



# PE Toolkit for Schools

Written by

Motherwell Cheshire CIO

#CheshireGirlsCan Campaign





"There was a limited choice of sports at school and no opportunity for new ones. it wasn't innovative at all"

# About the toolkit

This toolkit has been designed to help schools get more girls involved in PE and school sport. This toolkit aims to provide guidance on making PE inclusive by

- Preventing gendered sports in schools
- Adapting PE lessons to be inclusive of all pupils abilities and disabilities
- Including pupils opinions and feelings, of sports in the timetable
- Incorporating online platforms as a alternative choice

The toolkit is based on research and conversations with our Youth board. It examines the reasons why so few girls are active and, importantly, seeks to understand what would help them to become more active.

"Today, only 12% of girls aged 14 meet the official guidelines for physical activity – roughly half the number of boys at the same age"

"When playing sports at school, the teachers just picked the same 'favourites' and this put me off sports"

# What Are The Barriers Girls Face that Impacts Them Participating In Sport?

## 1. Lack of self-confidence

Girls, on average, have less self-confidence than boys and rate their performance or ability more negatively than do boys. Self-confidence is also linked to competition.

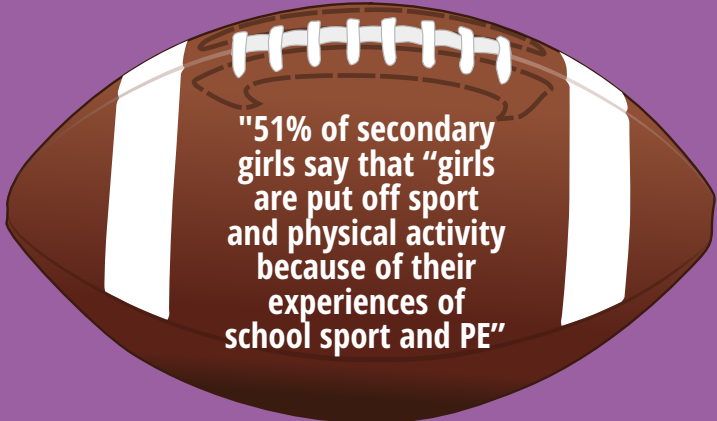
Although some women enjoy the competitive element of sport, many girls and women are turned off sport because it's competitive. This is one of the reasons why 'aesthetic activities', such as aerobics, gymnastics, yoga, are increasingly popular amongst girls and young women, and why some traditional team sports are less popular.

## 2. Male-dominated culture of sport

The culture of sport itself presents a problem. Some women/girls are turned off 'sport' altogether because they see it as a male-dominated activity. It is just not seen as feminine or 'girly' to be interested in sport and, for many girls, being sporty is felt to be at odds with being feminine.

## 3. Period and puberty

Puberty is a confusing time of significant physical, emotional and social change for girls, which they feel unprepared to deal with due to a lack of education. During this transition to adulthood, girls can form negative attitudes towards sport.



"51% of secondary girls say that "girls are put off sport and physical activity because of their experiences of school sport and PE"

# Recommendations

## Review and consultation

- To begin with, it's important to reflect on where your school is currently, in terms of girls' physical activity, and where you'd like it to be. On the basis of this reflection, your school will have a better understanding of what girls want and what needs to be done differently

A part of the reflection process would be getting input from your students. What do your students enjoy? What sport activity is their least favourite? What sport would they like to do that isn't on the planner? Do they feel like they are only learning about sport that is generally a female sport?

Below are two small questionnaire example that could be handed out to students before or after each term to understand what they want to see going forward. This gives the pupils the opportunity to explore a variety of sports no matter their gender, as well as providing feedback to teachers on enjoyment where they can further signpost the pupils to outside of school sports groups.

Which of these sports would you like to be included in your PE lessons? (choose as many as you want)

- ☐ Athletics
- ☐ Badminton
- ☐ Baseball
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Boxing
- ☐ Canoeing
- ☐ Cricket
- ☐ Cross country
- ☐ Curling
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Fencing
- ☐ Football
- ☐ Golf
- ☐ Gymnastics
- ☐ Handball
- ☐ Hockey

### PE Feedback Form

Form description

What sport have you just done in PE?

Long-answer text

On a scale of 1-5 how much did you like this sport in PE?

I did not like this sport at all 1 2 3 4 5 I liked this sport a lot

Would you like to do this sport again?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

Would you like anything to be different next time you do this sport in PE?


Your answer

**46% of the least active girls agreed that they “don’t like the activities we get to do in PE” compared to just one in four – 26% – of the most active**



## Self esteem and body image

1. Make sure all women/girls, regardless of skills or experience, get the chance to be an active part of activities and teams.
2. Women and girls respond better to the social, health and well-being characteristics than competition, so perhaps combine physical activity with social activities or guest speakers on active lifestyles, nutrition, body image, smoking etc.
3. Empower girls through involving them in design of PE kits if they are feeling uncomfortable in what they are wearing they are not going to enjoy the activities provided.
4. Develop role models by using girls from the school current or past as positive influencers and advocates for other groups of girls.
5. Place developing self-confidence at the heart of PE and physical activity.



"School sports were not inclusive, if you physically couldn't take part (disability etc) you were made to change into PE clothes then just sit on the side all lesson"

## Pupils using their menstrual cycle as a way of getting out of PE

**What can a girl do to manage symptoms and why should we encourage girls stay active during their period?**

While it may seem a surprise to most, and they may not feel like doing it, exercise and being active is a really good way of reducing symptoms and helping girls to feel better!

