

Student Voice 2025

Insights from the voice of
tamariki and voice of
rangatahi surveys



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Guide to reading this report

Student Voice 2025 combines findings from the voice of tamariki and voice of rangatahi surveys. The surveys are a collaboration between Sport New Zealand, Regional Sports Trusts (RSTs) and the Regional Sport Director (RSD) network.

Voice of tamariki aims to gain insight into how tamariki (children) experience physical activity, specifically within a primary school/kura setting. In 2025, **38,321 students (aged 8 to 13)** voluntarily completed the survey which was delivered to **459 schools and kura in 16 RST regions**.

Voice of rangatahi aims to gain insight into how rangatahi (young people) experience physical activity, specifically within a secondary school/kura setting. In 2025, **19,822 students (aged 12 to 18)** voluntarily completed the survey, which was delivered to **125 schools and kura in 15 RST regions**.

Intermediate schools are included in both surveys and therefore the experiences of ākonga (students) are reported within both primary and secondary school data.



This national report provides a view of the combined results from all the tamariki and rangatahi that participated in the 2025 surveys.

The report shares insights into the overall state of physical activity within the school setting.

The RSTs, RSDs and schools that took part have direct access to school results, which helps them establish what is working and what could be improved with physical activity at primary and secondary schools. Schools participating in Healthy Active Learning (HAL) and Active As have direct support to plan and deliver responses to the survey findings.

The 2025 survey was the first for voice of tamariki and the seventh for voice of rangatahi.



Schooling Equity Index

The Equity Index (EQI) is referred to throughout this report. It is a Ministry of Education tool used to estimate the extent to which students face socio-economic barriers to learning at school. EQI has been used since 2023, following the removal of the decile system.

Disability

For voice of rangatahi, disability was identified using the Washington Group Short Set (WSS) of questions. Disabled rangatahi are those that reported ‘a lot’ of difficulty in 1 or more of 6 functional areas. In voice of tamariki, the WSS questions were not used. Instead, tamariki were asked whether they found it harder than their peers to do everyday things such as seeing, hearing, moving, learning, reading, writing or managing their feelings. Tamariki who answered ‘yes, a lot of difficulty’ were identified as experiencing greater levels of impairment. See the **methods and demographics** section at the end of this report for more detail.



Acknowledgements

Sport NZ would like to acknowledge the partners who supported schools and kura to participate in the voice of tamariki and voice of rangatahi surveys. Insights gathered help to provide quality physical activity experiences for tamariki and rangatahi.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Active Southland | Sport Hawke's Bay |
| Aoraki Secondary Schools Sport Assn | Sport Manawatū |
| CLM Community Sport | Sport Northland |
| College Sport Auckland | Sport Otago |
| College Sport Wellington | Sport Taranaki |
| Harbour Sport | Sport Tasman |
| Nuku Ora | Sport Waikato |
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Report structure

1. Summary of key findings
2. Questions to consider
3. Why being active matters
4. Physical activity participation at school
5. Enjoyment and satisfaction
6. Barriers, challenges and improvements
7. Attitudes toward physical activity and school
8. Methods and demographics

Note: Each data section begins with a summary, followed by detailed findings from the voice of tamariki and the voice of rangatahi surveys.



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Summary of key findings (1 of 2)

Physical activity participation at school

Physical activity at school drops as students get older. It starts to fall in Years 7 to 8 and drops further from Year 11, when physical education (PE) becomes optional. Tamariki are most active through play, while rangatahi rely more on PE. Gaps remain and widen with age, with boys more active than girls and low Equity Index (EQI) schools reporting higher activity.

Enjoyment and satisfaction

Most young people enjoy being active when it's fun, social and supportive, and when they have access to meaningful activities. Tamariki enjoy unstructured play most. Rangatahi are most satisfied with competitive sport. Girls, disabled young people and students at high EQI schools report less enjoyment and satisfaction, showing unequal access to quality experiences.

Summary of key findings (2 of 2)

Barriers, challenges and improvements

Barriers change with age. Tamariki mainly report social barriers at school, such as poor behaviour, being left out and feeling like they're being watched. Rangatahi are more likely to perceive personal barriers including lack of time, tiredness, low motivation and low confidence – with being 'too busy' the most common challenge. These perceived barriers are highest for girls, disabled young people and high EQI students.

Attitudes toward physical activity and school

Most young people want to be more active and know it's good for them. But confidence and a sense of belonging drop with age, especially from intermediate onwards. Feeling included in PE also weakens through secondary school. The gaps widen for girls, disabled young people, Asian ākonga and high EQI students.

Questions to consider when reading this report

Voice and co-design

- How do we engage with tamariki and rangatahi to co-design opportunities that address their needs and promote a sense of autonomy?

Motivation and enjoyment

- In what ways can we create physical activity opportunities that align with young people's motivations for fun and social connection?
- How can we encourage rangatahi to prioritise physical activity in their daily routines?
- In what ways can we maintain young people's confidence in participating in physical activities, especially for girls?

Access and inclusion

- What needs to change to make physical activity more accessible within schools and kura, particularly at the secondary level?
- How can we create physical activity settings that are inclusive of tamariki and rangatahi of diverse ethnicities, abilities and genders?
- What options are available to provide opportunities for girls to be active in ways that better suit their needs?

Why being active matters for tamariki and rangatahi



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Physical activity improves learning and wellbeing

Physical activity improves academic outcomes for tamariki and rangatahi. This includes better performance in maths, reading and language, as well as higher overall achievement. Importantly, allocating more time to physical activity does not reduce academic performance; in fact, it can lead to additional learning gains.¹

Increased physical activity in schools leads to higher engagement, better concentration, more time on-task and improved attendance rates. Participation in sport and active recreation also fosters social skills, teamwork, resilience and a sense of belonging.¹

Regular physical activity is linked to better wellbeing. Team sports and activities in natural environments provide additional mental health benefits, including a stronger sense of belonging and social connection.²

¹ Source: Sport New Zealand (2022). Active Bodies, Active Minds. Wellington.

² Source: Sport New Zealand (n.d). The Value of Blue and Green Spaces. Wellington.

Physical activity participation at school



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- **Activity levels at school decline with age** and the drop begins early. For tamariki, activity levels are high in early primary years but start to decline by Years 7 and 8, especially during break time. Participation in physical activity (PE) drops sharply from Year 11, when it is no longer compulsory, and we see activity in other contexts, such as break time, also decline at this time.
- **Participation changes** from unstructured (break times) at primary and intermediate schools to structured (PE) at secondary school.
- **Inequities are consistent across ages and widen in adolescence.** Gender gaps persist, where boys and male rangatahi are consistently more active across contexts (ie, play time, class time, after school). Low Equity Index (EQI) schools show higher activity levels than high EQI schools for both age groups.

Note: The Schooling Equity Index (EQI) is a statistical model that estimates the extent to which students face socio-economic barriers to achievement at school. Source: [Education Counts](#).

Voice of tamariki

Physical activity participation at school

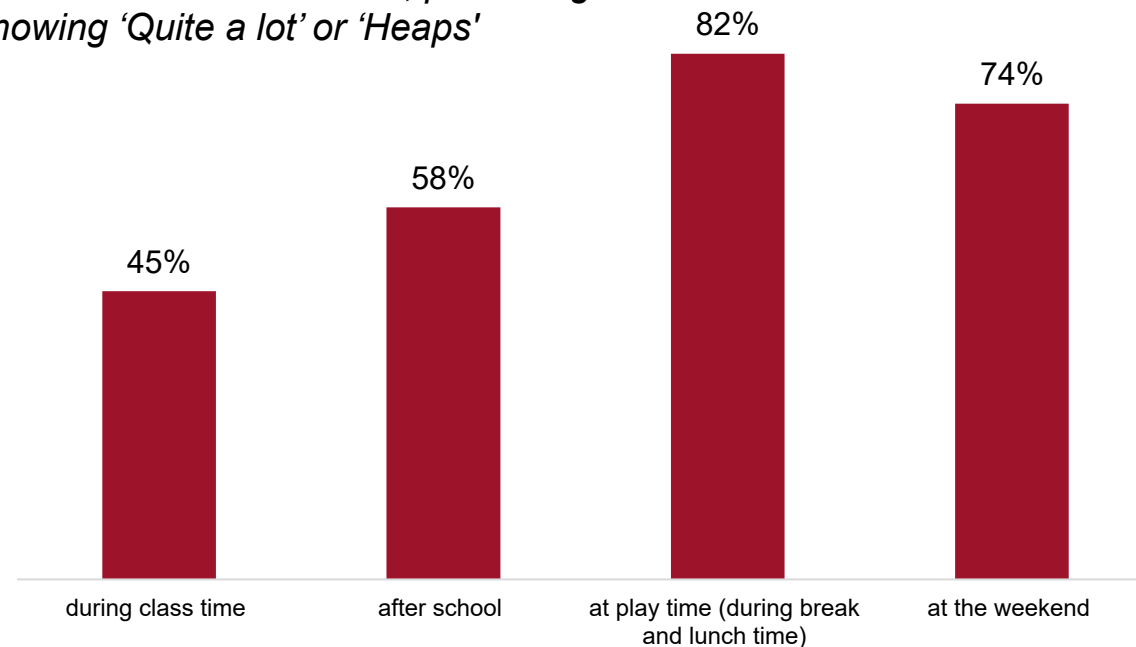


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The majority of tamariki are active during play time (during break and lunch time) at school/kura.

- The majority of tamariki are active at play time (during break and lunch) and at the weekend.
- Activity levels among tamariki are stable across year levels, except for during play time: 83% of younger tamariki (Years 4 to 6) are active compared to 78% of older tamariki (Years 7 to 8).

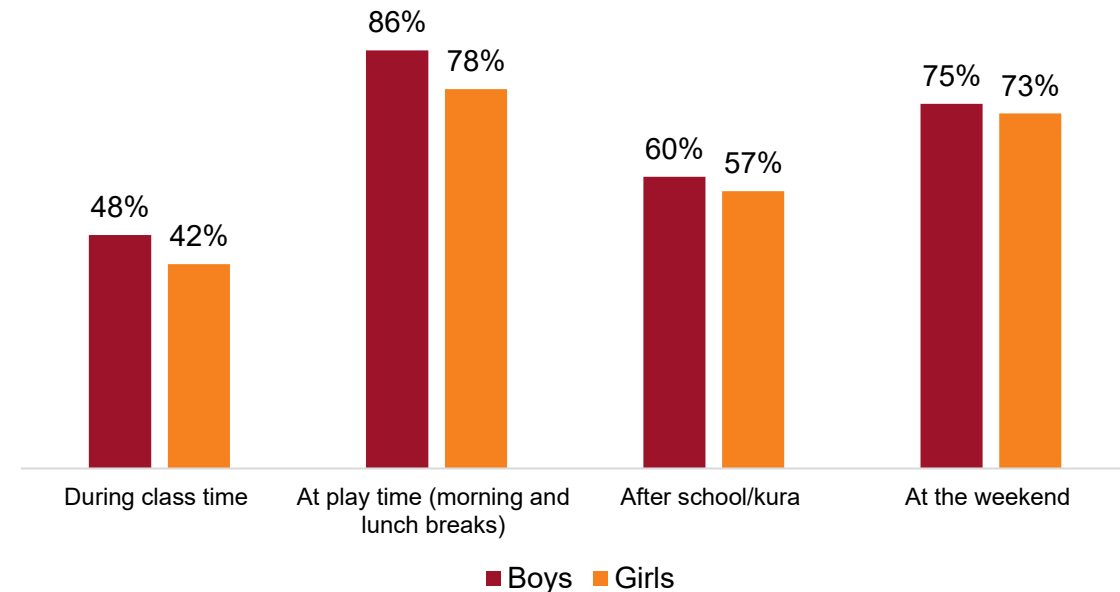
Tamariki activity levels at school/kura and outside of school/kura, percentage showing 'Quite a lot' or 'Heaps'



Boys consistently report higher activity levels across all contexts, with the biggest difference being during play time (86% vs 78%).

- **Break time** shows the biggest difference, with 86% of boys reporting they are active 'quite a lot' and 'heaps', compared to 78% of girls.
- **Class time** is when tamariki (both genders) think they are least active.
- **After school/kura and at the weekend** is similar for both genders, with boys being slightly more active.

Tamariki activity levels by gender



Physical activity levels are consistently lower for tamariki experiencing greater impairments and tamariki in schools with high EQI.

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment and physical activity levels:

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment report consistently lower activity levels than non-impaired peers across all settings. The largest difference is during play time, where 74% of tamariki experiencing greater impairment are active 'quite a lot' or 'heaps', compared to 87% of tamariki not experiencing any impairment.

Ethnicity and physical activity levels:

Activity levels are consistent across contexts, with Māori, Pacific Peoples and New Zealand European showing high levels of activity. Pacific (51%) and Asian (52%) tamariki are notably more active during class time, which is above the total sample (45%).

Equity Index (EQI) and physical activity levels:

Students in schools with low EQI tend to be more active during break times, after school and weekends than peers in schools with high EQI. For instance, 84% of tamariki in schools with low EQI are active 'quite a lot' or 'heaps' during play time (morning and lunch break) compared to 79% of tamariki in schools with high EQI.

Note: Tamariki experiencing greater impairment are identified as those who reported a lot of difficulty in doing things compared to others their age (eg, seeing, hearing, moving, learning, reading, writing or managing feelings).

Voice of rangatahi

Physical activity participation at school

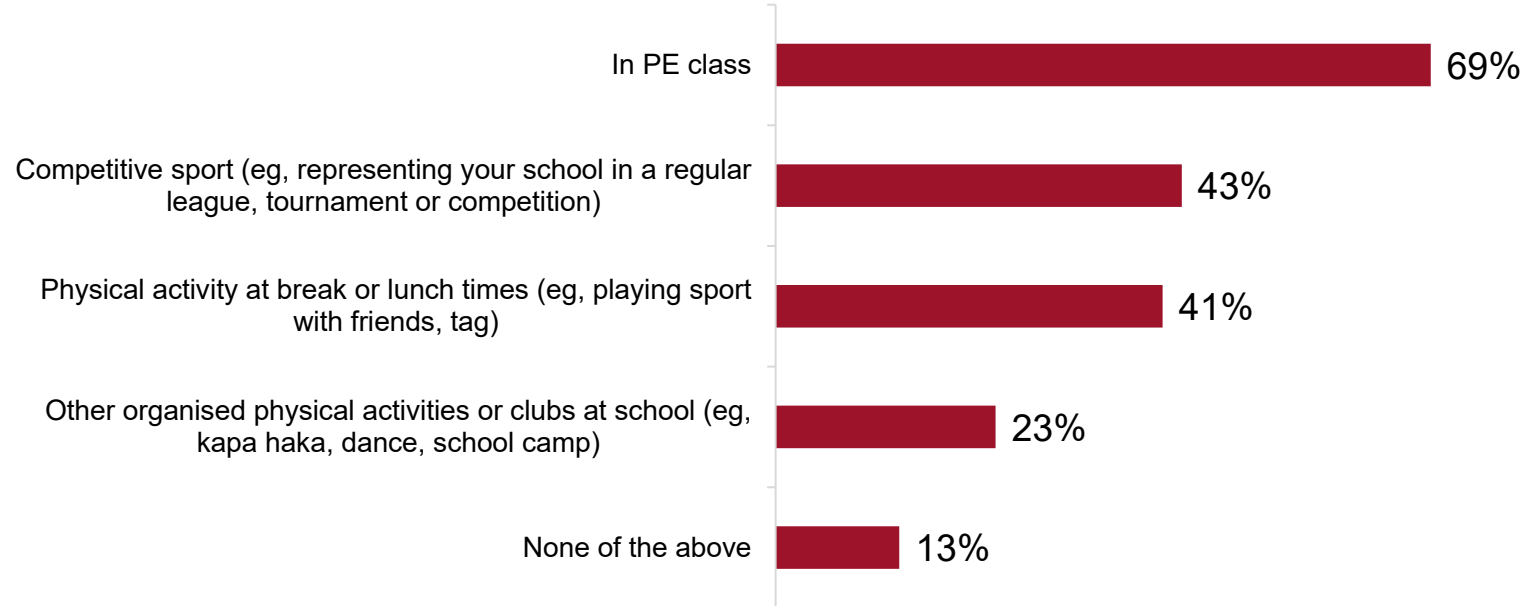


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87% of rangatahi have participated in physical activity at school/kura.

