

CURRENT PARTICIPATION TRENDS IN SPORT



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission



TOP SPORT PARTICIPATION TRENDS IN 2024



Personal Touch

There's a rising demand for experiences over products. Consider enhancing the experience at competitions and events and connect/communicate with participants regularly through your channels.



Holistic Health

There's a growing focus on mental health and measurement of various health elements e.g., diet and sleep. Consider incorporating health benefit messaging in your competition promotions and wellness programs.



Convenience is King

There is greater time fragmentation in current generations. Consider flexible or revised match times particularly for children and families. Promote the short time commitment required for Touch (i.e. no training for social players, max 45minutes etc.)



Personal Fitness Growth

There is an increase in participation rates of non-organized physical activity. Consider prioritizing the social aspect of Touch participation over structured competition / pathways.



Everybody's Game

There's a growing focus on inclusivity in Australia's diverse communities and growth of women's sport. Consider inclusive messaging and programs with wide-ranging participation opportunities.



New Technologies

Individuals are increasingly online to connect and access information and clubs. Consider latest digital trends to stay up-to-date with digital and social media. Make sure your affiliate is always able to accept enquiries or be found online via MySideline competition finder or Google.



More than Sport

Sport is increasingly being seen as a positive contribution to society and utilised by governments to achieve objectives. Consider the role that you play in sport and the mission of your organisation within your community for participants. Promote your role when applying for funding.



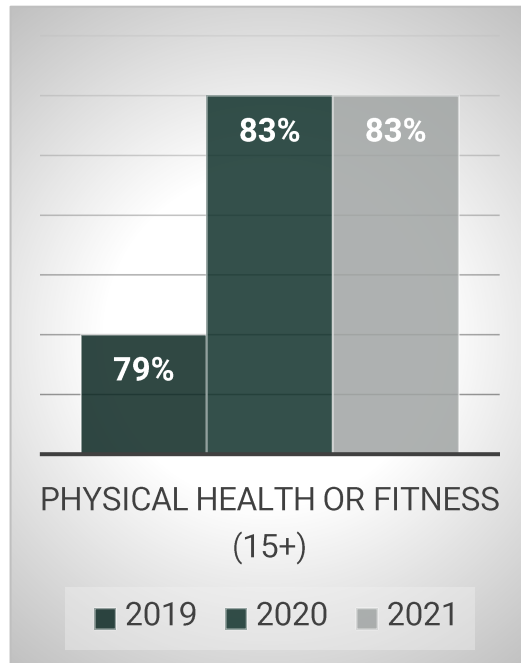
Changing Population

Australia is changing. Take the time to understand the ever-changing needs & demographics of your community and adapt content and language to suit your local / target demographic. Consider programs or marketing tailored to new audiences.

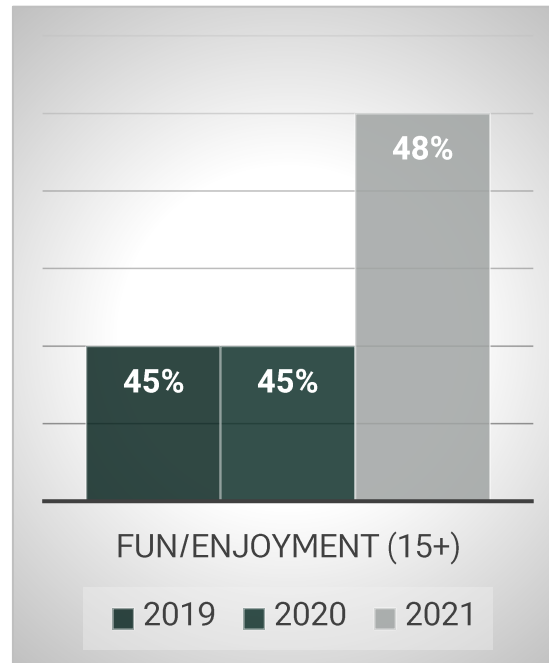
TOP MOTIVATORS FOR PLAYING SPORT

When planning competitions and promotional activities, focus should be applied to the leading motivating factors that influence participation in sport and physical activity.

