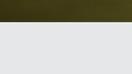


How can activity better meet the needs of young women?



SPORT
NEW ZEALAND
IHI AOTEAROA

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Insights tell us young women understand the value physical activity adds to their lives and their wellbeing, and they want to do more.

Here are some tips for sport and active recreation providers to consider when planning, developing and delivering opportunities for teenage young women.

1. Focus on wellbeing

- Teenage years create new pressures on the lives of young women. Insights tell us they become busier, feel more stressed and less self-confident.
- Quality physical activity offerings should contribute to young women's holistic wellbeing by creating opportunities and environments in which young women can thrive, experiencing enhanced wellbeing rather than added stress and pressure.
- When planning and designing offerings for young women, engage with them to understand different factors that affect their wellbeing, not just from a physical perspective, but also socio-emotional.



2. For young women, with young women

- Young women are experts on their own lives. They understand better than anyone what they like and how different activities and environments make them feel.
- When planning and designing activities for young women, take time to engage with them, understand their world, their fears, their concerns, their worries, their aspirations, their motivations and their wants.
- By understanding and acknowledging how they feel and what their interests and motivations are, you'll be able to develop a stronger relationship with young women, building trust and empathy.

3. Every move counts

- Value and encourage all forms of physical activity, recognising some physical activity is better than none.
- There is no single right approach when it comes to providing quality opportunities for young women to engage in physical activity.
- Young women differ in their needs and wants when it comes to being active.
- Some young women enjoy structured competitive activity, while others prefer unstructured recreational activities; both are valid and valuable.

4. For 'the feels'

- Key motivators for young women to engage in physical activity are fun, friends and fitness.
- When planning and delivering physical activity for young women, ensure the atmosphere and the activities create positive experiences.
- 'Feel good' moments are key motivators for young women and most of the time these come from fulfilling their own goals and aspirations, not from competitive results.



5. Free of judgement

- Young women don't want to be judged for how they look or how good they are at performing an activity or sport.
- Create physical and social environments free of judgement, embarrassment and expectation.
- When planning and delivering activities for young women, take the time to talk to them to understand what they need and how they want to feel free of judgement, included, valued, and safe to express and be their true selves.
- Some factors you might consider are who is watching, what's expected from young women, what are the uniform requirements, and who is coaching and/or facilitating the sessions.

6. Young women as leaders

- Young women have great ideas about how they would like to engage in physical activity; empower young women to create and lead activities.
- When planning and delivering activities for young women, create opportunities to give them a voice and a platform to lead.
- Using a co-design approach will not only help you better understand their needs and wants, but also give young women a sense of ownership, belonging and empowerment.
- Supporting and enabling young women to lead their own activities can be a powerful approach not only to encourage their participation, but also to increase leadership opportunities for young women in and through sport and active recreation and to showcase positive role models.

7. The power of sisterhood

- Friends and peers are key influencers in young women's lives.
- Use the power of friendship and peers to motivate young women to join and engage in activity by creating offerings that encourage social connection.
- Create opportunities where young women can be active while hanging out and connecting with their friends.



8. Digital lives

- Mobile devices, technology and social media are key parts of young women's lives.
- If used well, they can enable great connectivity and easy access to a variety of opportunities.
- As a provider of physical activity, think about how you can use devices, digital platforms and social media to engage with young women and offer your products/activities. Some examples might be social media challenges, use of free apps, and digital content that young women can access at their own time.
- Work with young women to embrace the use of mobile devices and other technology.

9. Not just for the 'sporty'

- Remember physical activity is not just for young women who self-identify as 'sporty'.
- Quality physical activity can look like, feel like and sound like lots of different things, not just traditional sport.
- How young women are portrayed in promotional and marketing material is crucial; relatable images and language are key to help young women to feel connected and want to engage.

10. Physical activity 'on demand'

- Insights tell us young women's lives are busy, time is limited, and different activities compete for time (study, family commitments, jobs, social commitments, relationships, etc).
- When planning and designing activities, think about options that can fit around young women's lives – opportunities and activities that young women can decide when and how to engage with.
- Think about the entry, exit and re-entry points. How can young women engage, disengage and engage again?
- Access and availability are two other key factors to consider. Find out where young women are to ensure the activities are easy to access and available when and where young women want to engage.