PE is the most common way rangatahi are active at school/kura, with more than two-thirds (69%) taking part in PE.

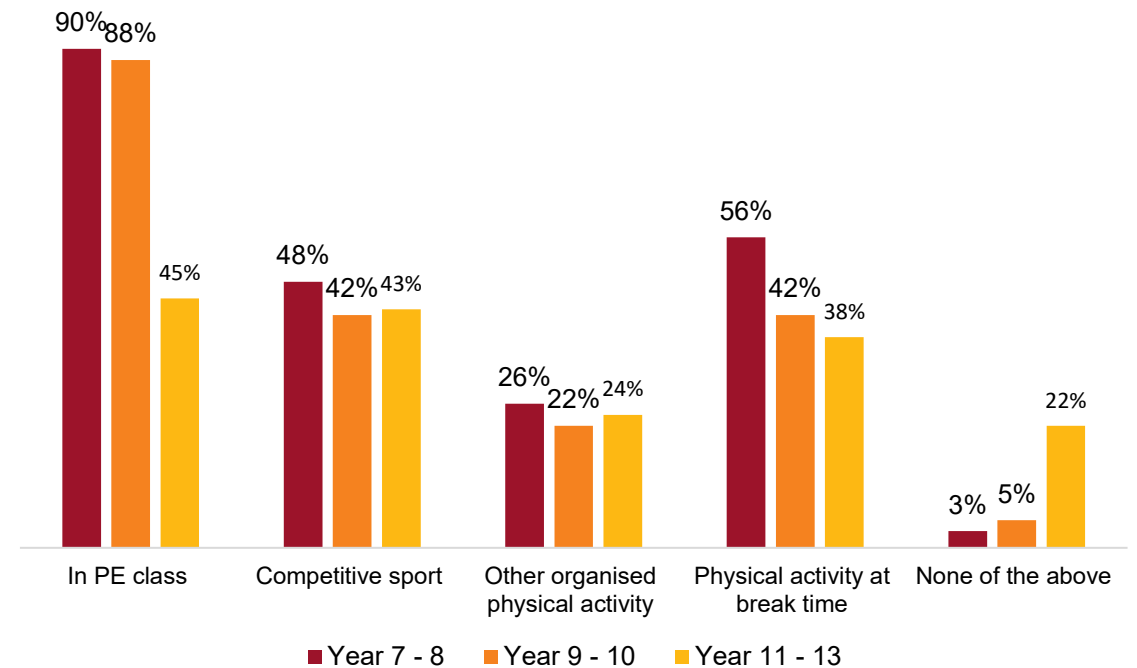
Different ways rangatahi take part in physical activity at school/kura



Physical activity drops sharply in senior years, especially PE participation and during break time.

- PE participation is highest in Years 7 to 10 and drops sharply in Years 11 to 13 (45%). PE is no longer compulsory in secondary schools in New Zealand, contributing to lower activity levels of rangatahi at this age.
- Break time activity declines with age.
- Participation in other organised activities and competitive sport remains relatively stable across groups.
- Inactivity at school rises significantly in senior years.

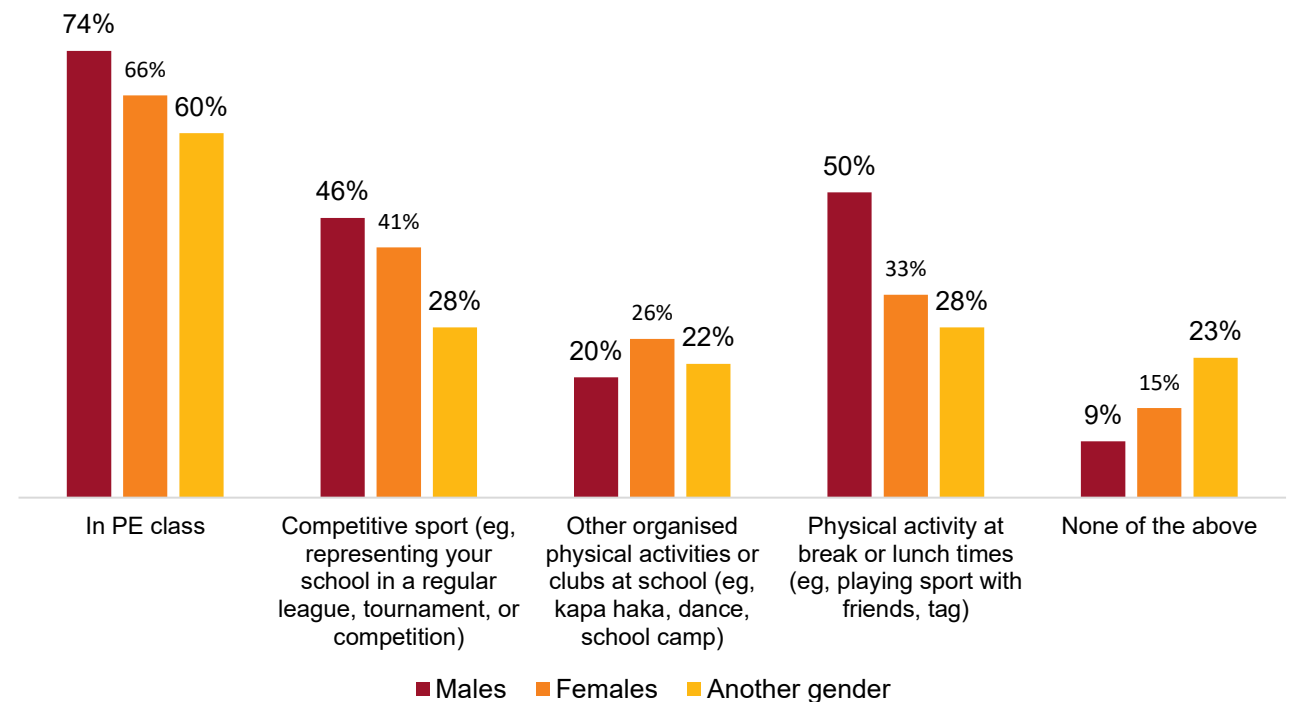
Rangatahi participation in physical activity at school/kura, by school years



Male rangatahi tend to be more active in PE, competitive sport and at break time, while girls show stronger engagement in other organised activities.

- **PE** is the most common activity for all genders, but there are higher participation rates for males (74%) than females (66%) or those who identify as another gender (60%).
- **Break time** has the biggest gap, with half (50%) of males participating, compared to only a third (33%) of females and just over a quarter of rangatahi who identify as another gender (28%).
- **Other organised physical activities or clubs at school (eg, kapa haka)** have females (26%) participating more than males (20%).

Different ways rangatahi have taken part in physical activity at school/kura, by gender



Participation across school-based contexts is lower for disabled rangatahi, Asian rangatahi and young people at schools with high EQI.

Disability and physical activity participation:

- Disabled rangatahi are less active than their non-disabled peers across all school-based physical activity settings.
- The most significant differences are seen in competitive sport (34% disabled vs 45% non-disabled rangatahi) and break time activities (35% disabled vs 42% non-disabled rangatahi). Disabled rangatahi are also more likely to not participate in any physical activity at school/kura compared to non-disabled rangatahi.

Ethnicity and physical activity participation:

- NZ European, Māori and Pacific rangatahi are the most active at school, showing consistently higher participation rates across all contexts except competitive sport.
- In contrast, Asian rangatahi have lower participation rates, with nearly 1 in 5 (18%) reporting that they do not take part in any physical activity at school/kura.

EQI and physical activity participation:

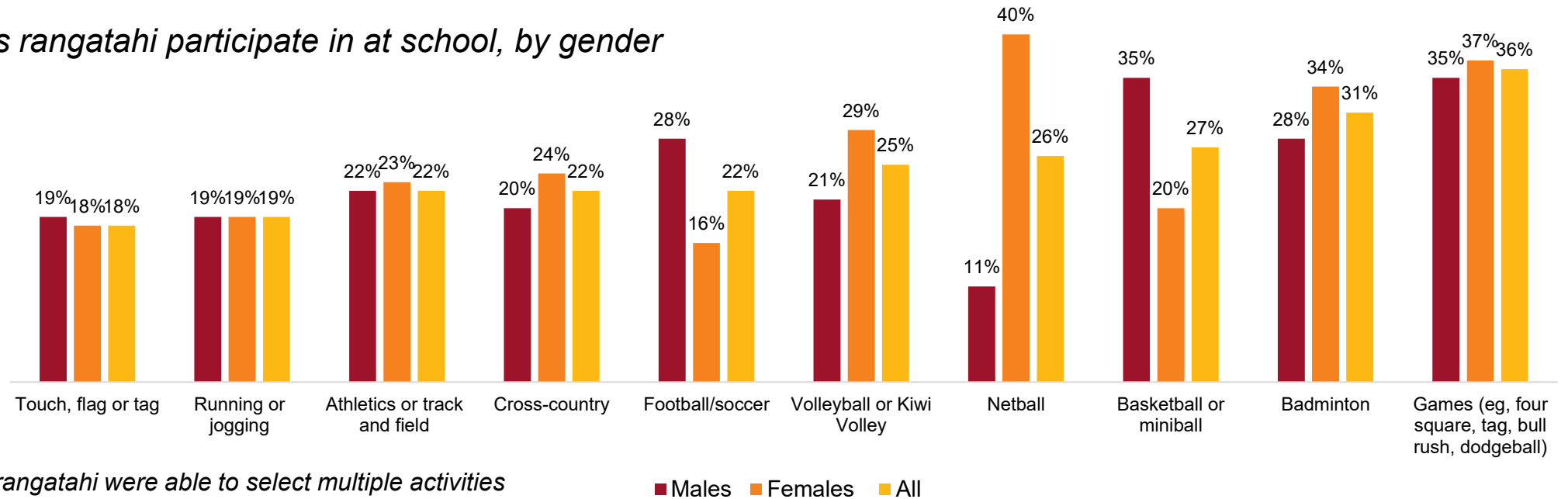
- Rangatahi in schools with low EQI have higher participation rates across all contexts compared to their peers in schools with moderate or high EQI.
- Differences in participation are greater in the context of competitive sport (low EQI: 58%, moderate EQI: 43% and high EQI 40% respectively) and break or lunch time (low EQI: 55%, moderate EQI: 37% and high EQI: 42% respectively).

Note: The Washington Group on Disability Statistics short set of questions has been used to identify disabled rangatahi. In the VoR survey, disabled rangatahi are people who self-report at least 'a lot' of difficulty across one or more of 6 domains of disability. Non-disabled rangatahi are people who self-report 'some difficulty' or 'no difficulty' in all 6 domains.

Games are the most common activity at school/kura, followed by traditional sports such as badminton, basketball and netball. There are differences in physical activities at school by gender (eg, netball and basketball or miniball).

- Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball) were common across different age groups.
- Gender differences are evident in activity selection: for example, netball is predominantly played by females, while basketball or miniball is more popular for male rangatahi.

Top 10 activities rangatahi participate in at school, by gender



Note: In the survey, rangatahi were able to select multiple activities they participated in during the current school year.

Enjoyment and satisfaction



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- Positive experiences (enjoyment for tamariki, satisfaction for rangatahi) are shaped by similar drivers – fun, social connection, supportive environments, confidence and access to meaningful, varied activities.
- We see different patterns in enjoyment levels based on the context within which tamariki and rangatahi participate in physical activity. Tamariki report greater enjoyment for unstructured play (eg, play time) while rangatahi are most satisfied with structured activities, such as competitive sport.
- Inequities (ie, gender, disability, EQI) seen in activity levels reappear in enjoyment and satisfaction, indicating systemic differences that start early and continue into adolescence.

Voice of tamariki

Enjoyment and satisfaction



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Overall, 65% of tamariki enjoy being active at school. Tamariki enjoy being active most during break time and out of school/kura and enjoy it least during class time, suggesting a preference for unstructured play.

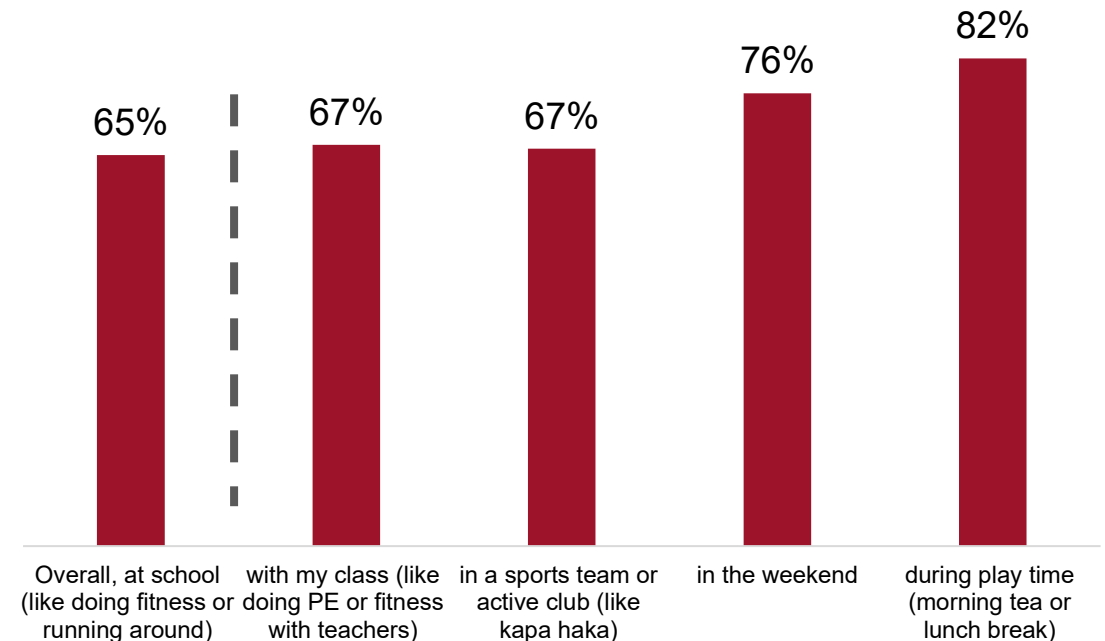
Enjoyment declines across contexts as tamariki transition from primary school years (Years 4 to 6) to intermediate school years (Years 7 to 8). For example, 83% of tamariki in primary years enjoy being active during play time, compared to 79% of tamariki in intermediate years.

Overall enjoyment at school/kura is higher for tamariki who:

- enjoy being active
- feel confident trying different physical activities
- feel included during PE and other class activities
- are interested in their learning
- have opportunities to do physical activities they enjoy.

Note: Regression analysis is a statistical method used to explore the relationship between one outcome of interest and one or more factors that might influence it. It helps estimate how strongly each driver is linked to the outcome and can be used to make predictions based on those relationships.

Tamariki enjoyment levels of physical activity at school/kura and outside of school; percentage shows 'quite a lot' or 'heaps'



The top themes that emerged from comments by tamariki who responded to what they enjoy about being active at school (like during play time, breaks or PE) are connecting and spending time with their friends, and playing games and sports they love.