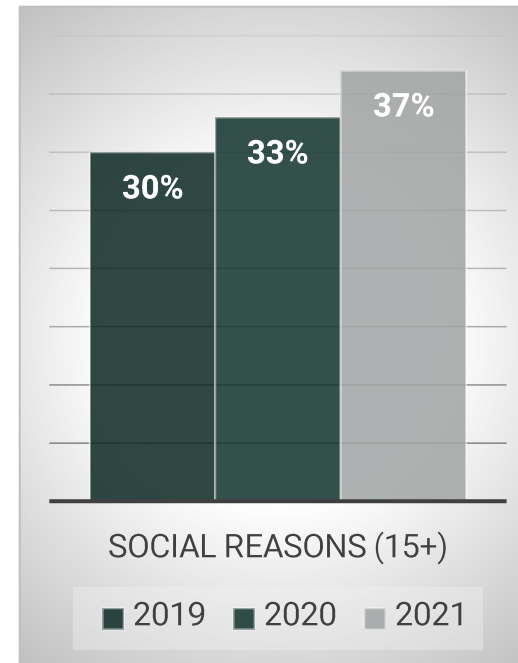
PHYSICAL HEALTH OR FITNESS (15+)



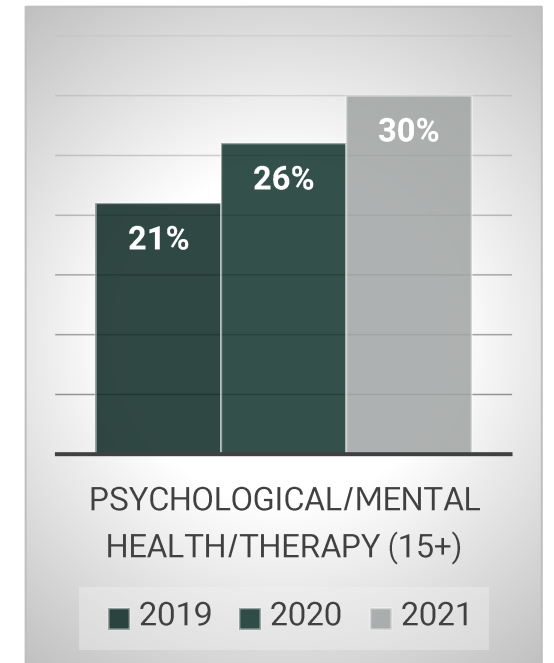
FUN / ENJOYMENT (15+)



SOCIAL REASONS (15+)



MENTAL HEALTH (15+)



MOST COMMON MOTIVATORS TO PLAY TOUCH FOOTBALL²

Sources:

https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1060399/Ausplay-COVID-update-July-2022.pdf

²TFA National Participation Survey, June 2023



FACTORS INFLUENCING SPORT PARTICIPATION

There are many factors influencing an Australian's decision to participate or not participate in sport. Understanding these barriers and influences can make a difference in attracting or retaining participants.



FACTORS SUPPORTIVE OF SPORTS PARTICIPATION

Positive environment and experience (fun)

Peer interaction

Parental and family support (for juniors)

Venue accessibility

Welcoming environment



FACTORS NEGATIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO NON-PARTICIPATION OR DROPOUT

Poor on field or off field experiences

Expense of competition or training

Inconvenient game times

Excessive travel requirements

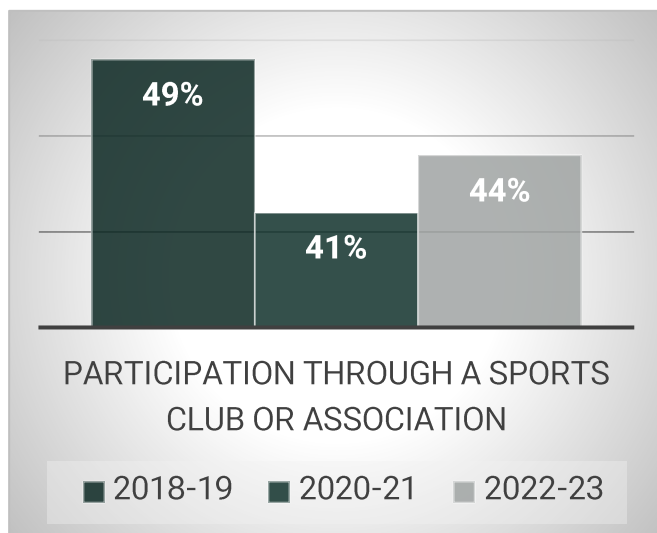
An environment that is 'too competitive'

SNAPSHOT: NATIONAL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION REPORT (OCTOBER 2023)

