

# SPOTLIGHT ON DISABILITY

## KEY FINDINGS

—  
DECEMBER 2018





## One in four New Zealand adults identifies as disabled and 11 per cent of children under the age of 15 are disabled.”<sup>1</sup>

This document captures the landscape of disabled people’s participation in play, active recreation and sport.

Drawn from Sport New Zealand’s (Sport NZ’s) 2017 Active NZ survey, which captures the responses of more than 30 000 New Zealanders, this report summarises the key findings of the full Spotlight on Disability report.<sup>2</sup>

We have applied the Washington Group<sup>3</sup> Short Set of validated questions to our 2017 Active NZ survey results,<sup>4</sup> to identify most people at risk of participation in society across six domains of disability:

- seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses
- hearing, even when using a hearing aid
- walking, lifting or bending
- using your hands to hold, grasp or use objects
- learning, concentrating or remembering
- communicating, mixing with others or socialising.

## GLOSSARY

We use the term disabled people. Disability is not something people have – individuals have impairments. People with impairments are disabled if society does not provide an environment that takes their impairments adequately into account. Consequently, they experience barriers that prevent their participation in society.

**Play and active recreation** are terms used by Sport NZ to capture participation in activities not considered to be sport, for example, playing, dancing or tramping. Sport can be undertaken in an organised structure (eg, in a competition or tournament) or informally outside an organised structure.

**Participants** are people who have been physically active in play, exercise, active recreation or sport in the past seven days, where this participation excludes any physical activity undertaken for work or chores.

**Young people** are aged from 5 to 17.

**Adults** are aged 18-plus.

### Physical literacy

A person’s physical literacy is a combination of their motivation, confidence and competence to be active, along with their knowledge and understanding of how being active contributes to their life. The more physically literate someone is, the more likely they are to be physically active for life.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For information on the Disability Survey, please refer to: [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/health/disabilities/DisabilitySurvey\\_HOTP2013.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/health/disabilities/DisabilitySurvey_HOTP2013.aspx).

<sup>2</sup> Sport New Zealand. *Active NZ 2017 Participation Report*. Wellington: Sport New Zealand, 2018. Retrieved from <https://sportnz.org.nz/managing-sport/search-for-a-resource/research/active-nz-survey-2017> (5 December 2018).

<sup>3</sup> The Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG) is a United Nations city group established under the United Nations Statistical Commission. The WG was constituted to address the urgent need for cross-nationally comparable population-based measures of disability. Its mandate is the promotion and co-ordination of international co-operation in the area of health statistics focusing on disability data collection tools suitable for censuses and national surveys. <http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the Active NZ Technical Report (Q50 (young people) and Q76 (adults) are the questions used to define disability). Sport NZ. *Active NZ Technical Report for Data Collected in 2017*. Wellington: Sport NZ, 2018. Retrieved from <https://sportnz.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Active-NZ-2017-Technical-Report.pdf> (6 November 2018).

<sup>5</sup> For more information, refer to <https://sportnz.org.nz/about-us/who-we-are/what-were-working-towards/physical-literacy-approach/>.

# WHO'S AFFECTED AND HOW?

# 95 000

95 000 New Zealand children under the age of 15 (11%) are disabled, half of whom have conditions that existed at birth.

# 1 100 000

1.1 million (24%) of New Zealand adults identify as disabled.



## TYPES OF IMPAIRMENT



Learning, concentrating or remembering



Seeing, even when wearing glasses or contact lenses



Communicating, mixing with others or socialising



Using your hands to hold, grasp or use objects



Hearing, even when using a hearing aid



Walking, lifting or bending



# 15%

At least 15 per cent of disabled children live in households with incomes under \$30,000, and disabled children cost families more than non-disabled children.

# 53%

Just over half of all disabled people (53%) have more than one type of impairment.



Socioeconomic status and disability are inextricably linked – disabled adults are more likely to be unemployed or on a low income.

