or rollerblading.

In 2006, the proportions of children aged 5 to 14 years in Western Australia who participated in bike riding and skateboarding or rollerblading in the past 12 months were higher for males than females.

Non-organised physical activities for children aged 5 to 14 years by sex: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

Activity	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)
Bike riding	78.8	63.9	71.5
Skateboarding or rollerblading	35.3	20.1	27.9

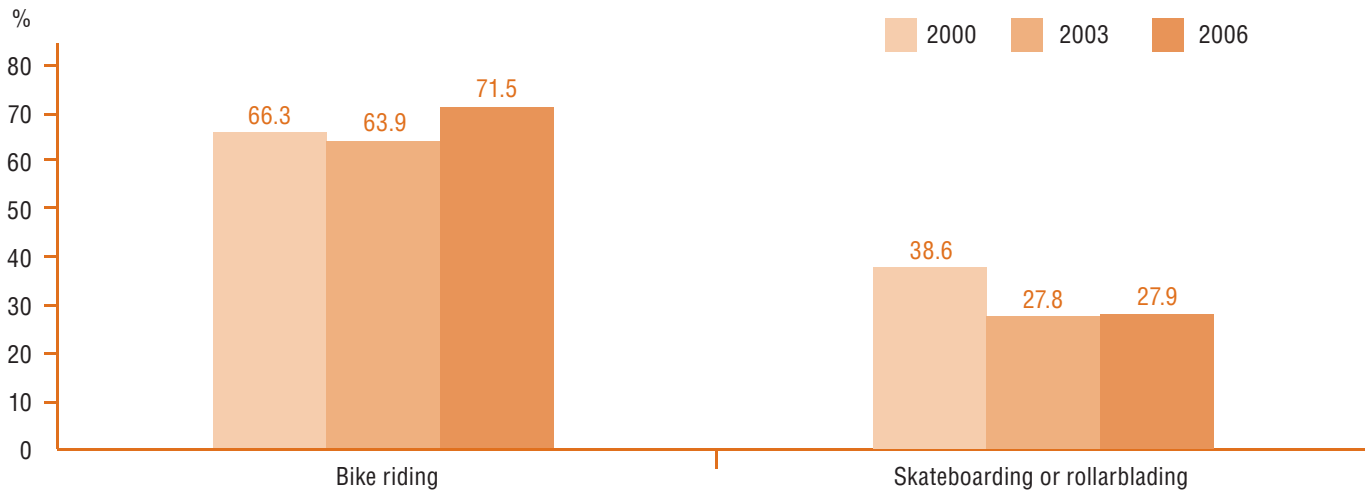
(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Junior Participation

Children's participation in non-organised physical activities over time^{11, 12, 13}

From 2000 to 2006, the participation rate for bike riding increased while for skateboarding or rollerblading it decreased.

Non-organised physical activities for children aged 5 to 14 years: Western Australia – 2000, 2003, 2006¹⁾



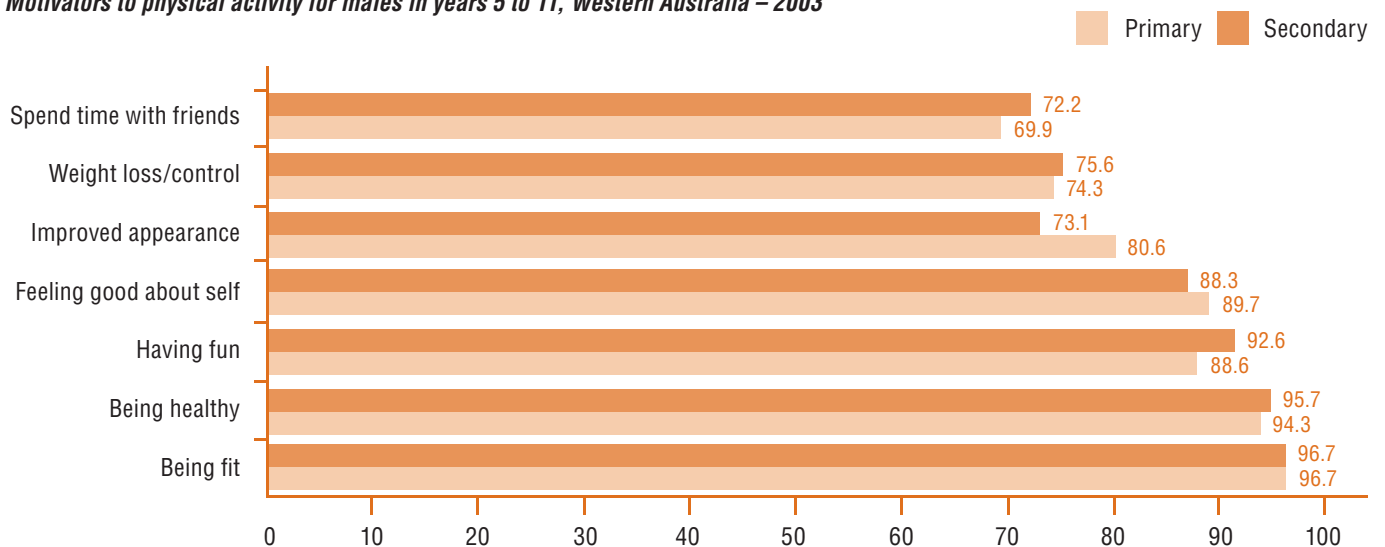
(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Motivators and barriers to junior participation in physical activity