Connecting and spending time with their friends (36%)

“Playing games with my friends because the game is based off something we’re all into, like playing a game where two of us are dragons and one’s a human and the dragons are trying to catch it.”
- Year 6 student

Playing games and specific sports such as rugby, football, netball (31%)

“I like doing gymnastics, handball, and benchball and dodgeball... I also like netball and basketball because I'm a sporty type person.”
- Year 5 student

Fun, letting energy out and feeling good (8%)

“You get a break from doing school work, imagine having to do schoolwork all day with NO break times or brain breaks.”
- Year 6 student

Learning a new skill or sport (4%)

“I like PE at school because I get to learn new sports and because it helps me be more active.”
- Year 5 student

Access to playgrounds and equipment (3%)

“I like playing on the playground, and walking around the school.”
- Year 6 student

Note: Microsoft Co-Pilot was used to generate themes from the open-text comments.

The top themes that emerged from comments by tamariki who responded to what they enjoy about being active when they are not at school/kura (like at home or in the weekend), are playing sport and doing physical activities that may not be available at school and spending time with whānau.

Playing sport, doing other physical activities such as surfing, trampoline (21%)

“I love being active in the weekend and after school, I do rugby, dance, touch and kapa haka.”
- Year 8 student

Spending time with whānau (18%)

“I really really really really really enjoy running with my mum and every weekend I do a 5k run with her.”
-Year 5 student

Access to natural spaces (parks), places (eg, neighbourhood alley, playgrounds) (14%)

“Playing games and riding my bike around our neighbourhood and playing soccer with my brother.”
-Year 4 student

Autonomy and choice: being able to make choices, create/make up new games (2%)

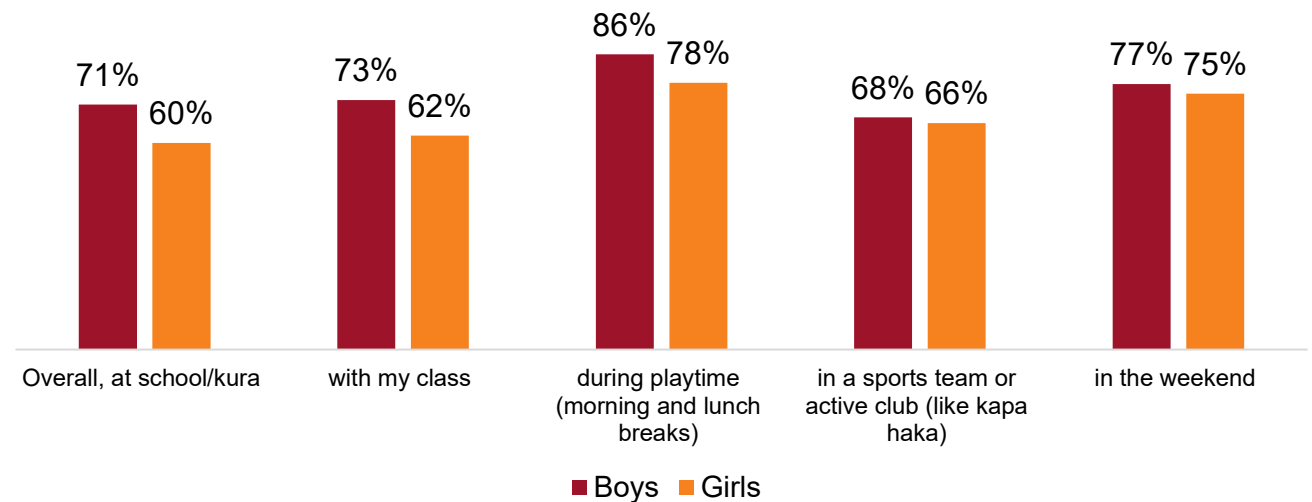
“I can make up a game and have a choice.”
- Year 8 student

Note: Microsoft Co-Pilot was used to generate themes from the open-text comments.

Boys consistently report higher enjoyment of physical activity at school than girls, with the biggest differences found during break time and class time.

- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of boys enjoy being active with their class, compared to under two-thirds (62%) of girls.
- Similarly, boys (86%) report greater enjoyment during play time than girls (78%).
- Positively, both boys and girls have similar enjoyment levels outside of school or in organised structured activities (sport team or club).

Tamariki enjoyment levels across contexts by gender, graph showing percentages for 'quite a lot' or 'heaps'



Enjoyment of physical activity varies across groups, with tamariki experiencing greater impairment and Asian tamariki less likely to enjoy physical activity during class, break time and with a team. Pacific Peoples and those in low EQI schools consistently report higher enjoyment.

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment and their enjoyment levels:

- Tamariki experiencing greater impairment report lower enjoyment levels with being active at school/kura compared to peers experiencing no impairment.
- The largest gaps are seen in overall enjoyment at school/kura (56% vs 75%), with their class (57% vs 75%) and during play time (ie, morning tea and lunch break: 73% vs 87%).

Ethnicity and enjoyment levels:

- Pacific tamariki (72%) are more likely to enjoy being physically active with their class than all other tamariki (67%)
- Asian tamariki (57%) are less likely to enjoy being in a sports team or club.
- NZ European and Māori tamariki report high levels of enjoyment in most contexts.

EQI and enjoyment levels:

- Tamariki in schools with low EQI (87%) tend to enjoy being active at school more than peers in schools with high EQI (63%), with a larger difference reported in enjoyment during play time (84% vs 78%).

Voice of rangatahi

Enjoyment and satisfaction



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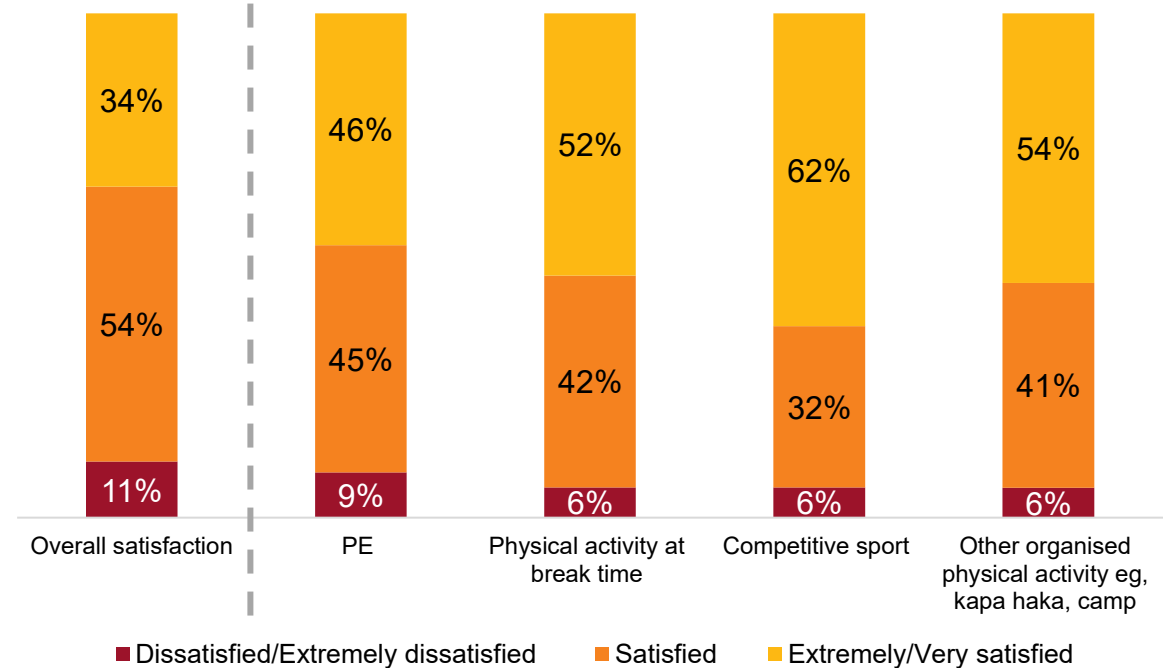
Nearly 9 in 10 rangatahi are satisfied with their overall physical activity at school/kura (89%), with a third reporting being highly satisfied (34%). 6 in 10 rangatahi report they are highly satisfied with competitive sport (62%).

The strongest drivers for **overall satisfaction at school** are those who:

- are confident to take part in different activities
- feel their school/kura is an inclusive and safe environment to be in
- are encouraged by people to take part in physical activity
- are interested in what they are learning
- feel the physical activities offered in their school/kura reflect their culture
- have a say in what physical activities are offered at their school/kura .

Note: Regression analysis is a statistical method used to explore the relationship between one outcome of interest and one or more factors that might influence it. It helps estimate how strongly each driver is linked to the outcome and can be used to make predictions based on those relationships.

Rangatahi satisfaction with physical activity experiences at school/kura

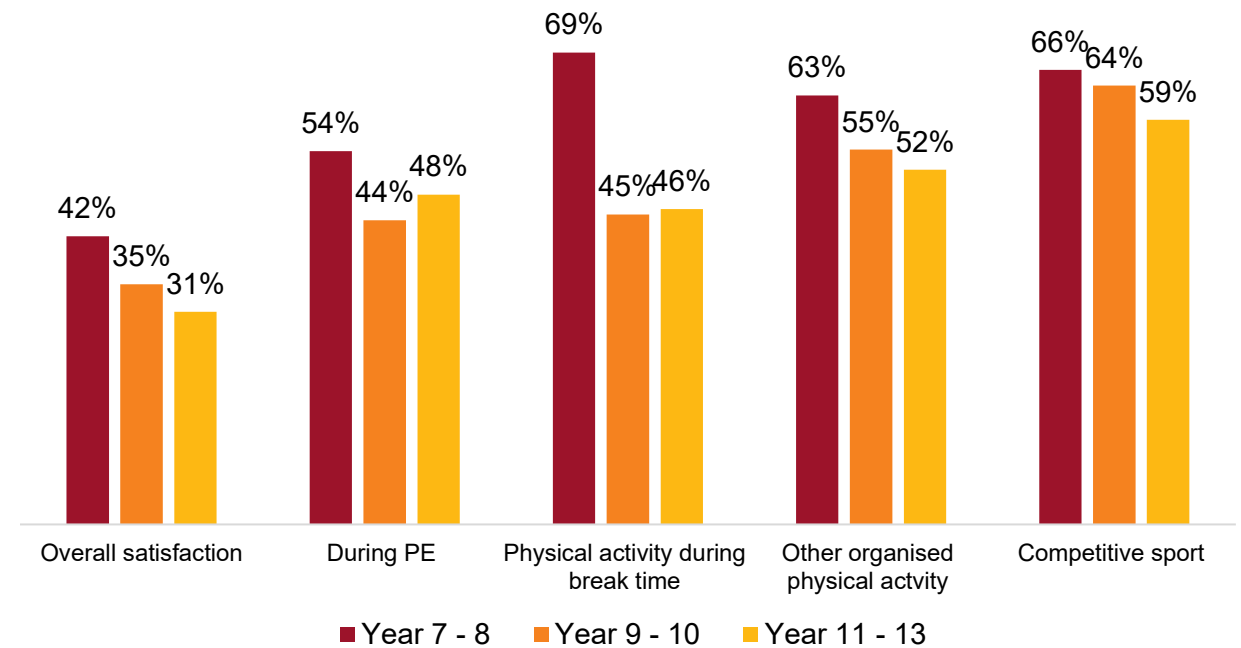


Note: 'Satisfaction' is only asked of those who participated in each context.

Overall satisfaction declines as students progress to higher year groups, with Years 11 to 13 showing the lowest satisfaction overall.

- Years 7 to 8 students within the secondary school setting report the highest levels of satisfaction with their physical activity experiences at school.
- The increase in PE satisfaction for Years 11 to 13 is likely due to rangatahi choosing to participate in PE.

Rangatahi satisfaction with physical activity experiences at school/kura



Note: 'Satisfaction' is only asked of those who participated in each context.

Rangatahi who reported feeling more than satisfied with their physical activity experiences were prompted to tell us more. The top theme that emerged from their comments related to enjoyment and fun.

Activities are fun, enjoyable and something they love doing (32%)

“I get a lot of physical activity every day either from PE or interval and lunch. I also enjoyed the PE camp that was held, it was very beneficial for both my mental and physical wellbeing. I'm neutral when it comes to the kapa haka practices, and when I do attend them the whare wars, cross country and other events held in school are all fun and good for me physically.”
- Year 12 student

Helps them stay active, fit and healthy (14%)

“I feel this way because I can become fit and also hang out with other classmates becoming confident.”
- Year 9 student

Involvement with friends, supportive teams and teachers (13%)

“It was fun getting to do dance with people at school, we get to connect with the people from younger year groups. We have been working towards lots of competitions, and that has really brought us all a lot closer.”
-Year 12 student

Good range of sports and options available (10%)

“Even though we are a small school, lots of sports and opportunities are offered and the teachers are always open to student voice in trying new sports.”
- Year 12 student

Opportunities to learn, improve and achieve (5%)

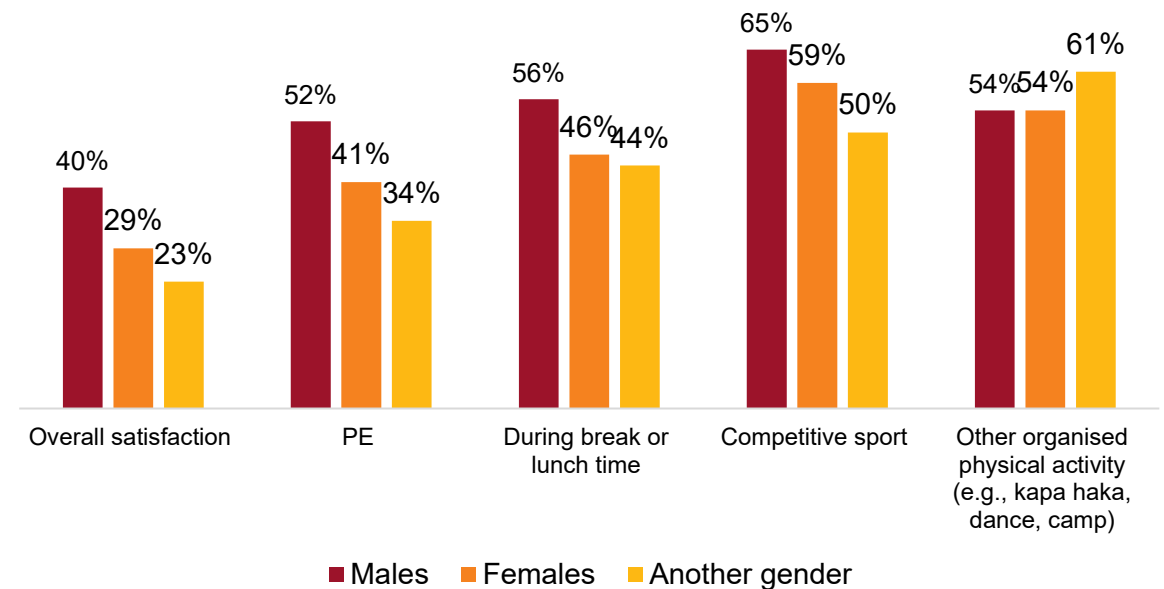
“The tutoring my coach/teacher gives me more skills and abilities for when I play on game days.”
- Year 10 student

Note: Microsoft Co-Pilot was used to generate themes from the open-text comments.

Males consistently report higher satisfaction with physical activity than females.

- The largest gaps in satisfaction with physical activity experiences by gender are observed during break or lunch time and PE class.
- Rangatahi who identify as another gender are least satisfied across contexts with the exception of other organised physical activity.