# PARTICIPATION AND AGE

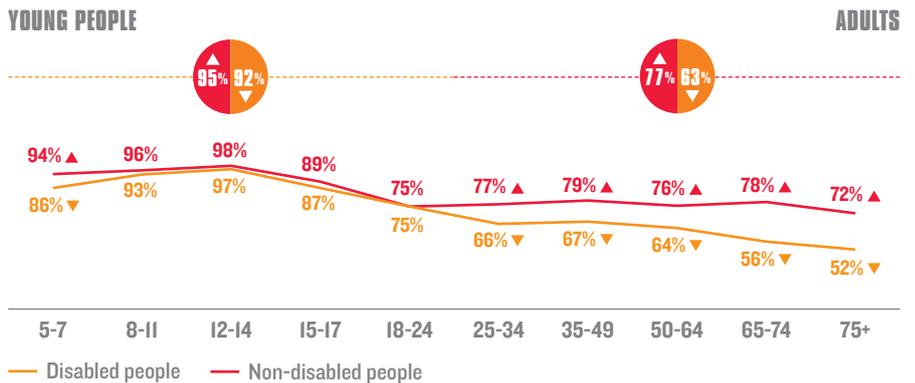
Being disabled has a negative impact on participation in play, active recreation and sport.

- Disabled people are less likely to participate in any given week. They also participate in fewer sports and activities than non-disabled.
- The appetite to participate more, compared with non-disabled, is highest among disabled adults age 25-plus. This is the age when participation among disabled adults begins its steady decline.

# 25

From age 25-plus, the proportion of disabled people participating weekly, and the average number of sports and activities they participate in, begins to decline; in contrast to a relatively stable picture for non-disabled up until age 75-plus.

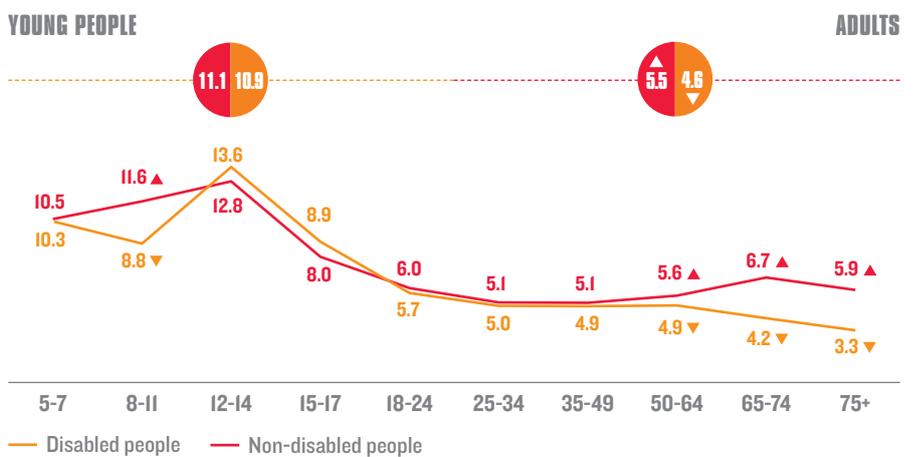
**FIGURE 1: WEEKLY PARTICIPATION**



# 16%

Overall, disabled adults spend 16 per cent less time participating than non-disabled adults. This is driven by less time spent in weekly participation from 50-plus.

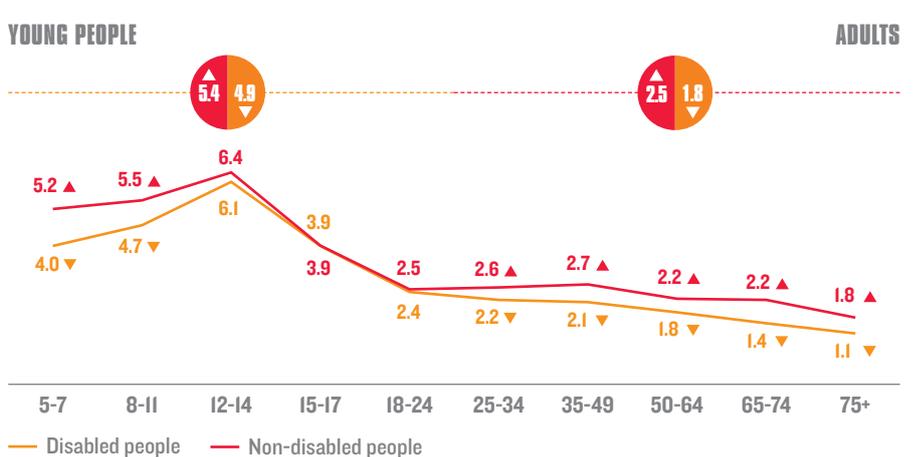
**FIGURE 2: AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK**



