



**Sport Ireland
Media Release
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For Immediate Release

The first all-island Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study published

Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland and Healthy Ireland (through the Healthy Ireland fund) today published the first all-island Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity (CSPPA 2018) study. It provides rich insights into the experiences of children and adolescents throughout the island around their participation in physical activity, sport and physical education. In the case of children from the Republic of Ireland it also includes comparisons with the results of the CSPPA 2010 study commissioned by Sport Ireland.

The report contains a mixture of positive findings as well as highlighting some significant challenges in the areas of physical activity, sport and physical education. These include:

- Only a small minority of children, North and South, are active enough to meet the physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity per day. The numbers meeting the guidelines decline as children get older.
- Levels of active and social participation in sport, in the school and in the community, are high although there are notable differences for particular groups based on age, gender, disability, and social class. Children who play sport regularly are significantly more likely to meet the physical activity guidelines.
- In the Republic of Ireland, notable improvements were seen in active commuting (walking or cycling) to school since the previous study in 2010 although barriers exist here around the distance to travel to schools and the question of safety.
- Compared to 2010, some improvements were recorded around the delivery of Physical Education although the report identifies that more needs to be done in this regard.

Speaking at the publication of the CSPPA 2018, Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Brendan Griffin TD, said:

"From this excellent study, which has been completed with a most welcome level of North-South research collaboration, we can see that the majority of children are participating in

organised sport, at either community or school level. While that is good news, we need to build on this achievement by providing more support to parents, clubs and communities with the resources they need to ensure children have a broad range of opportunities to participate. A Sports Action Plan covering the period to end 2022 will be presented to Government by the end of this year which will contain a number of specific actions designed to address the significant challenges that this report is clearly outlining”.

Minister of State for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy Minister Byrne TD said

“The promotion of physical activity for children, particularly in schools, is one of our main priorities in Healthy Ireland and a primary focus in the implementation of the National Physical Activity Plan. The CSPPA study provides us with important data on how well our children and young people are doing in terms of their levels of physical activity, and where more support and intervention may be needed.

The Department of Health has worked closely with our colleagues in the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Education and Skills to provide supports for schools and communities through initiatives such as Active School Flag and funding for Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSCs).”

Kieran Mulvey, Chairperson of Sport Ireland’s Board said

“CSPPA 2018 highlights the significant levels of sports participation among children and young people on the island and the contribution that such participation makes to their health, well-being and development. Sport Ireland is committed to working in partnership with key stakeholders under the National Sports Policy to ensure that the benefits from being active are available to all our children and young people.”

Antoinette McKeown, Chief Executive for Sport Northern Ireland said

“Sport NI welcomes the launch of the Children’s Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study (CSPPA 2018) as follow up to the original CSPPA Study (2010). I would like to express my thanks to the researchers involved on both sides of the border who have produced an invaluable look into children’s activity levels on the island of Ireland.

Notably, this is the first time that Northern Irish statistics have been included in the collection of data in the CSPPA reports- this provides an excellent base for future policy development and delivery.”

The study is expected to provide valuable baseline material against which future progress under policy developments under the National Sports Policy and National Physical Activity Plan can be assessed.

The study involved some 6,600 students from 115 schools across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland along with school principals and teachers from many of these schools. The

CSPPA 2018 research team comprised of researchers and students from University of Limerick, Dublin City University, University College Cork and Ulster University.

The full Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity study and the Infographics which summarise all the key results can be downloaded at www.sportireland.ie/Research.

Ends.

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