Satisfaction with physical activity at school/kura by gender, percentages showing 'very' and 'extremely satisfied'

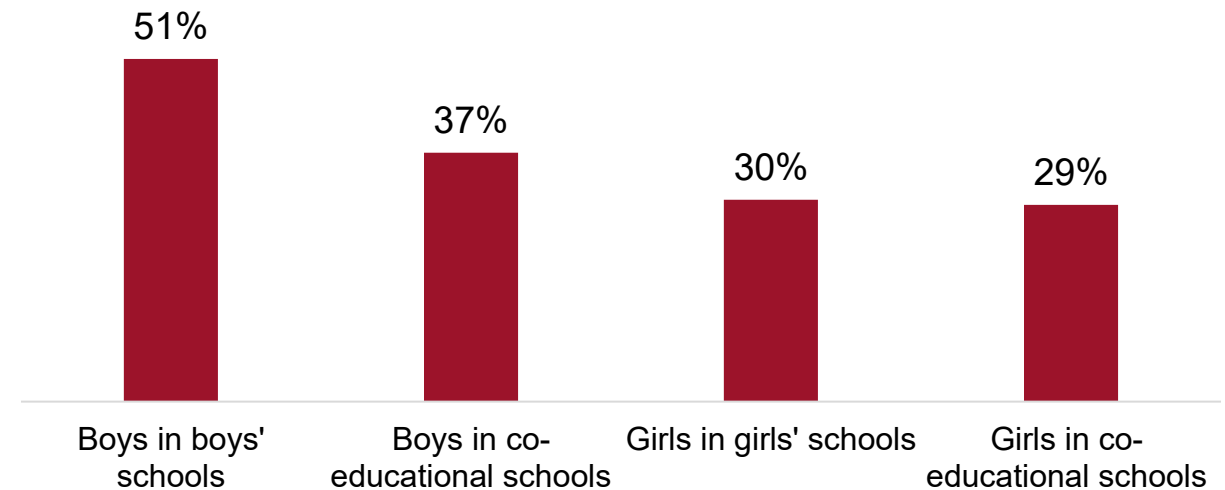


Note: This question was only asked of those who participate in the physical activity chosen.

Boys in single-sex schools report the highest satisfaction with physical activity, while girls in co-educational schools report the lowest.

- Boys in single-sex schools are more likely to be satisfied with PE, competitive sport, physical activity at break time and their overall physical activity experience.
- Boys in co-educational schools report higher satisfaction than girls in co-educational schools.

Overall satisfaction with physical activity at school by gender of students at school, percentages showing 'very' and 'extremely satisfied'



Ability, ethnicity and EQI play significant roles in shaping students' satisfaction with physical activity at school/kura.

Disability and satisfaction:

Disabled rangatahi are consistently less satisfied with their physical activity experiences at school compared to their non-disabled peers.

- The gap is evident across all activity types (competitive sport, break time, PE and other organised activities).

Ethnicity and satisfaction:

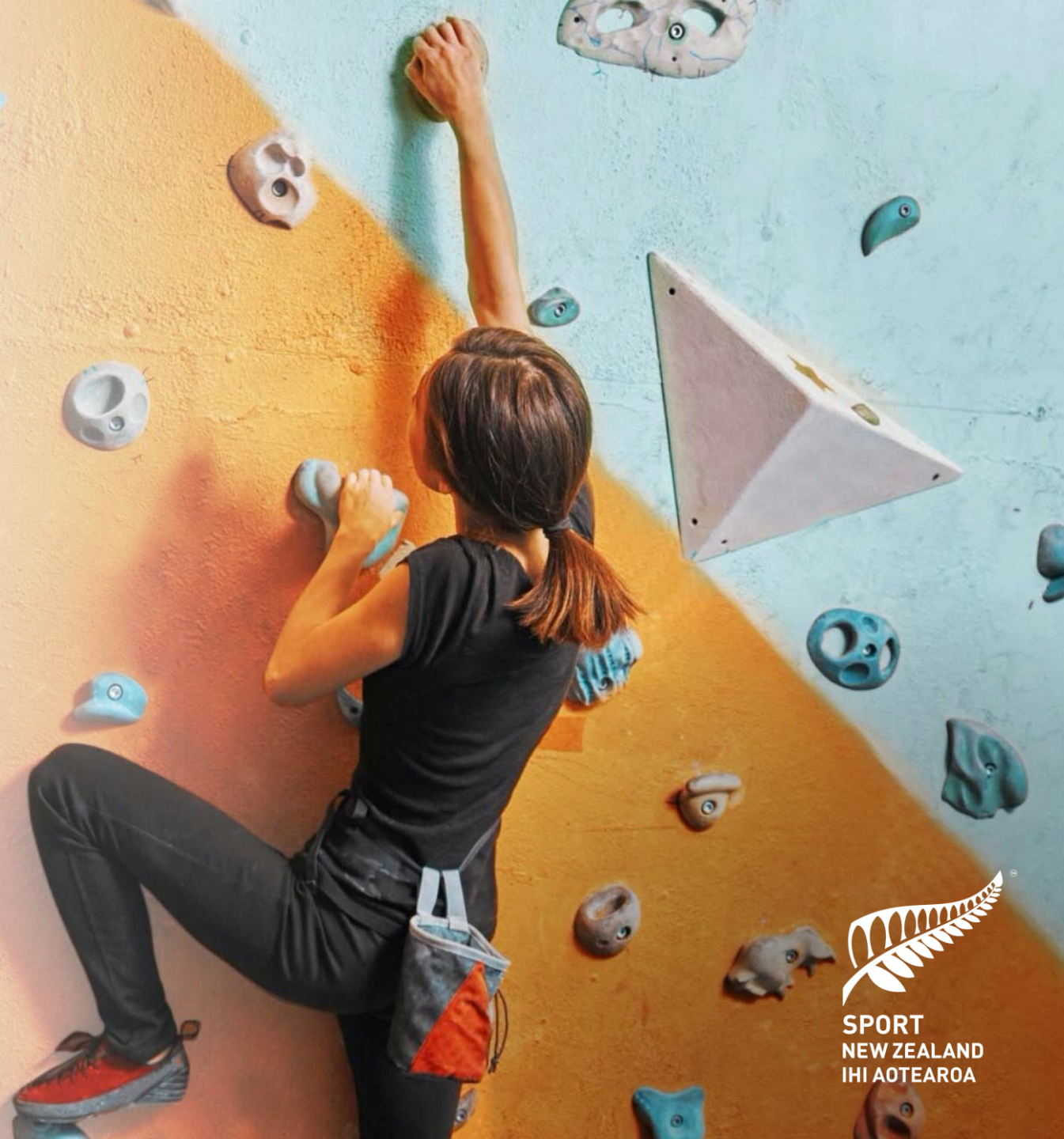
The data shows that ethnic background influences satisfaction levels, and these patterns are consistent with participation rates seen in the section on physical activity at school.

- Māori and NZ European students show high satisfaction, but with some variation by context. Pacific rangatahi consistently score above the overall average for satisfaction across all categories.
- Asian students consistently score below the overall average.

EQI and satisfaction:

Rangatahi in schools with low EQI are more likely to be satisfied with their physical activity experiences at school than their peers in schools with high EQI. This pattern is consistent across contexts.

Barriers, challenges and improvements



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Social factors are the biggest barrier for tamariki.

Things tamariki don't like about being physically active at school are people cheating or being mean, not getting a turn, having no one to play with and being watched.

Internal factors are the biggest barrier for rangatahi.

As young people get older, the key barriers shift toward time, tiredness, motivation and confidence. Being 'too busy' becomes the main reason rangatahi aren't more active.

Girls, disabled young people and high EQI students face the most challenges.

Voice of tamariki

Barriers, challenges
and improvements



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People cheating or being mean is the number one thing tamariki do not like about being physically active at school/kura. Other things tamariki do not like about being active tend to be socially related (eg, not getting a turn, having no one to play with or being left out) and perception (eg, confidence, making mistakes).

Social barriers decline with age:

Having no one to play with/being left out drops sharply from Year 4 (47%) to Year 8 (31%).
Not getting a turn also declines from Year 4 (46%) to Year 8 (32%).

Physical concerns decline with age:

Getting hurt decreases from Year 4 (52%) to Year 8 (30%).

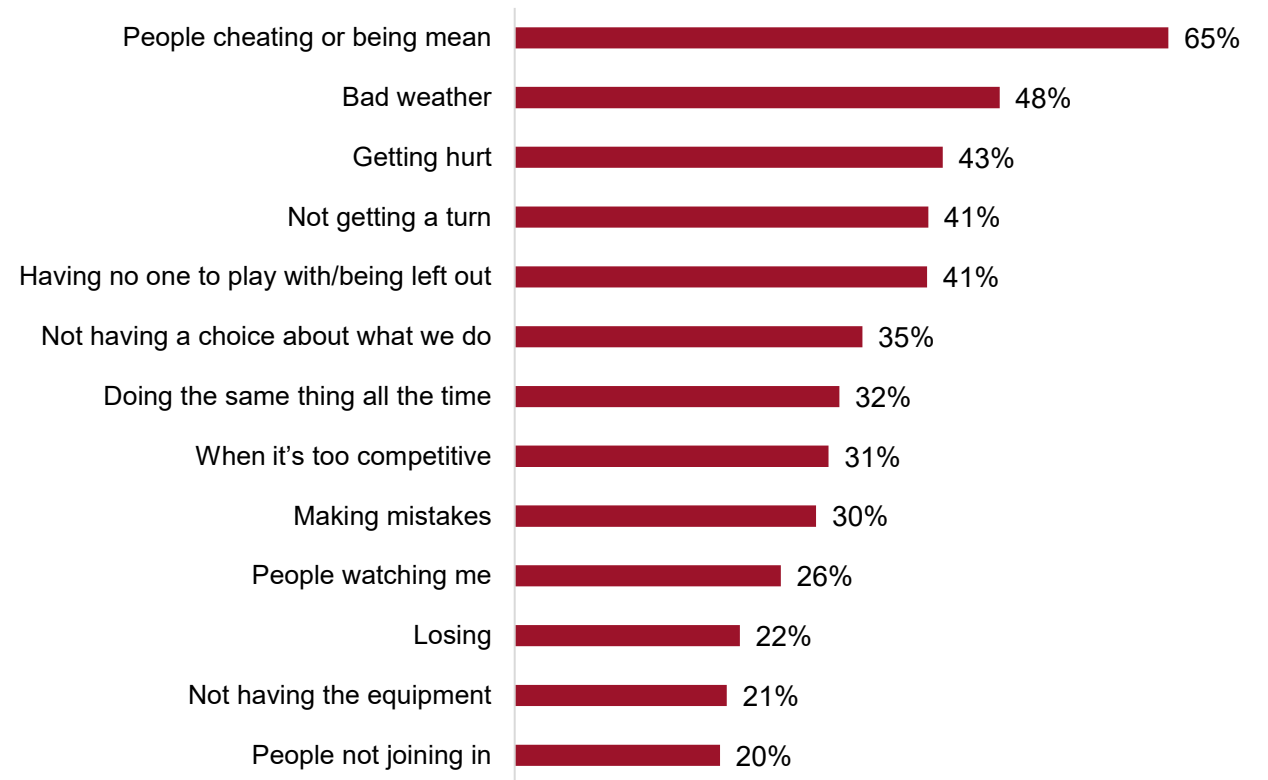
Choice and autonomy increase in importance:

Not having a choice about what we do rises from Year 4 (31%) to Year 8 (36%).

Skill-related concerns increase slightly:

Making mistakes and when it's too competitive both increase slightly with age.

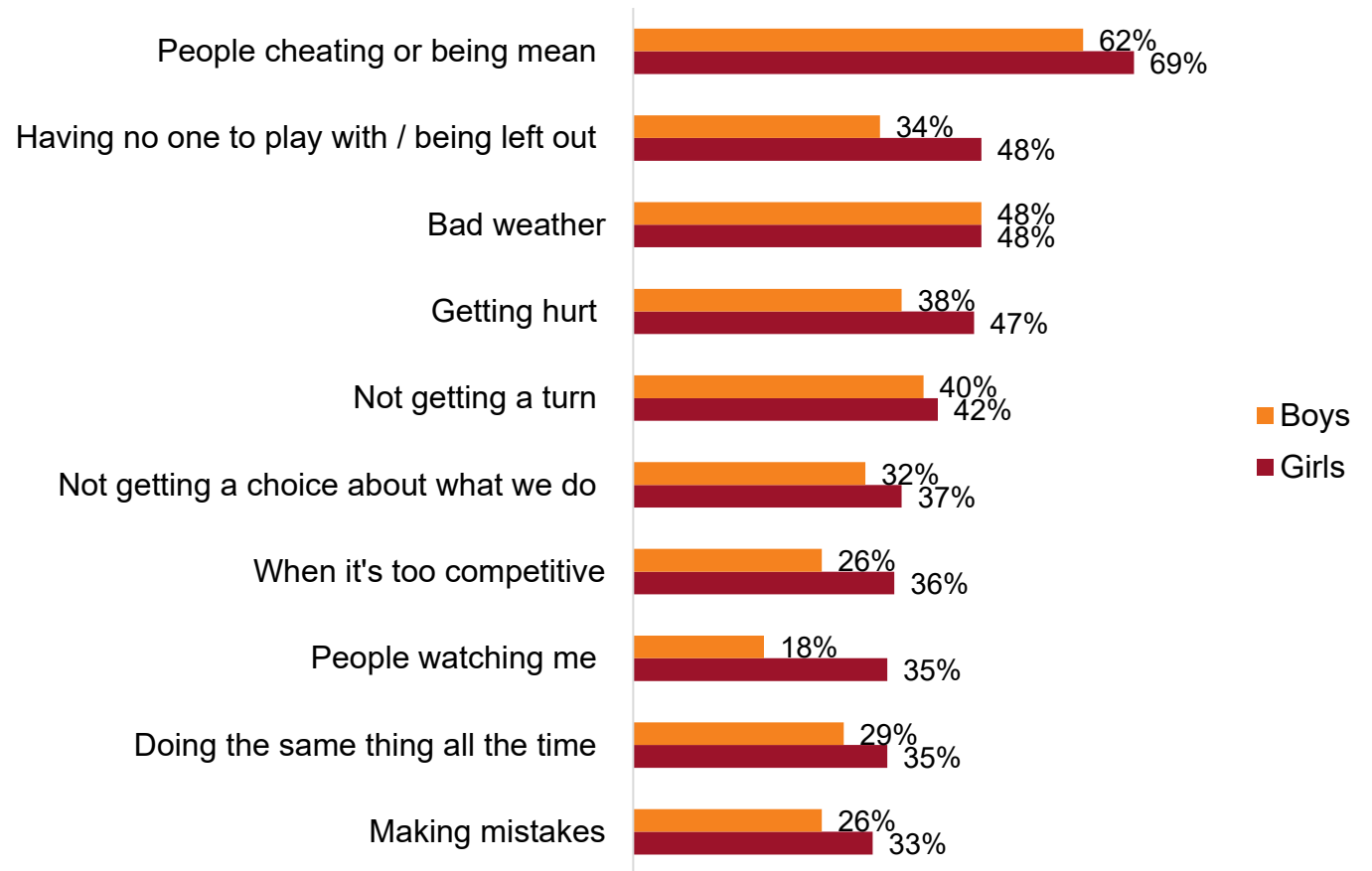
Things tamariki do not like about being physically active at school



Things girls are more likely to not like about being active are people watching me, not feeling confident and getting hurt. While boys do not like things about being physically active too, they are fewer on average.

Girls consistently report more things they dislike than boys for most factors, with girls choosing 5.3 things on average, compared to 4.5 for boys.

Things tamariki do not like about being physically active at school/kura, by gender



Tamariki experiencing greater impairment do not like things such as people watching them, having no one to play with and making mistakes. While their non-impaired peers also face challenges, they are fewer.