# 0%

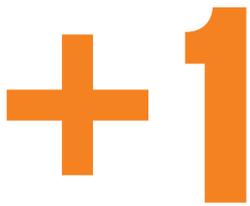
No difference is evident in weekly participation, time spent participating and the number of sports and activities participated in by disabled and non-disabled people aged 12 to 24.

**FIGURE 3: AVERAGE NUMBER OF SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES PER WEEK**



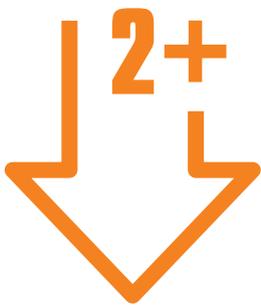
# PARTICIPATION AND TYPE OF IMPAIRMENT

The number of impairments affects weekly participation among disabled people.



Disabled young people with one impairment are just as likely to participate weekly as non-disabled young people.

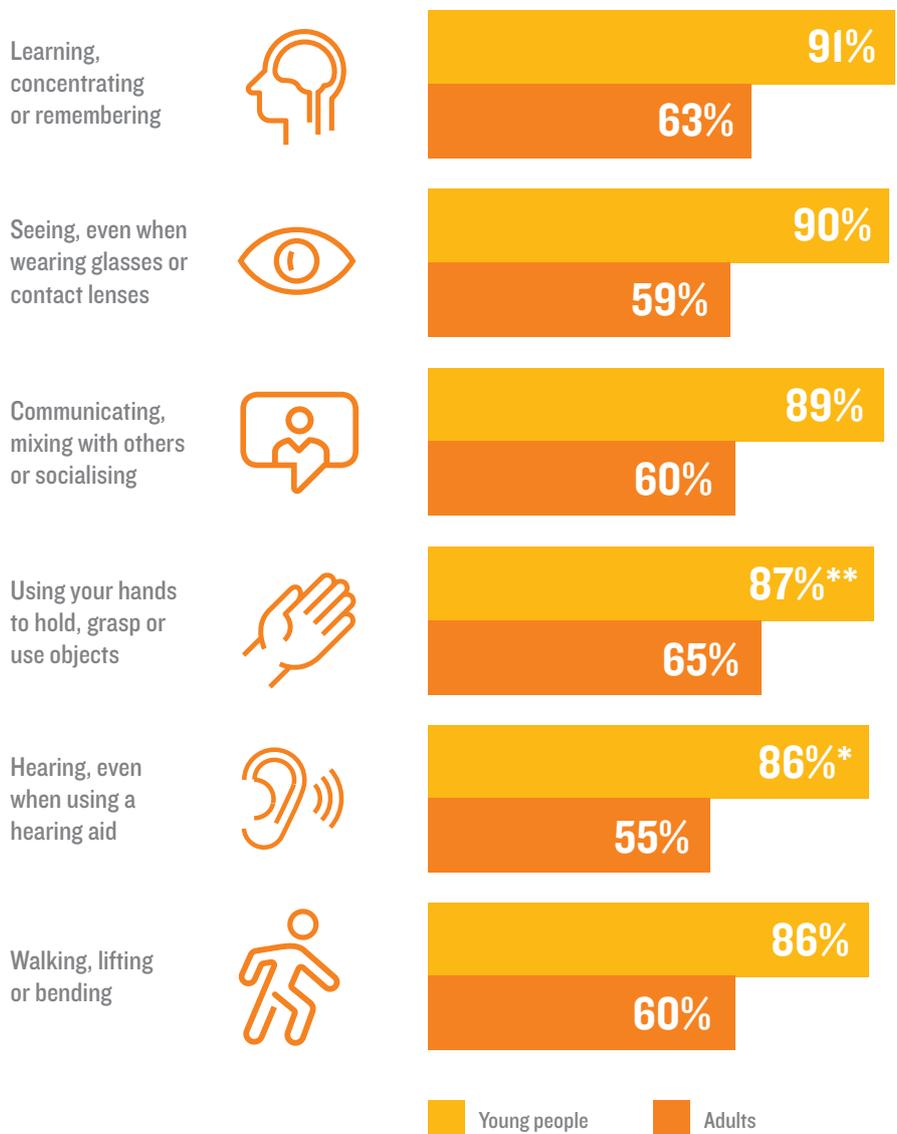
Disabled adults with one impairment are less likely to participate weekly than non-disabled adults.