Motivators¹⁴

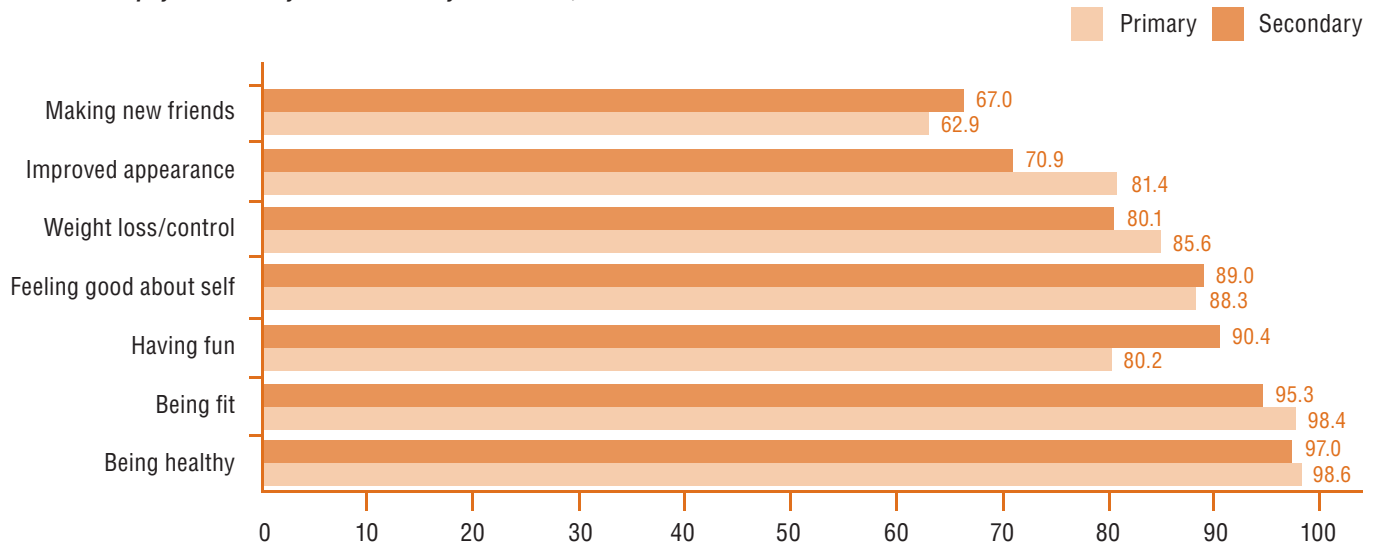
In 2003, Western Australian school students in years 5 to 11 were asked whether they agreed with statements about motivations to being active. The responses with the most agreement were similar for males and females and for primary and secondary students.

Motivators to physical activity for males in years 5 to 11, Western Australia – 2003