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment and things they do not like:

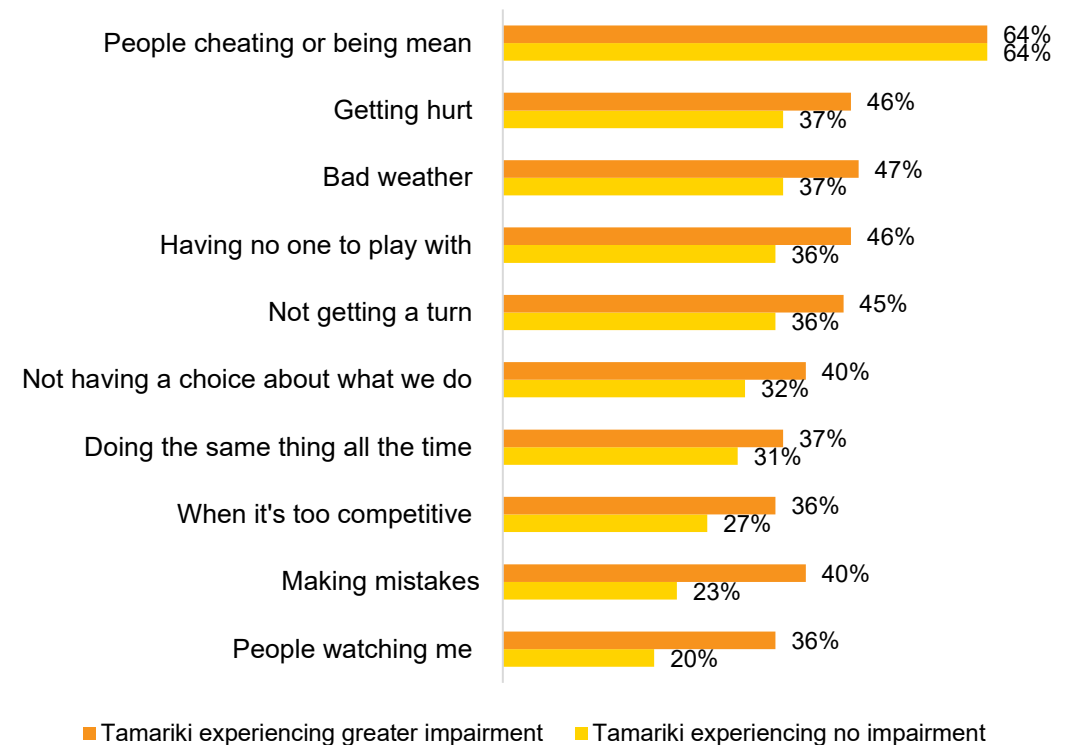
Tamariki experiencing greater impairment report more things they dislike about being active than tamariki who do not experience any impairments.

Ethnicity variations and things they do not like:

There are different things tamariki do not like about being active by ethnicities.

- There are more European (68%) and Asian (69%) tamariki who do not like people cheating/being mean than overall (64%).
- There are more Māori (33%) and Pacific (35%) tamariki who do not like making mistakes than overall (30%).
- Having no one to play with/being left out and not having a choice about what we do is reported more by European (43%) and Asian (44%) tamariki than overall (41%).

Things tamariki do not like about being physically active at school/kura, by impairment



Voice of rangatahi

Barriers, challenges
and improvements



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Rangatahi who reported feeling dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with their overall physical activity experiences at school were prompted to tell us more. The top themes that emerged from their comments related to teaching quality, boredom and school culture around physical activity.

Dislike for PE,
boring and not fun
(12%)

“I don't like PE, and I find it really hard to keep up with the stuff. The class we go against is always 10 times better than us and we always lose, and the stuff we do if not even fun.”
- Year 10 student

Social (eg, excluded,
embarrassed) or
personal factors (eg,
time, injury) (12%)

“I don't like people seeing me do things cause I don't want them to judge me.”
- Year 13 student

Support and
organisation
from teachers &
school (8%)

“Lack of recognition from school, no communication between players, coaches and parents, last minute organisation, limited due to availability of school vans and travelling distances.”
- Year 13 student

Repetitive activities,
lack of options or
equipment (7%)

“It's too repetitive and every day there should be a variety of sports rather than there being one sport for the week. Also I recommend to the teachers to ask their class on what sports they are satisfied to do so more people would be more active because it's the sport they like.”
- Year 9 student

Insufficient activity/too
little exercise & too
much theory (6%)

“I don't think we do enough physical activity during PE because we mostly do chromebook work and rarely go to do physical activity during PE class.”
- Year 13 student

Note: Analysis was conducted using Microsoft Co-Pilot. Comments from dissatisfied students were analysed. Each comment could be tagged to more than one theme.

Rangatahi who reported feeling dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with their PE experiences were prompted to tell us more. The top themes that emerged from their comments related to boredom, limited variety and choice and not enough PE.

Boredom and lack of enjoyment (50%)

“Our PE teacher hardly ever shows up to school, so we don't really do much. We always do the same things and it is very boring.”
- Year 10 student

Limited variety and choice (30%)

“PE is just games, I would like to do more sports. If we do some sports it's just the same ones repeated. It needs to be more active. PE should be x3 a week.”
- Year 8 student

Teacher quality, too much theory, not enough PE (25%)

“Because we don't focus on PE as much as I would like and we mainly do book work and I understand we have to have a balance between them but the balance is going more towards classwork instead of PE.”
- Year 12 student

Social factors (eg, bullying, lack of inclusion) (20%)

“When we play games boys don't pass to the girls, that means the girls just stand around doing nothing because the only time a boy will pass to you is if it's at their advantage.”
- Year 9 student

Personal dislike or discomfort with PE (15%)

“I have a strong dislike of PE and my feelings on the subject are unlikely to change. I find it difficult to enjoy the activities involved, and I often feel uncomfortable when I am forced to participate. Physical education does not resonate with me, and I wish there were more options that aligned with my interests and preferences.”
- Year 10 student

Note: Analysis was conducted using Microsoft Co-Pilot. Comments from dissatisfied students were analysed. Each comment could be tagged to more than one theme.

Rangatahi who are dissatisfied with physical activity during break or lunch time most often point to limited space and social factors (eg, no friends to play with) as key reasons. Many also mention repetitive activities and boredom during lunch.

Limited facilities/resources
(25%)

“There is not much to do like the weights room is too small and doesn't offer the equipment I need and the volleyball gym is always packed.”
- Year 11 student

Social and personal factors
(eg, no friends to play with) (11%)

“There aren't many options for us. Not much sport equipment to take out and no one wants to do anything at break time which discourages me.”
- Year 11 student

Boredom and lack of variety
(8%)

“There are not many activities to do at break times so some people are seen just wandering around half the time.”
- Year 13 student

Note: Analysis was conducted using Microsoft Co-Pilot. Comments from dissatisfied students were analysed. Each comment could be tagged to more than one theme.

Rangatahi who were dissatisfied with competitive sport at their school referred to opportunities, coaching quality and organisation, alongside concerns about aspects such as inclusion and fairness. The same themes show up in what young people who participate in sport want improved.

Opportunities and resources (67%) includes lack of leagues, training time, funding

Coaching and support (26%) such as poor quality, lack of training

Organisation and communication (13%) such as disorganisation, poor communication, scheduling

Social factors and inclusion (27%) such as feeling excluded, bullying, not feeling welcomed

Inequality and discrimination (12%) which includes unequal treatment of boys and girls, neglect of smaller sports

“The school doesn't provide vans to the sport that I want to go to which is cross country and running. There aren't a lot of opportunities for that sport.”
- Year 10 student

“Because our coach was not very good at coordinating us and we were not given much information by her. Most of the details we had to figure out ourselves, even though we asked for them repeatedly and she said she would get back to us. We paid to do this.”
- Year 10 student

“We don't have enough equipment or sports coach and coaches in general are not committed in training us preparing us for future games , our rugby league team didnt have enough training times which really dissapointed me and the boys.”
- Year 10 student

“I had felt that my coach had been negative towards players in the team (approaching things in negative ways and making jokes to, or about players) as well as picking on certain players.”
- Year 13 student

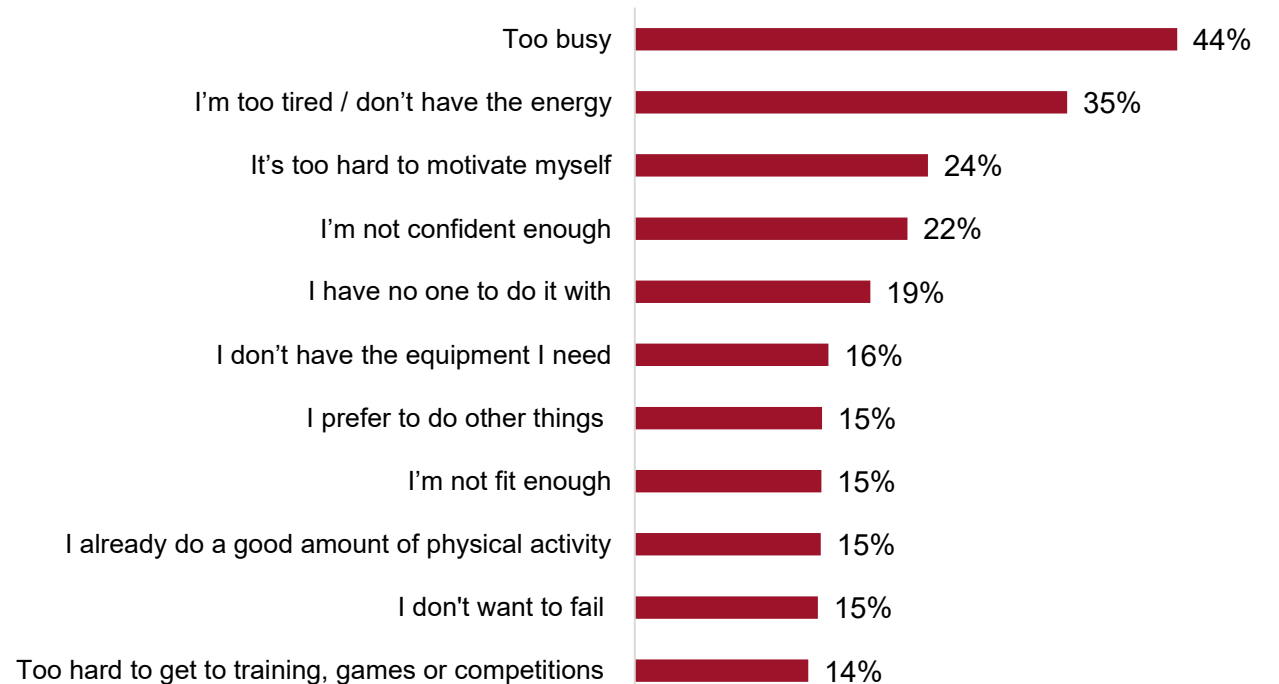
“There was unfair training with coaches. The coaches would spend more time with the boys instead of helping the girls improve.”
-Year 11 student

Note: Analysis was conducted using Microsoft Co-Pilot. Comments from dissatisfied students were analysed. Each comment could be tagged to more than one theme.

‘Being too busy’ is the top reason rangatahi are not doing as much physical activity as they would like to. Barriers rangatahi face relate to personal factors such as feeling too tired or finding it difficult to motivate themselves.

Being busy increases with age:
Years 11 to 13 report the highest rates (51%), while younger students face more confidence and motivational challenges.

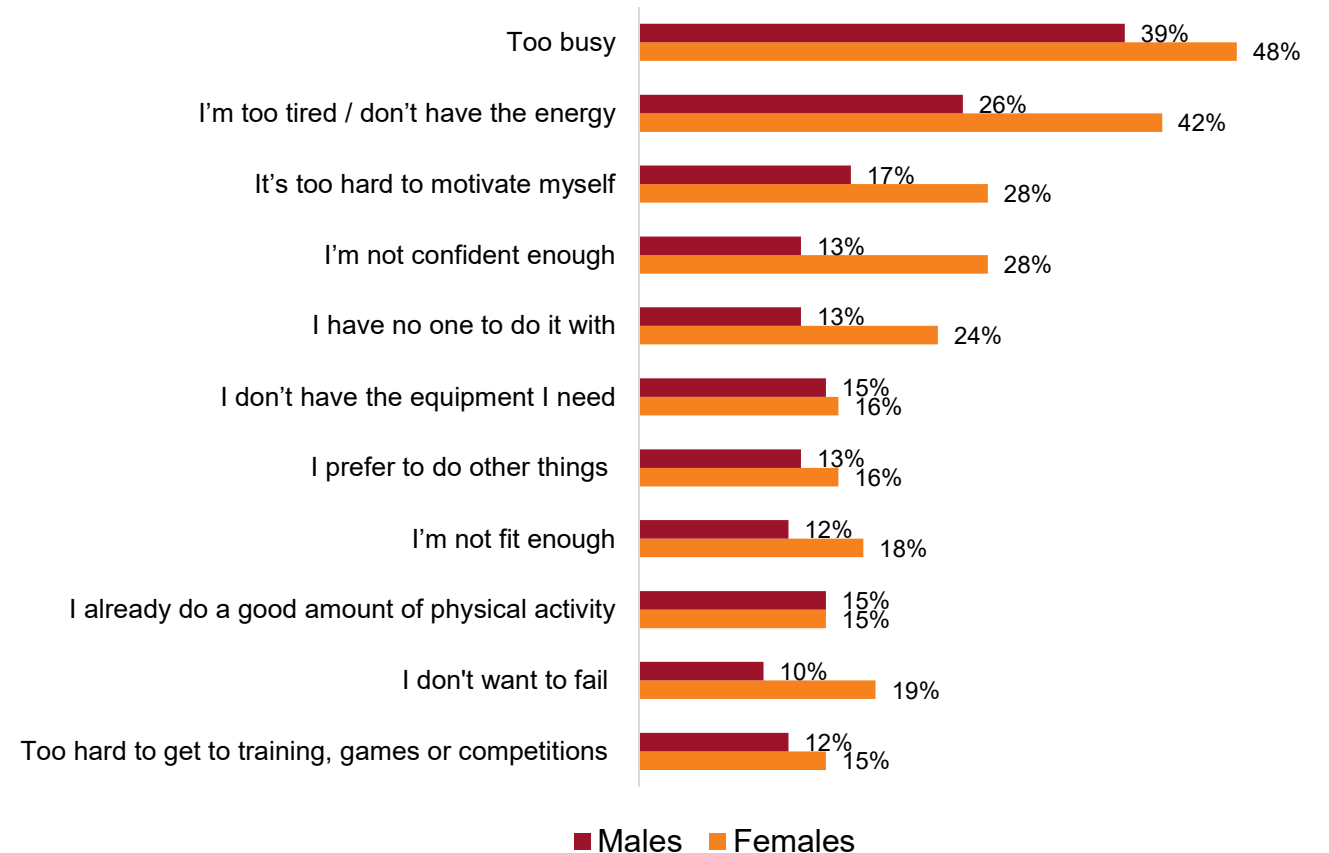
Reasons rangatahi are not doing as much physical activity they would like to or want to



The top barrier to being physically active for both male and female rangatahi is 'being too busy'.

Female rangatahi consistently report higher rates and select more motivational and social barriers than their male peers, such as not feeling confident enough or having no one to do it with.

Reasons rangatahi are not doing as much physical activity they would like to or want to, by gender



Internal barriers such as confidence, motivation and fear of failure emerge most strongly for disabled rangatahi, Asian and NZ European rangatahi, and students in high-EQI schools.

Disabled rangatahi and barriers to physical activity:

- Disabled rangatahi report higher levels of internal barriers. They are more likely to say they lack confidence (31%), struggle with motivation (31%) and have no one to do it with (24%) compared to non-disabled peers (20%, 21% and 18% respectively).
- Visibility and vulnerability are more pronounced concerns. Disabled rangatahi are twice as likely to dislike being seen while active (18% vs 9%), suggesting discomfort or self-consciousness in public physical activity settings.

