

Community Tennis Forum – Tennis Victoria

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

18 March 2015

Female Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

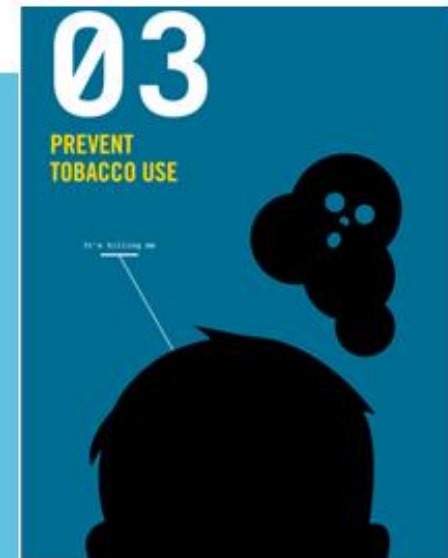
A snapshot of the evidence



VicHealth

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) is a pioneer in health promotion – the process of enabling people to increase control over and improve their health.

VicHealth Action Agenda





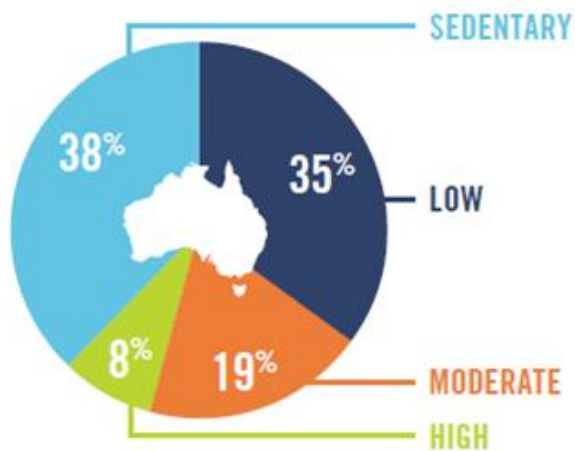
What does the evidence tell us?

Snapshot



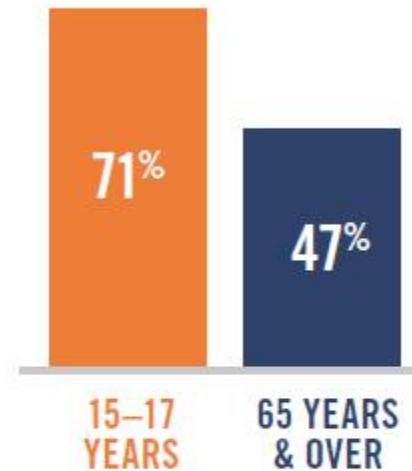
- Females of all ages generally have lower physical activity participation rates than males (ABS 2012)
- Increasing physical activity levels for females is important for health and wellbeing (ABS 2012)
- Gender and the needs of females should be considered when developing specific physical activity opportunities

Trends



TREND: ACTIVITY LEVELS

More than two-thirds of adult Australian females were classified as being sedentary or having low levels of exercise.



TREND: PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Participation in sport and active recreation by Victorian females declines as females get older.

What motivates females to get physically active?



Key motivators:

- Maintaining or improving health
- Appearance and weight management
- Personal fulfilment
- Well-being & improving quality of life
- Social interactions

Not all females are the same and some may experience different barriers and challenges to others. Certain barriers can affect a female more at different life stages ...



Physical Activity across the life stages

Influencers on physical activity

- Parents' physical activity levels^{27,28}
- Parental support (transport, cost and organisation)^{28,29}

- Life stages and lifestyle (education, work, home life, family)¹³
- Inflexible opportunities for physical activity¹³
- Societal pressures and guilt (prioritising physical activity in their lives)¹³

- Level of partner, family and social support^{23,25,33}

- Fewer 'perceived' barriers (than other age groups)²⁰
- Illness and injury²⁰
- Lack of information or opportunity²⁰

- Cultural background, beliefs around gender and sport or value of physical activity^{40,41}
- Confidence, knowledge and perception of ability^{42,43,44,25,20,40,17}

LIFE STAGE



**GIRLS & ADOLESCENTS
0–18 YEARS**



**WOMEN
18–55 YEARS**



MOTHERS



**OLDER WOMEN
55+ YEARS**



**FEMALES
OF ALL AGES**

Keys to engagement in physical activity

- Provide non-competitive options³¹
- Make it fun and social³¹
- Provide goal setting and self-monitoring options³¹

- Provide opportunities for involvement in program creation (creates a sense of ownership and meets needs)^{14,24}

- Provide flexible physical activity options in terms of schedule, cost and location^{14,24,13}
- Promote benefits of short duration physical activity that is suitable to fit into lifestyle (e.g. at work)^{14,24,13}

- Promote relevant, timely, specific information with consideration to overcoming health concerns^{20,24,38,39}
- Highlight the social focus^{20,24,38,39}

- Create partnerships and consultation with cultural and community groups^{40,45,46}
- Use word of mouth or face-to-face communication^{14,37,53}
- Foster social group and family support⁴⁰ and engage them in participation^{14,37}

In Summary ...

- Females choose to participate for a range of reasons
- Sports can engage females across life stages by taking a step back and reviewing what they offer

* VicHealth acknowledges the Centre for Sport and Social Impact at La Trobe University