Junior Participation

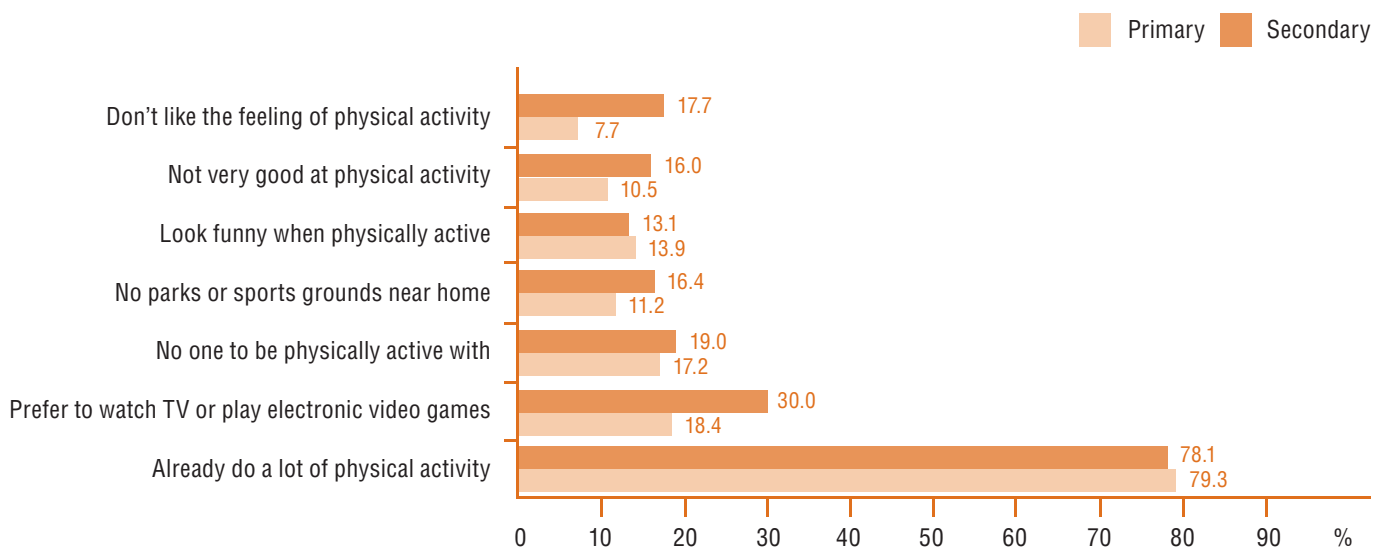
Motivators to physical activity for females in years 5 to 11, Western Australia – 2003



Barriers¹⁵

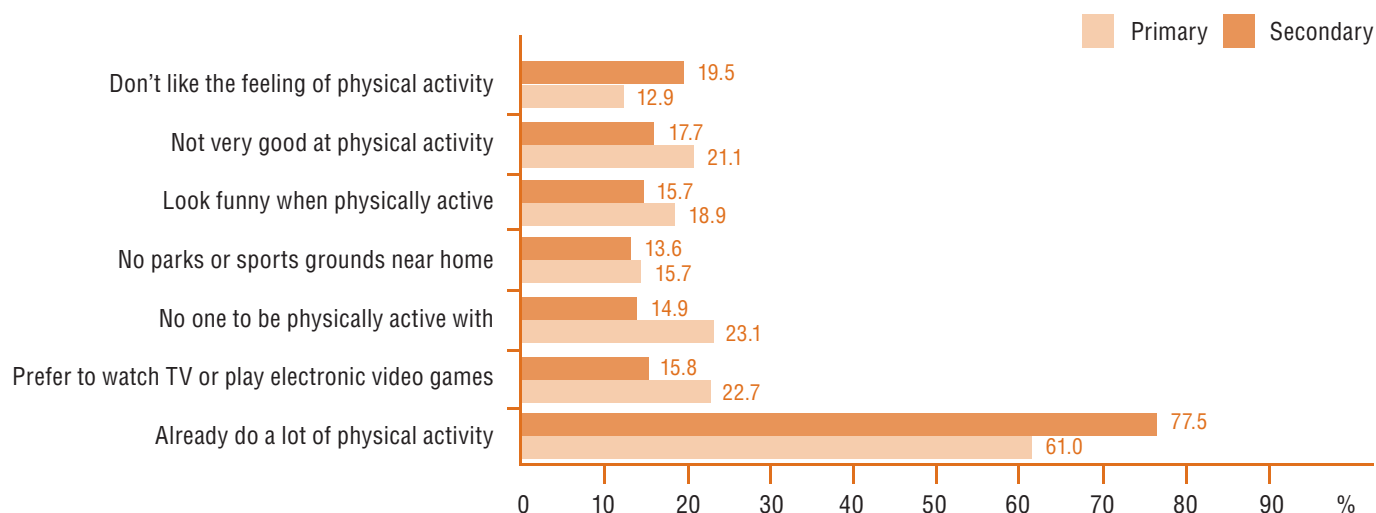
In 2003, Western Australian school students in years 5 to 11 were asked whether they agreed with statements about reasons for not participating more in physical activity. Over 70% of students agreed that their physical activity level was already sufficient. Other barriers to participation included a preference for TV or electronic games, not having anyone to be physically active with and not being very good at physical activity.