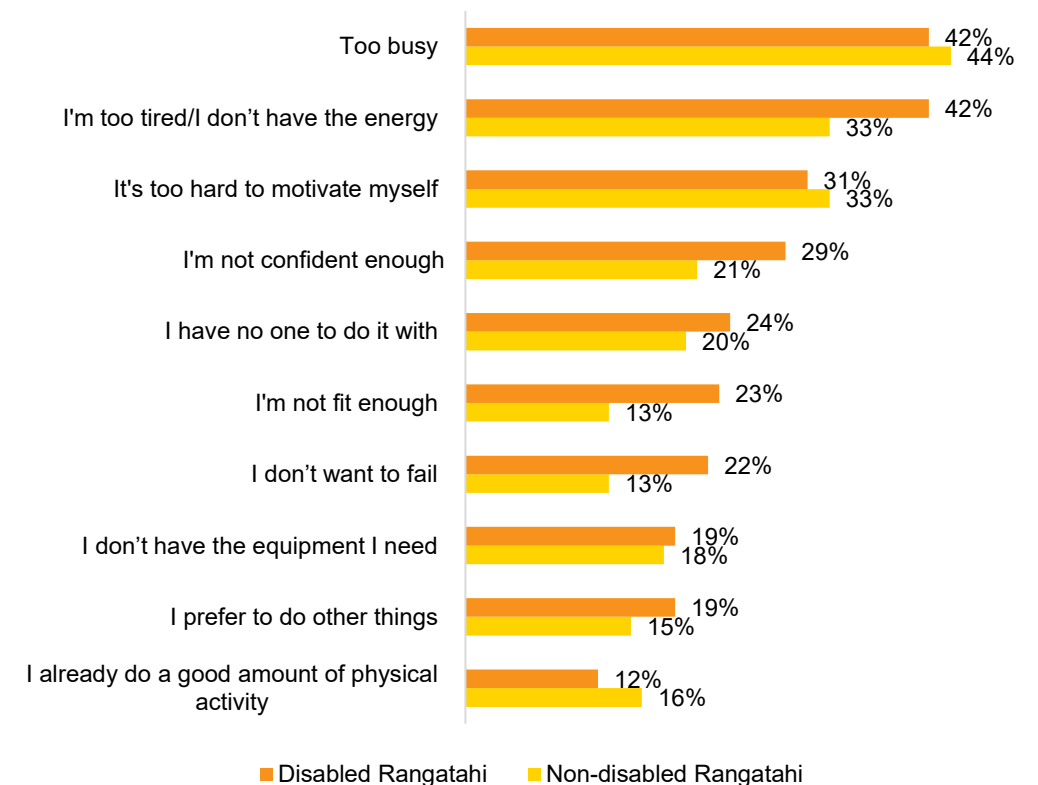
Ethnicity and barriers to physical activity:

- ‘Too busy’ is the top barrier for all ethnic groups, but the proportion varies slightly.
- Confidence and motivational barriers are also similarly reported across all ethnicities.

EQI and barriers to physical activity:

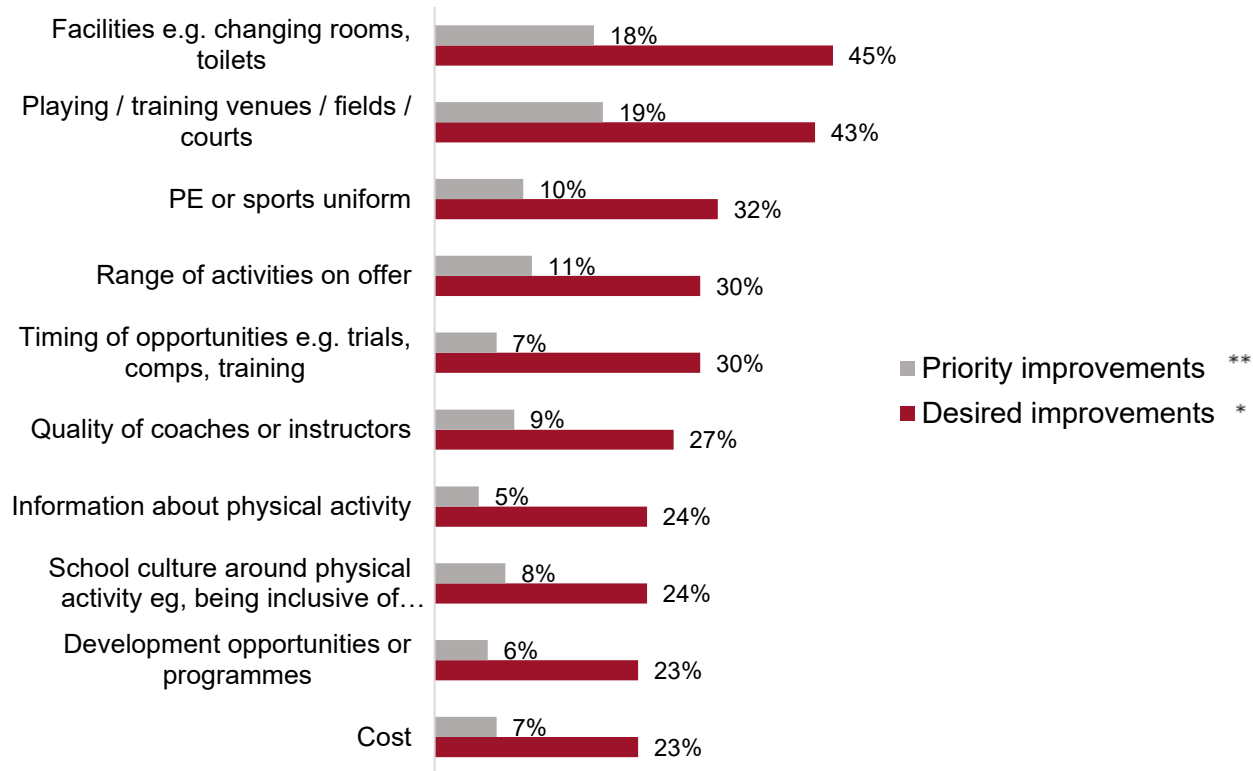
- Across all groups, time/energy are the dominant barriers to physical activity, while motivation consistently sits close behind. Rangatahi in schools with higher EQI report lower confidence and greater barriers to physical activity. Not feeling confident is more common in moderate and high EQI schools (22% and 23%) than in low EQI schools (15%). A lack of equipment is also reported more often, rising from 12% in low EQI schools to 15% and 19% in moderate and high EQI schools.

Reasons rangatahi are not doing as much physical activity they would like to or want to, by disability



A third of rangatahi would like improved facilities and playing/training venues, and a quarter prefer better PE or sports uniform and range of activities on offer.

Desired and priority improvements according to rangatahi



“The court in the gym is very dangerous and slippery. There has been a lot of injuries this year in that gym.”

“More breathable, stretchable fabrics that allow better movement and reduce discomfort during exercise. Uniforms could come in more sizes and cuts to fit different body types better.”

“I would like to see more inclusive fitness groups like yoga with multiple small groups so we can feel more confident not having to do it in front of lots of people.”

*Desired improvements = respondents could choose as many options as they wanted.

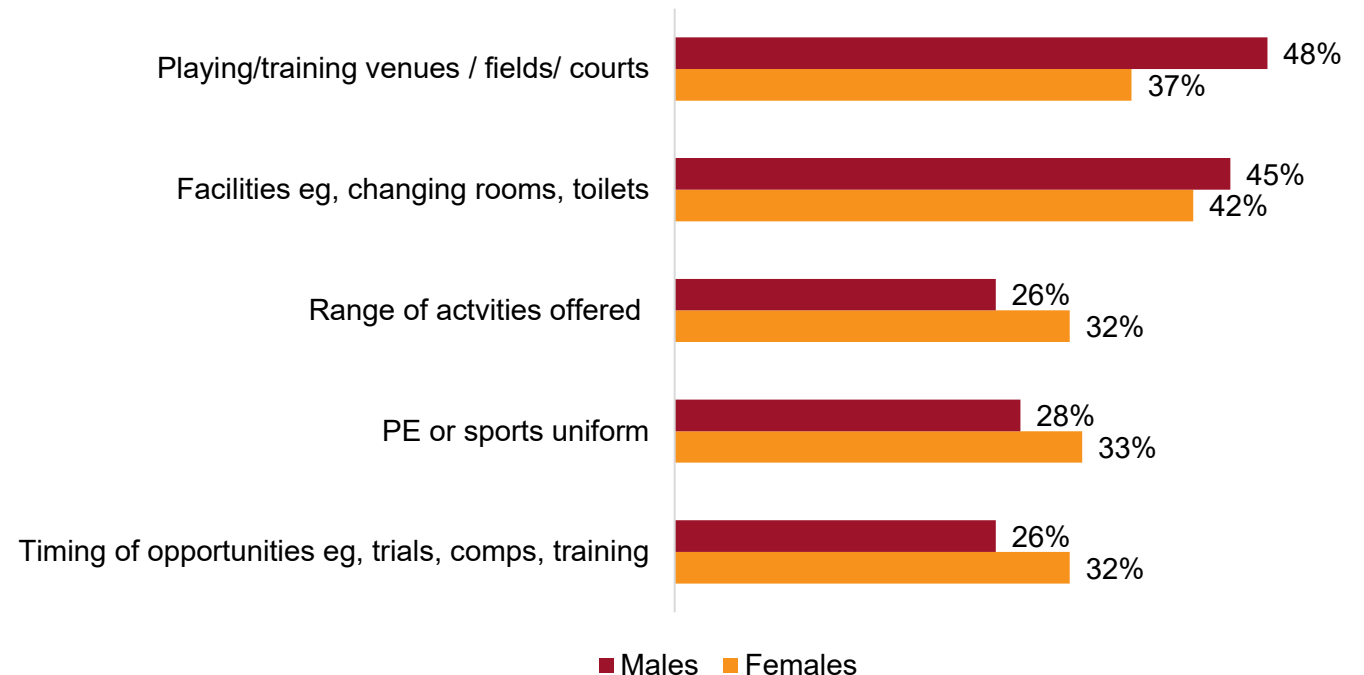
**Priority improvements = respondents could only choose ONE most important aspect to improve.

Both male and female rangatahi would like to see improvements in facilities and playing fields. However, males prioritise these improvements more than females.

Females place greater priority on areas for improvement than males for a wider range of activities (32% vs 26%), PE/sports uniforms (33% vs 28%), and better timing of opportunities (32% vs 26%).

Males consistently prioritise infrastructure for physical activities more than females, while females would like broader improvements across participation options and uniform.

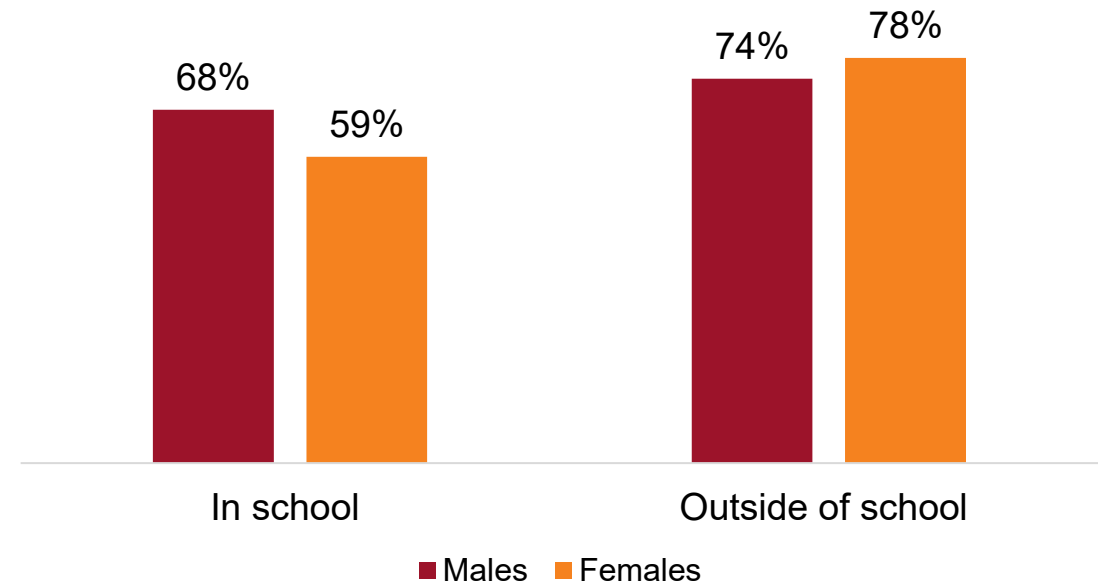
Desired improvements for males and females



The majority of rangatahi want to be more active. More rangatahi want to be more active outside of school than at or for school/kura.

- Three-quarters (75%) of rangatahi want to be more active outside of school, while two-thirds (63%) want to be more active in school/kura.
- Male and female rangatahi express strong interest in wanting to be more active at school and outside of school/kura; male rangatahi show slightly more motivation than females.

Rangatahi who want to be more active at/for school/kura and out of school/kura, percentage showing 'yes', by gender



Attitudes toward physical activity and school



- Most young people want to be more active and understand why physical activity is good for them, but confidence declines as they get older, especially from intermediate onwards.
- Belonging and inclusion weaken across schooling, with tamariki and rangatahi feeling progressively less included during class-time PE, and less connected to their school environment as they move into higher year groups.
- Inequity gaps widen with age – girls, disabled young people, Asian ākonga and students in high EQI schools report lower confidence, lower enjoyment and weaker encouragement, with gaps becoming more pronounced in secondary years.
- Ethnicity appears to be an indicator of differing attitudes toward physical activity and school for both tamariki and rangatahi.

Voice of tamariki

Attitudes toward physical
activity and school



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Three-quarters (75%) of tamariki want to be active and enjoy being active and two-thirds feel confident to try different physical activities.

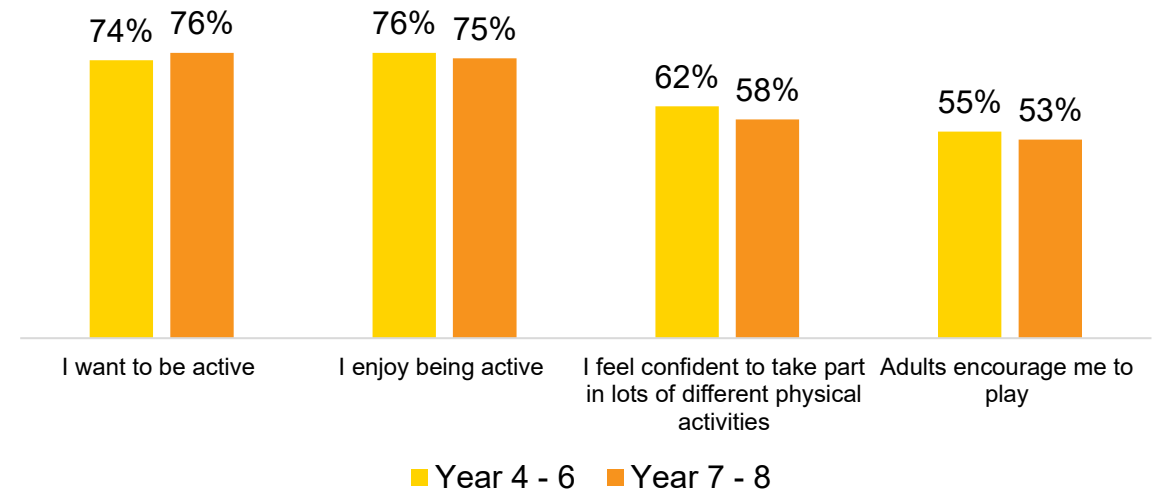
Younger tamariki feel more confident, encouraged and enjoy being active compared to older year groups.

Tamariki who report feeling confident to take part in lots of different physical activities are those who report:

- enjoyment being active, in general
- feeling included during physical activity in class time (like in PE)
- opportunities to learn about Māori culture through physical activity
- encouragement by people to be active.

Confidence to take part in lots of different physical activities is reported lower among girls and tamariki in schools with high EQI.