With two or more impairments, participation for both disabled adults and young people drops.

- Disabled young people's participation is lowest among those with a walking, lifting or bending impairment. These young people are significantly more likely to want to increase their participation.
- For disabled adults, weekly participation is lowest among those who have a hearing impairment. These adults are significantly less likely to want to increase their participation.

**FIGURE 4: WEEKLY PARTICIPATION BY TYPE OF IMPAIRMENT**

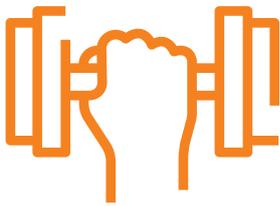


\*\* Warning: Small base (n<100) \* Warning: VERY small base (n<50)

# HOW DISABLED PEOPLE PARTICIPATE

Disabled people are less likely to participate in competitive sports and activities, especially disabled young people with an impairment in communicating, mixing with others or socialising.

- Although disabled young people are less likely to participate in any given week than their non-disabled counterparts, when they do, they spend the same amount of time in organised and informal participation as non-disabled young people.
- The biggest difference in participation in competitive sports and activities occurs between ages 8 and 14 when participation peaks for disabled and non-disabled young people.



Disabled young people are more likely to walk for fitness and do a workout than their non-disabled counterparts.



Disabled young people are less likely to participate in a range of sports and activities, particularly play-related activities such as playing on playgrounds and scootering.

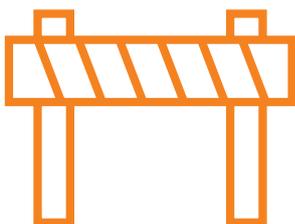


Disabled adults participate in the same sports and activities as non-disabled but to a lesser extent in any given week. The biggest gap between disabled and non-disabled adults' participation is in walking, running and jogging.

# MOTIVATIONS AND BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Disabled people have more barriers to increasing their participation than non-disabled people.

- Disabled young people are more likely to participate for fitness and health and less likely to participate for fun than non-disabled young people.
- Disabled people share the top two barriers to participation: lack of time and low levels of motivation. Although, in comparison with non-disabled people, time is less of a barrier for disabled people, and poor motivation is more of a barrier.
- Disabled people with an impairment in communicating, mixing with others or socialising have the most barriers and score highest on lack of motivation.
- These young people with this impairment are also more likely to lack confidence.



For disabled people between ages 15 and 24, not having the equipment required, family not being able to afford it, lack of nearby facilities or places, and no one to participate with are much stronger barriers than for non-disabled people of the same age.



**THE GAP IS BIGGEST FOR DISABLED PEOPLE ON CONFIDENCE, COMPETENCE AND OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN ACTIVITIES OF THEIR CHOICE, COMPARED WITH NON-DISABLED PEOPLE**

# HOW DO DISABLED PEOPLE DIFFER ON PHYSICAL LITERACY?

Disabled people have poorer results than non-disabled people in all six domains of physical literacy.

- The gap is biggest for disabled people on confidence, competence and opportunity to take part in activities of their choice, compared with non-disabled.
- Differences are evident in physical literacy by age and impairment. The widest gap in physical literacy among disabled young people is between ages 8 and 11 and disabled people with a communication, mixing with others and socialising impairment.