KEY FINDINGS

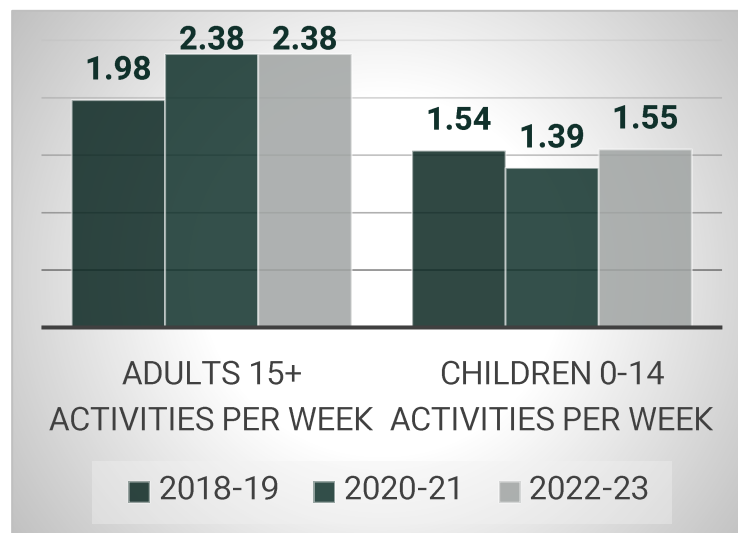
CLUB PARTICIPATION

- Participation through a sports club or association is recovering after a low point during COVID-19 but not yet back to pre-COVID levels.



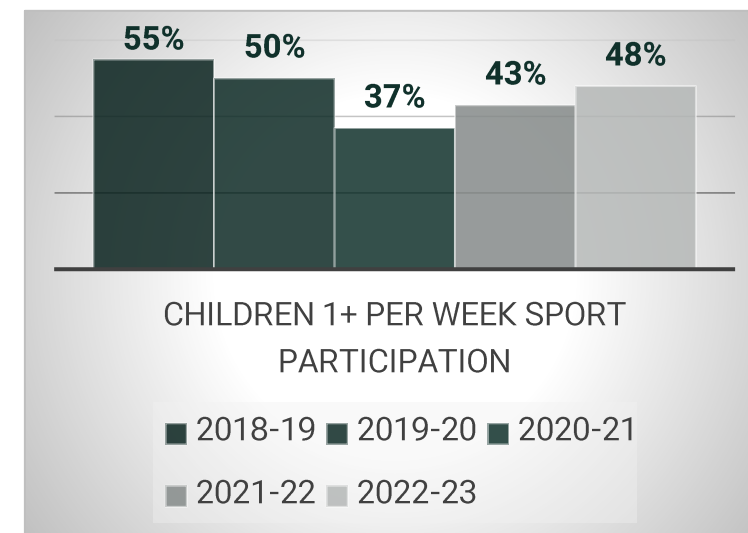
AMOUNT OF ACTIVITY

- Australians aged 15+ continue to engage in a greater mix of activities compared to only sport-related or only non-sport-related.
- The average number of activities for 15+ remains higher than pre-COVID, and has rebounded for children



CHILDRENS PARTICIPATION

- Children aged 0-14 continue to return to regular sporting activity
- Children have returned to sport at a higher rate but not yet back to pre-COVID levels.



Sources:

<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results/participation-report>

https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1122757/AusPlay-COVID-Review-October-2023.pdf