Tamariki attitudes towards physical literacy, graph shows percentage of agreement for 'quite a lot' and 'heaps', by age groups



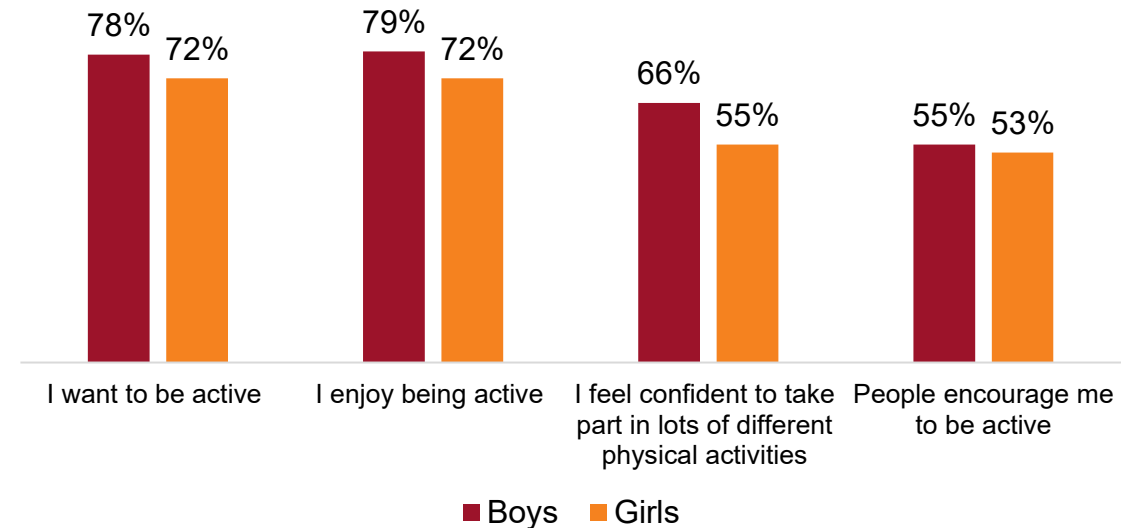
Note: 'I enjoy being active' here refers to general enjoyment, which is different from enjoyment derived in being active within specific settings (eg, during class time, play time).

Note: Regression analysis is a statistical method used to explore the relationship between one outcome of interest and one or more factors that might influence it. It helps estimate how strongly each driver is linked to the outcome and can be used to make predictions based on those relationships.

Boys tend to report more positive experiences with physical activity compared to girls.

- Boys consistently report positively across physical activity attitudes compared to girls.
- While both boys and girls are encouraged to be physically active, boys report greater motivation and enjoyment for physical activity.
- The most notable gap is confidence: 66% of boys report feeling confident to take part in lots of different physical activities compared to 55% of girls.

Tamariki views on physical activity, graph shows percentage of agreement for 'quite a lot' and 'heaps'



Note: 'I enjoy being active' here refers to general enjoyment, which is different from enjoyment derived in being active within specific settings (eg, during class time, play time).

Views on physical activity vary across different groups, with tamariki who have impairments generally showing less positive attitudes towards physical activity; however, these attitudes also differ according to ethnicity.

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment and attitudes:

Tamariki experiencing greater impairments report less positive attitudes toward physical activity at school/kura compared with peers experiencing no impairment. The largest gaps are in confidence to take part in lots of different physical activities (52% vs 72%), enjoy being active (63% vs 85%) and feel encouraged by adults.

Ethnicity and attitudes: Most ethnic groups show significant differences in attitudes, but some exceptions stand out:

NZ European tamariki report higher levels of wanting to be active, enjoyment of being active and confidence in taking part in lots of different physical activities. NZ European tamariki (77%) are slightly more likely to report they want to be active than their peers (75%).

Māori tamariki are marginally less likely to report they want to be active (71%) or enjoy being active (73%) than their non-Māori peers (75% and 75% respectively).

Pacific tamariki (60%) are most likely to report people encourage them to be active than non-Pacific peers (54%) .

Asian tamariki (56%) are less likely to report they feel confident to take part in different physical activities than their peers (60%).

EQI and attitudes:

While tamariki in schools with low EQI are most likely to feel confident trying different physical activities compared to their peers in schools with high or moderate EQI, they are less likely to be encouraged to be more active.

Majority of tamariki report feeling included during physical activity in class time (like in PE).

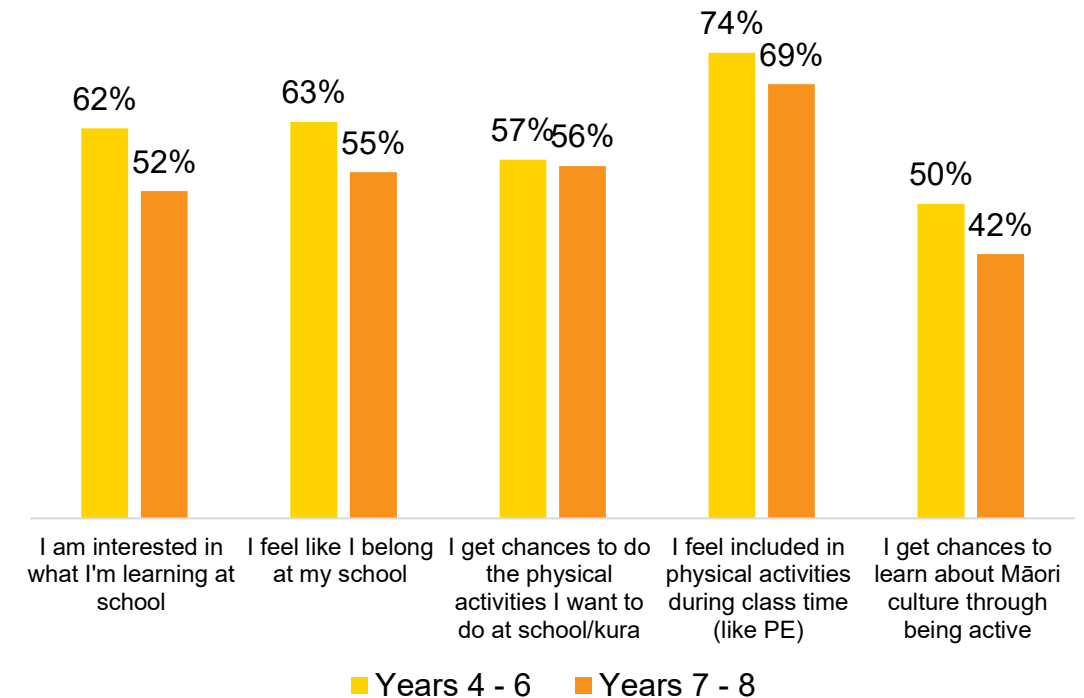
Chances to do physical activities tamariki want to do at school are relatively stable across primary and intermediate years.

However, attitudes toward learning, belonging and feeling included decline from primary to intermediate years.

Tamariki who report feeling a sense of belonging at their school/kura are those who report:

- feeling interested in what they are learning at school
- feeling included during physical activity in class time (like in PE)
- getting chances to do the physical activities they want to do
- being encouraged to be active by people.

Tamariki attitudes towards school/kura, graph shows percentage of agreement for 'quite a lot' and 'heaps', by age groups

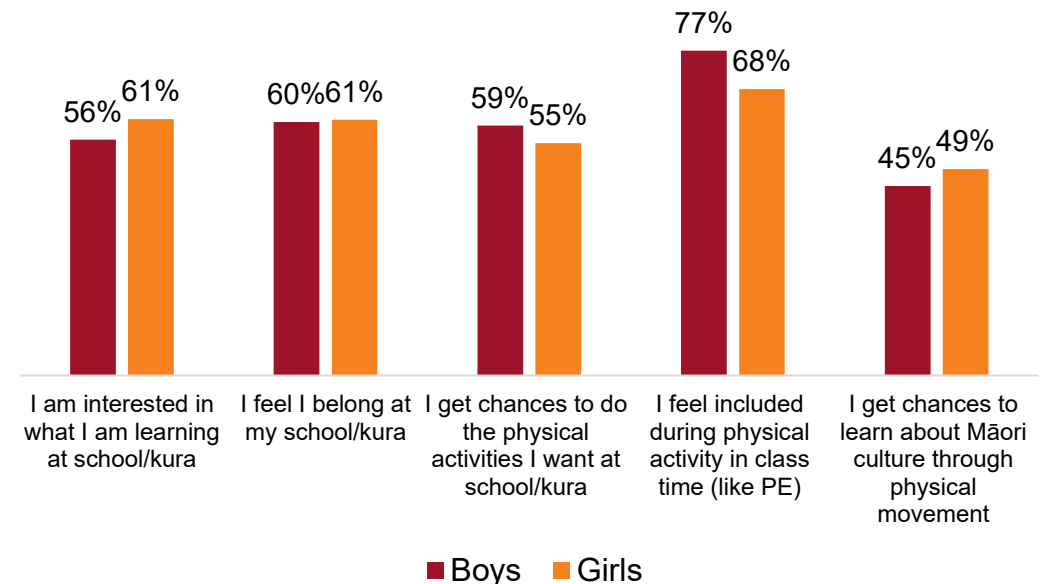


Note: Regression analysis is a statistical method used to explore the relationship between one outcome of interest and one or more factors that might influence it. It helps estimate how strongly each driver is linked to the outcome and can be used to make predictions based on those relationships.

Attitudes toward school tend to be context specific, with boys reporting positively toward physical activity within the school setting, while girls are more likely to report positively toward learning.

- Boys report more positive physical activity experiences across almost every measure.
- Particularly large differences are reported for feeling included in physical activity during class time (like PE): only 68% of girls report feeling included in physical activity during class time compared to 77% of boys.
- Girls tend to report higher interest in learning, while boys are more positive about the physical activity environment.
- Positively, boys and girls report similar levels of belonging at school/kura.

Tamariki attitudes toward school/kura, graph shows percentage of agreement for 'quite a lot' and 'heaps'



Views on school attitudes vary across groups, with tamariki who have impairments generally showing less positive feelings towards school; however, these attitudes also fluctuate based on context within different ethnic groups.

Tamariki experiencing greater impairment and attitudes:

Tamariki experiencing greater impairments report feeling less positively towards physical activity attitudes at school/kura compared to peers experiencing no impairment, particularly about feeling a sense of belonging (45% vs 60%) and feeling included during physical activity in class time (59% vs 81%) or feeling encouraged by adults.

Ethnicity and attitudes: Most ethnic groups show significant differences in attitudes, but some exceptions stand out:

Māori tamariki (61%) are most likely to report they get chances to learn about Māori culture through being active than their peers (47%).

Pacific tamariki consistently report feeling positively toward school, with higher reports of feeling interested in what they are learning (66%) and feeling included in during physical activity in class time (like PE, 77%) compared to their peers (58% and 72% respectively).

Asian tamariki tend to report most positively about feeling interested in what they are learning (71% vs 58%) and feeling like they belong at school/kura (67% vs 60%).

EQI and attitudes:

While tamariki in schools with low EQI are most likely to feel confident trying different physical activities compared to their peers in schools with high or moderate EQI, they are less likely to be encouraged to be more active.

Voice of rangatahi

Attitudes toward physical
activity and school

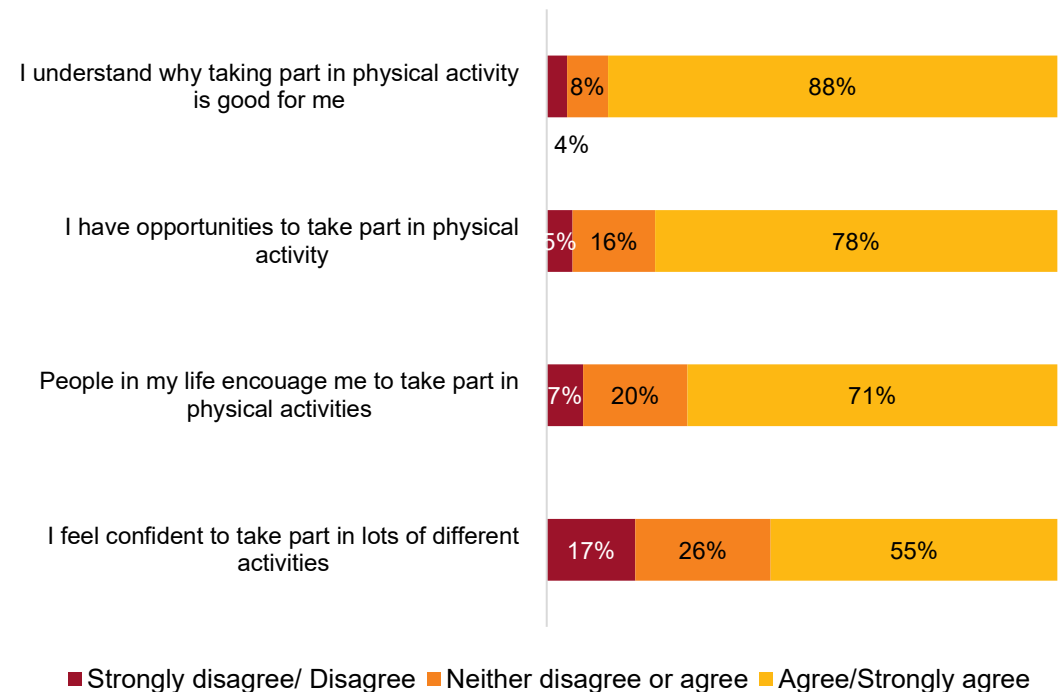


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Rangatahi know physical activity is good, and generally have opportunities, but confidence to participate appears to be less positive.

- Access is broadly adequate across year levels, but from Year 9 onward students' confidence and social encouragement decline, especially by Years 11 to 13, while understanding why taking part in physical activity is good dips in Years 9 to 10.
- For instance, 80% of rangatahi in Years 7 to 8 report people in their life encourage them to be physically active, compared to 73% in Years 9 to 10 and 70% in Years 11 to 13.
- Across all attitudes toward physical activity, male rangatahi consistently report feeling positively, while rangatahi who identify as another gender report the least positive experiences. For instance, 65% of male rangatahi feel confident to take part in lots of different physical activities compared to 48% of females and 39% of rangatahi who identify as another gender.

Rangatahi attitudes towards physical activity



Disabled rangatahi, Asian rangatahi and those in high EQI schools consistently report lower confidence, encouragement and opportunities to participate in physical activity.

Disability and attitudes:

Across all 4 questions on attitudes toward physical activity, disabled rangatahi report significantly lower ratings than non-disabled peers. For instance, disabled rangatahi are less likely than their non-disabled peers to agree they have opportunities to take part in physical activities (70% vs 82%).

Ethnicity and attitudes:

NZ European rangatahi are more likely to agree they have opportunities to take part in physical activities, and they understand why participating in physical activity is good for them.

Māori and Pacific rangatahi are more likely to agree that people encourage them to take part in physical activity and they are more confident to participate in different physical activities than non-Māori and non-Pacific rangatahi. However, Māori and Pacific rangatahi report they are less likely to understand why physical activity is good for them and that they have opportunities to take part in physical activity.

Asian rangatahi are less likely to report people encourage them to take part in physical activity than non-Asian rangatahi. They are also less likely to report they have opportunities to participate in physical activities compared to their peers.