Research has found yoga, aerobic exercise and light strength training to be effective in reducing stress and symptoms. These are options that could be offered to pupils. Not every girl experiences the same symptoms and cycle. Giving options can reduce disengagement in exercise.

# Research Evidence



## Statistics

### Changing-the-Game-for-Girls

- Over half of girls agree that "There are more opportunities for boys to succeed in sport/physical activity than girls"
- Today, only 12% of girls aged 14 meet the official guidelines for physical activity – roughly half the number of boys at the same age
- Some teachers said that PE was not overall a priority in school or particularly valued against the more academic parts of the curriculum. That meant that the abilities and qualities of the person teaching sport and PE had crucial impact
  - 48% of girls said that "getting sweaty is unfeminine"
  - 75% of girls agree that "girls are self conscious about their bodies"
- The least active are four times more likely than the most active to agree that "I feel like my body is on show in PE and this makes me like PE less"
- 42% of girls say there aren't many positive sporting role models for girls
- 37% of girls agree that "I am motivated to be active because my mother/stepmother is active"
- 58% of girls agreed that "girls drop out of sport because their friends do"

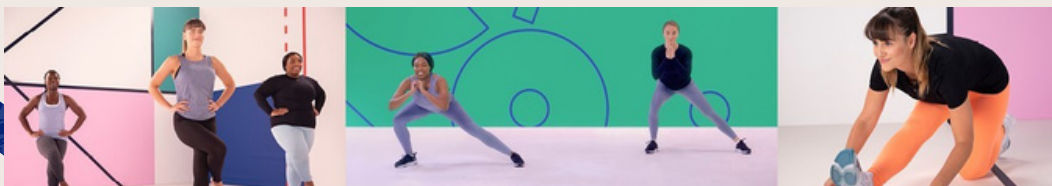
### Betty for Schools Research

- Almost half (46 per cent) of women said they had used their periods to skip a PE class.
- 59 per cent reflected that avoiding sports during school years can negatively impact the way women feel about physical exercise when they get older.
- Half of women also said they had experienced periods so painful and heavy that they had physically prevented them from playing sport while 63 per cent of women said they "dreaded" PE lessons if they were during their time of the month.

"I hated PE. it was the worst part of the week"

### Case studies

- A rural school introduced street dance and aerobics into the dance programme. Girls asked for an after-school street dance club and the evening aerobics class, run on the school site, was marketed to mothers and daughters. Participation rates within the curriculum have improved.
- Supported by the Head Teacher, Willowfield School have run Girls Active Days specifically targeting Year 9 girls in which taster sessions for current and new extra-curricular activities were launched, with an athlete mentor present to provide inspiration and encouragement. The days were hugely successful in increasing girls' participation – 95% were taking part in 3 hours of PESS compared to the national average of 44%. Attending extra-curricular clubs and participation in leadership opportunities also increased
- A relaxation of kit rules at one rural school had a major impact on participation rates. This involved the girls in deciding on a new PE kit. Because they'd chosen it they like it, enjoyed wearing it and were proud of their trendy, corporate image.



# Resources

Studio You is a video platform funded by Sport England and powered by This Girl Can, designed to engage less active teenage girls through free video-based PE lessons. Children and young people aged 5-18 should engage in 60 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity a day, yet only 10% of girls aged 13-16 achieve this\*. School PE lessons play a vital role in helping teenagers reach their recommended amount of exercise and building a healthy long-term relationship with physical activity. That's why Studio You was created, as it provides teachers with a different style of resource to support the delivery of PE lessons to this audience.

Developed using insight from both PE teachers and girls within KS3 and KS4, Studio You's ambition is to reconnect young people with physical education, improve their confidence and make being active fun. This keeps all pupils engaged and active no matter what the PE lesson.

"The sports were really gendered, boys got to do football, when i asked if the girls could play i was told i could go and join the boys PE class on my own"

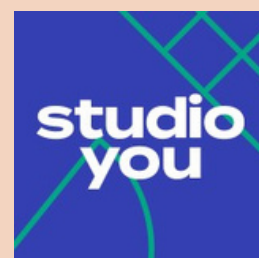
## Curriculum link

In England, the aims of the national curriculum for PE are for students to develop skills in a range of activities, be physically active for a sustained period of time, engage in competitive activities and, most importantly, lead healthy and active lives. Studio You not only supports the curriculum delivery, it offers new ways to bring PE to life in an engaging and inspiring way through alternative activities like yoga, dance and boxing.

Many teenage girls are turned off by competition, so Studio You can help you position this in a supportive way by focusing on self-improvement and enjoyment.

Built with the 2019 Ofsted framework in mind, Studio You is linked to the core values while maintaining the importance of having fun, including:

- Developing a good physical and mental health
- Developing personal interests and talents
- Becoming responsible, respectful and active citizens
- Building confidence



## How it works

You can plan your lessons by browsing through the themed content, as well as using the filters to include the time you have available. You can save the videos you think your students will like into custom folders, alternatively, engage your class by letting them choose the video they want to take part in during lesson time.

# Contact us

"Once you were beyond year 9, and hadn't chosen PE as a GCSE there is no incentive for the teachers to get you to join in, no reason to make the class fun, or inclusive. they didn't care if you took part or not"



You can get in touch through:

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CheshireGirlsCan>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MotherwellChes>

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## References

<https://www.studio-you.co.uk/about-studio-you>

\* Sport England, CYP Active Lives Survey, 2019

\*\* Women in Sport, Reframing Sport for Teenage Girls: Building Strong Foundations for their Futures, 2019

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