Barriers to physical activity for males in years 5 to 11, Western Australia – 2003



Junior Participation

Barriers to physical activity for females in years 5 to 11, Western Australia – 2003



Socio-economic status and junior participation in Western Australia¹⁶

In 2003, there were significant differences in participation rates of children with different characteristics. For example in Western Australia:

- Two thirds (66.9%) of children born in Australia participated in organised sport, compared to 55.6% of those born overseas.
- Children living in couple families were more likely to participate in organised sport outside of school hours (67.6%) than those in one-parent families (59.0%).

Participation in organised sport by employment status of parents: children aged 5 to 14 years, Western Australia – 2003^(a)

Employment status of parents	Participation rate (%)
One Parent Families	
Parent employed	68.5
Parent not employed	49.5
Couple families	
Both parents employed	75.7
One parent employed	59.3
Neither parent employed	28.7

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

- For the whole of Australia in 2003, children from households in the highest quintile of overall socio-economic status, as measured by the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) were much more likely to participate in an organised sport or dancing than those in the lowest quintile (80.6% compared to 51.9%).¹⁷

Junior Participation

Benefits of physical activity for children¹⁸

Physical health benefits

Physical activity assists young people to

- Develop healthy musculoskeletal tissues (i.e. bones, muscles and joints);
- Develop a healthy cardiovascular system (i.e. heart and lungs);
- Develop neuromuscular awareness (i.e. coordination and movement control); and
- Maintain a healthy body weight.

Mental health benefits

Physical activity provides psychological benefits by improving control over anxiety and depression.

Social benefits

Physical activity assists young people in their social development by providing opportunities for:

- Self-expression;
- Building self-confidence;
- Social interaction; and
- Integration.

Other benefits

In addition to the above, it has been suggested that physically active young people:

- More readily adopt other healthy behaviours (e.g. avoidance of tobacco, alcohol and drug use); and
- Demonstrate higher academic performance at school.

Endnotes

- ¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p58.
- ² Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). 'State Table 5 - Participation in organised sport or dancing - By States or territories; age and sex - 2006', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 10/03/2008. [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/32DB09525D54D5DDCA25726000111919/\\$File/49010_state_table5.xls](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/32DB09525D54D5DDCA25726000111919/$File/49010_state_table5.xls)
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). 'Time series table 1 - Organised sport or dancing, by age group and sex, 2000, 2003, 2006', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 10/03/2008. [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/1990AABC35D27297CA257361001F7C3F/\\$File/49010_timeseries_table1.xls](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/1990AABC35D27297CA257361001F7C3F/$File/49010_timeseries_table1.xls)
- ⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). 'State Table 5 - Participation in organised sport or dancing - By States or territories; age and sex - 2006', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 10/03/2008. [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/32DB09525D54D5DDCA25726000111919/\\$File/49010_state_table5.xls](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/32DB09525D54D5DDCA25726000111919/$File/49010_state_table5.xls)
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Children's participation in organised sport - 2000, 2003, 2006. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p11. Viewed 10/03/2008. http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0019/142228/ABS_-_Childrens_participation_in_organised_-_2003_-_2006
- ⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Children's participation in organised sport - 2000, 2003, 2006. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p12. Viewed 10/03/2008. http://www.ausport.gov.au/__data/assets/file/0019/142228/ABS_-_Childrens_participation_in_organised_-_2003_-_2006
- ⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). State Table 1 - Summary of Activities - By States or territories - 2006', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 10/03/2008. [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/738B8C563531F5ACCA257260001112C7/\\$File/49010_state_table1.xls](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/738B8C563531F5ACCA257260001112C7/$File/49010_state_table1.xls)
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2003). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p30.
- ¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2000). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p29.
- ¹⁴ Hands, B., Parker, H., Glasson, C., Brinkman, S. & Read, H. (2004). Results of Western Australian Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey 2003 (CAPANS). Physical Activity Technical Report. p83-84.
- ¹⁵ Ibid. p92-93.
- ¹⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics. Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. Western Australian data. Unpublished.
- ¹⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2005). The young and the restful (re-visited) - the effects of recreational choices and demographic factors on children's participation in sport. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory.
- ¹⁸ World Health Organisation. Physical activity and young people. Viewed 10/03/2008. http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/factsheet_young_people/en/index.html