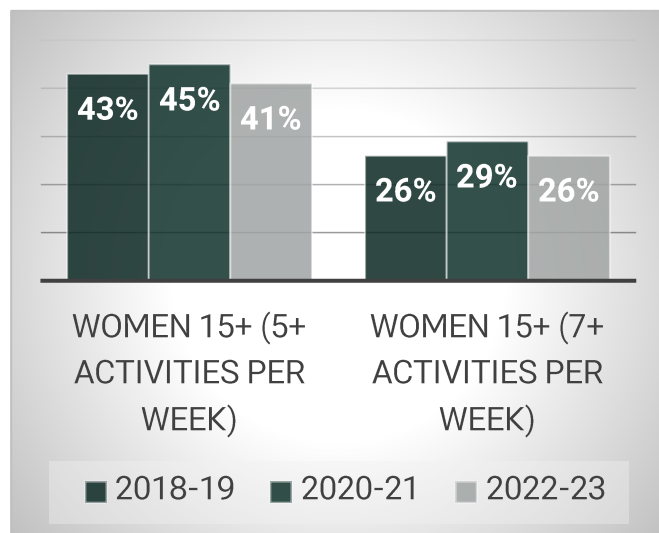


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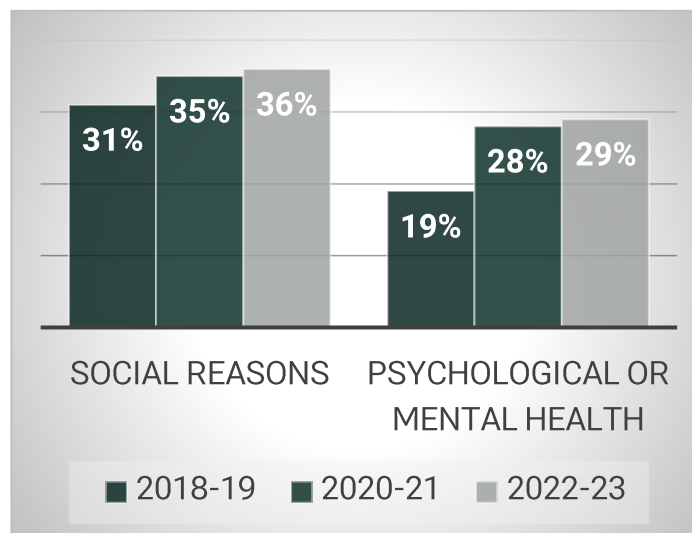
FEMALE PARTICIPATION

- Female participation has reduced to pre-COVID levels as their initial high levels of participation have not been sustained. Lack of time, family and work commitments likely factors.



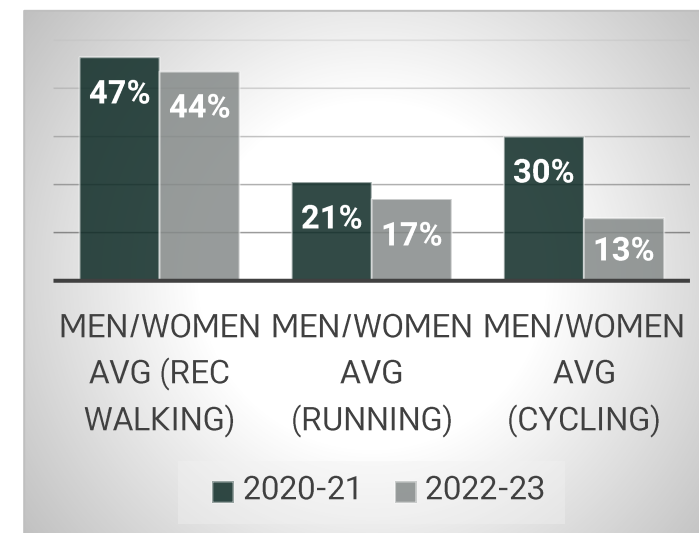
PRIMARY MOTIVATORS

- Australians continue to exercise for social and mental health benefits.
- Increasing trend appears to have slowed down but it remains a key motivator for Australians to become involved / stay in sport.



INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

- Among Australians aged 15+, activities that became more popular during COVID-19 have dropped off their peak participation rates (2020-21) but still attract more participants than they did pre-COVID (2018-19), competing with organised sports.



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<https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/research/ausplay/results/participation-report>

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SNAPSHOT: ASC 'PLAY WELL' SPORT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY (NOVEMBER 2023)

In response to the current trends in participation, the Australian Sports Commission introduced 'Play Well' – a new sports participation strategy built on creating new environments and experiences with a safe, welcoming, inclusive, fun, and united approach.

The goal of the strategy is to deliver inclusive and quality sport and physical activity programs for Australians to become more involved in sport from all ages, backgrounds, genders, and abilities.

Although this is an industry wide strategy, the key components are applicable to clubs and associations of any size.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS	DRIVE LIFELONG INVOLVEMENT	ACTIVATING PLACES AND SPACES	BUILDING CONNECTIONS	EQUITABLE ACCESS	TRANSFORMING CULTURE
Building the capability of people and associations to meet the needs of everyone involved in the sport.	Foster a sporting environment that enables positive lifelong involvement in the sport.	Creating, improving, activating, and better managing places and spaces to ensure everyone can have safe and enjoyable sporting experience at your club.	Creating a connected and collaborative sport ecosystem that supports all associations to provide quality sporting experiences.	Prioritising equity and choice to ensure all Australians can access our sport.	Transforming the culture of sport in Australia and at local associations to create an environment where everyone can access safe, inclusive, welcoming, and fun experiences.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

The following resources provide further information on sport participation trends.

[ASC Market Trends 2024](#)

[Ausplay Participation in Sport post COVID \(2022\)](#)

[Factors influencing sport participation](#)

[National sport and physical activity participation](#)

[AusPlay-National-Sport-and-Physical-Activity-Participation-Report-October-2023](#)

[Play Well – Australia's Sport Participation Strategy](#)



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