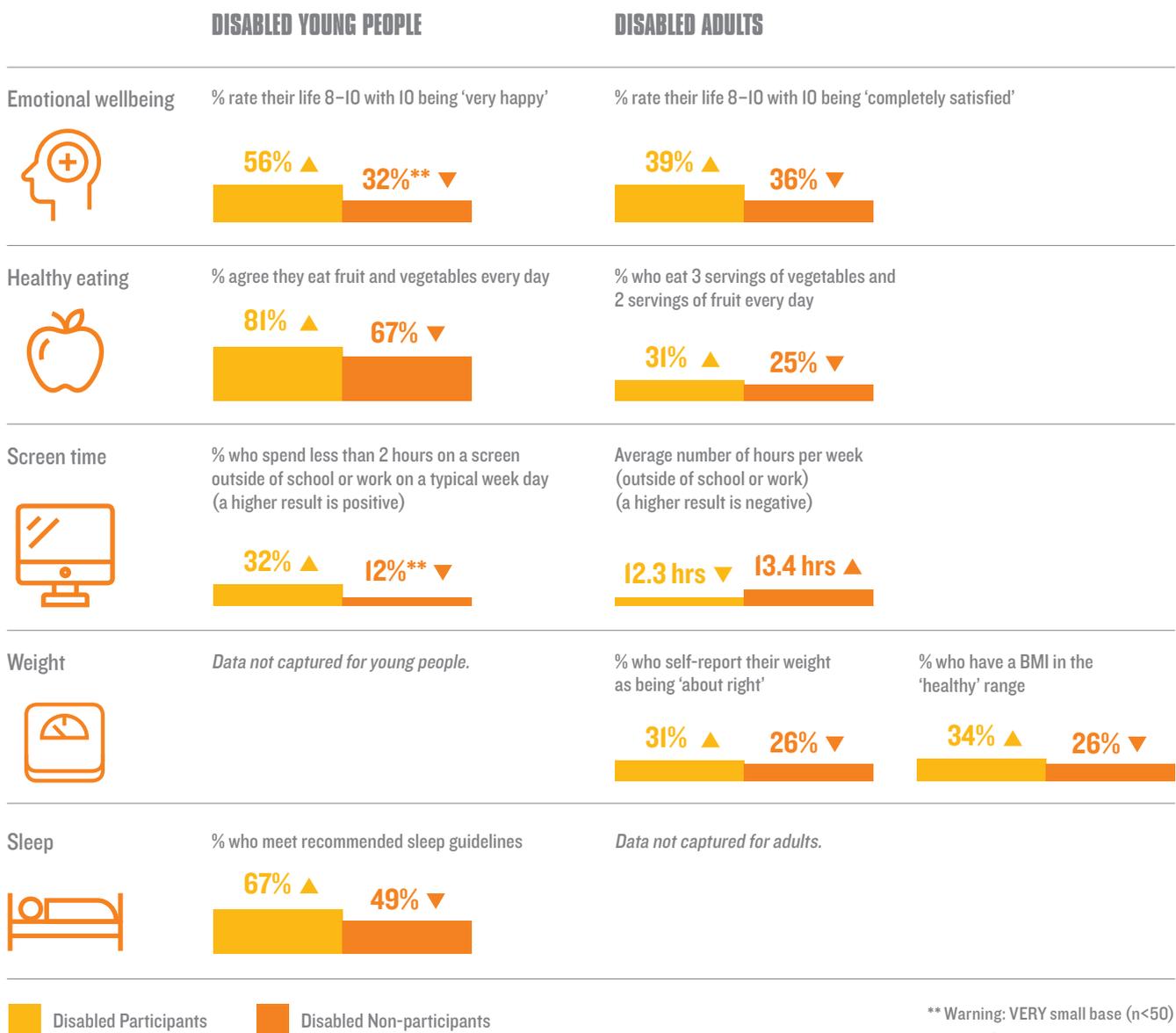
**FIGURE 5: WEEKLY PARTICIPATION BY TYPE OF IMPAIRMENT**



# HEALTH AND WELLBEING BENEFITS

Disabled people who participate in play, active recreation and sport score more favourably on all health and wellbeing indicators than disabled non-participants.

**FIGURE 6: HEALTH AND WELLBEING INDICATORS**  
- COMPARING DISABLED PARTICIPANTS WITH NON-DISABLED PARTICIPANTS



Base: All respondents aged 5 and over. Questions vary. BMI = Body mass index.



## WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Download the full Spotlight report and other  
Active NZ resources at [sportnz.org.nz/ActiveNZ](http://sportnz.org.nz/ActiveNZ)

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