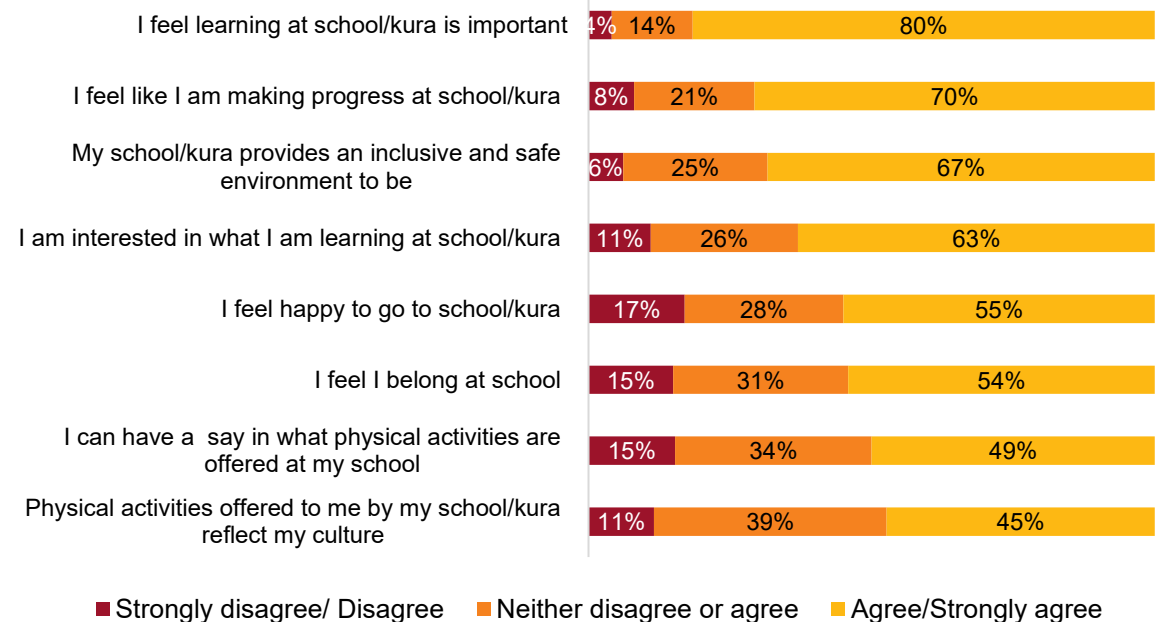
EQI and attitudes:

Across all questions on attitudes toward physical activity, rangatahi experiences differ across EQI groups, with rangatahi in schools with low EQI reporting more positively compared to peers in schools with moderate or high EQI. Differences are especially significant for having opportunities to take part in physical activities (Low EQI: 87% vs moderate EQI: 81% vs high EQI: 76%).

Most rangatahi feel learning at school/kura is important. But only about half feel happy to go to school or like they belong at their school/kura.

- Less than half report they have a say in what physical activities are offered (49%) and that physical activities offered reflect their culture (45%).
- Younger rangatahi (Years 7 to 8) report more positively on attitudes toward school/kura, while older students (Years 9 to 13) show a decline in these attitudes. The largest gaps consistently involve Years 7 to 8 vs Years 11 to 13, especially for perceptions of the school being an inclusive and safe environment (77% vs 65%) and having a say in what physical activities are offered (60% vs 48%).
- Male rangatahi are significantly more likely to report positively about their feelings toward school. Females tend to report more positively than those rangatahi who identify as another gender. For instance, 74% males reported their school/kura provides an inclusive and safe environment to be, compared to 63% females and 35% of rangatahi who identify as another gender.

Rangatahi attitudes towards school



Attitudes toward school vary among different groups. Disabled rangatahi tend to have less positive views of school, whereas differences across ethnicities appear to be more dependent on specific contexts.

Disability and attitudes:

Overall, disabled rangatahi are less likely than their non-disabled peers to agree that their school is inclusive and safe, that they are interested in their learning, that they have choice in the physical activities offered at school, and that they are making progress in their learning.

Disabled rangatahi are less likely than their non-disabled peers to feel happy to go to school/kura (43% vs 57%) or like they belong at their school/kura (41% vs 58%).

Ethnicity and attitudes:

NZ European rangatahi are less likely than non-NZ European rangatahi to report they have a say in what physical activities are offered at their school/kura (43% vs 56%) and that the physical activities offered at school/kura reflect their culture (42% vs 52%).

Māori are more likely than non-Māori rangatahi to report the physical activities offered at their school/kura reflect their culture (54% vs 43%).

Pacific rangatahi consistently report positively across most attitudes toward school, compared to non-Pacific rangatahi. For example, Pacific rangatahi report positively about their school offering physical activities that reflect their culture (54% vs 45%) and having a say in what physical activities are offered at their school (57% vs 48%).

Asian rangatahi are more likely than their peers to report they are interested in what they are learning at school/kura (73% vs 61%) and feel happy to go to school (64% vs 53%).

EQI and attitudes:

Rangatahi in schools with low EQI report stronger belonging, motivation/interest, perceived progress and positive views of school, compared to peers in schools with high EQI. The biggest difference is reported in feeling like they belong at school (low EQI: 71% vs moderate EQI: 58% vs high EQI: 52%).

Methods and demographics



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Notes to this report

Method

Schools and kura are enrolled to participate in voice of tamariki and voice of rangatahi via Regional Sports Trusts and the Regional Sports Director network.

Schools that agree to participate distribute an online survey link to their students for completion during class or form time. Surveys are jointly branded with Sport NZ and the Regional Sports Trust or Regional Sports Director.

The surveys are hosted, and responses collected, via a survey platform provided to Sport NZ by InMoment.

Limitations

Results for this report have not been weighted, and therefore should not be considered representative of all New Zealand schools, but read as indicative of New Zealand tamariki and rangatahi feedback regarding physical activity.

Voice of tamariki responses have a regional demographic skew:

- Responses are slightly skewed towards some regions, particularly Auckland (34%).

Voice of rangatahi responses have some demographic skews:

- Responses are slightly skewed towards some regions, particularly Auckland (26%), Taranaki (15%), Bay of Plenty (13%) and Canterbury (10%).
- There is also a skew towards younger rangatahi, with 51% in Years 9 to 10 (ages 13 to 15).
- There are more female responses (52%) than males (44%).

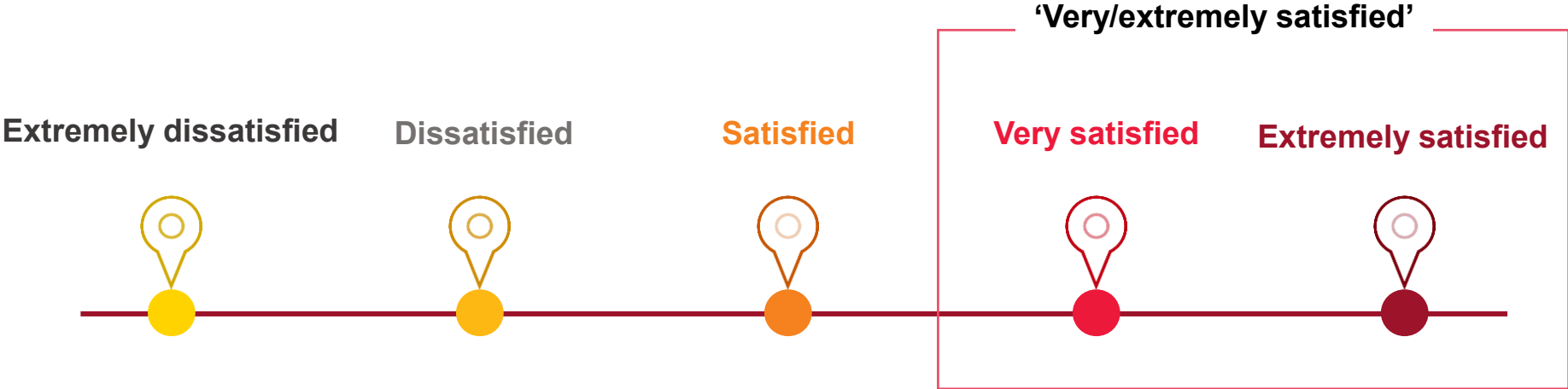
Notes to this report

Rounding of results

Due to rounding, the net figures provided (eg, % 'very satisfied' and % 'extremely satisfied') and total results may differ from the numbers shown on the charts.

Interpreting satisfaction and agreement scores

When level of satisfaction or agreement is referenced in this report (eg, the percentage who are 'very' or 'extremely satisfied'), the top 2 results ('very satisfied' or 'extremely satisfied') of a positively skewed scale are used (shown below).





Positively skewed scales are used because the neutral ratings are divided between dissatisfaction and satisfaction (as opposed to a neutral mid-point in a 'balanced' scale). This gives the opportunity for some of the 'very satisfied' to be 'delighted', allowing for more variation/greater discrimination compared with a balanced scale.

Comparing results across groups

When comparing results, 'vs' is used as an abbreviation of 'compared to'. In this report we compare different demographics (ie, males vs females) or to the overall average. All differences reported are statistically significant. Kruskal-Wallis test is used to check for differences between groups, followed by post-hoc Dunn test to observe which groups differ. Both tests are selected to suit ordinal data.

Weighting

No weighting was applied to these results. Please refer to the next pages in this section to understand who responded.

The voice of tamariki survey in 2025 received responses from 38,321 tamariki from 450 schools across regions.

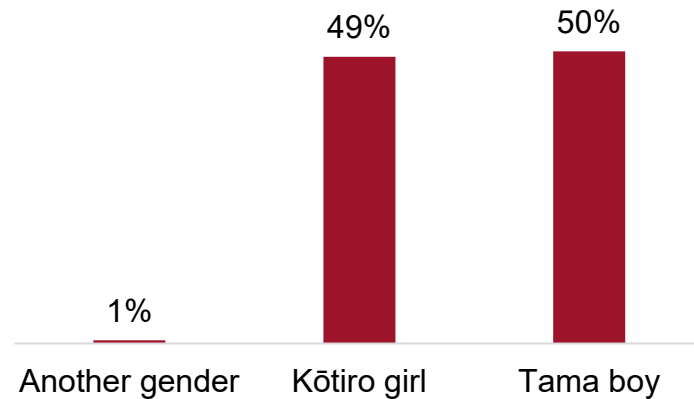
Gender:

A similar proportion of boys and girls responded to the survey. There is a spread of ages across age groups.

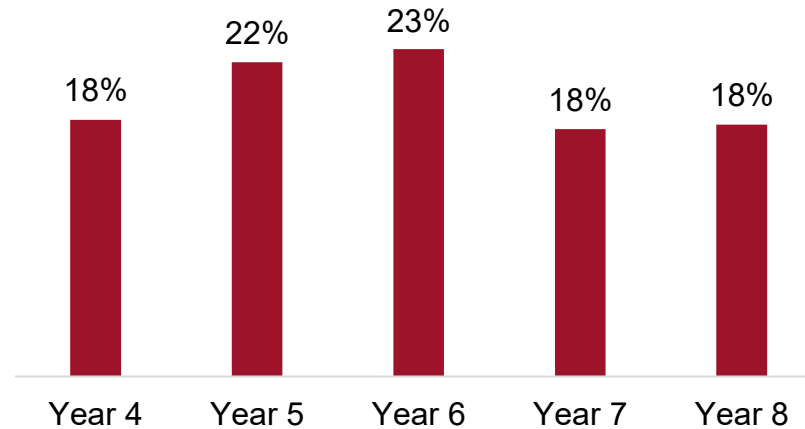
Impairment:

In voice of tamariki, we asked the question, 'Do you find it a lot harder than other kids your age to do things? Things you might find harder could be seeing, hearing, moving, learning, reading, writing or managing your feelings.' 33% of tamariki said they had no difficulty, 39% reported 'yes – a bit', 8% reported 'yes – a lot of difficulty', and 19% reported 'not sure'.

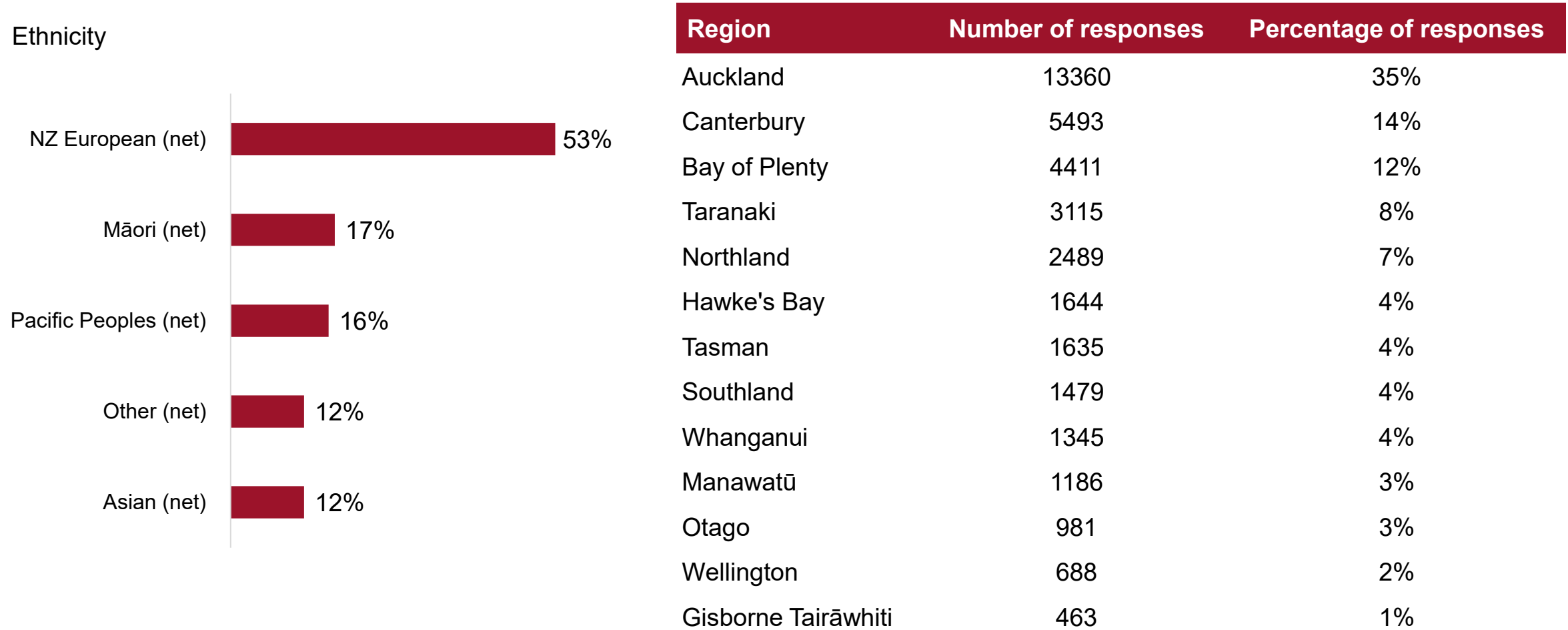
Gender



School year



Roughly 5 in 10 tamariki identified as NZ European*, 1 in 6 as Māori and Pacific People and Asian. Most of responses are from Auckland, followed by Canterbury and Bay of Plenty.



*Participants were able to identify as more than one ethnicity

The voice of rangatahi survey in 2025 had 19,822 respondents from 15 RSTs across 125 schools.

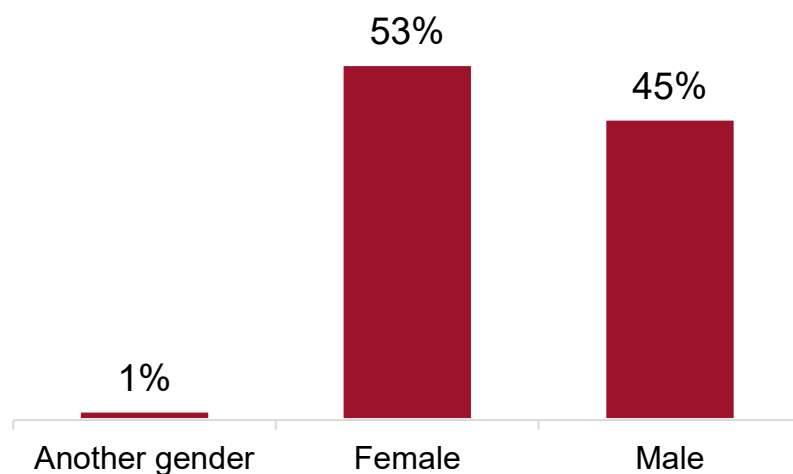
Gender:

More females (53%) responded to the survey in 2025 than males (45%). As seen in the previous years, there is a spread of ages across year groups with half (51%) of responses from Year 9 and Year 10.

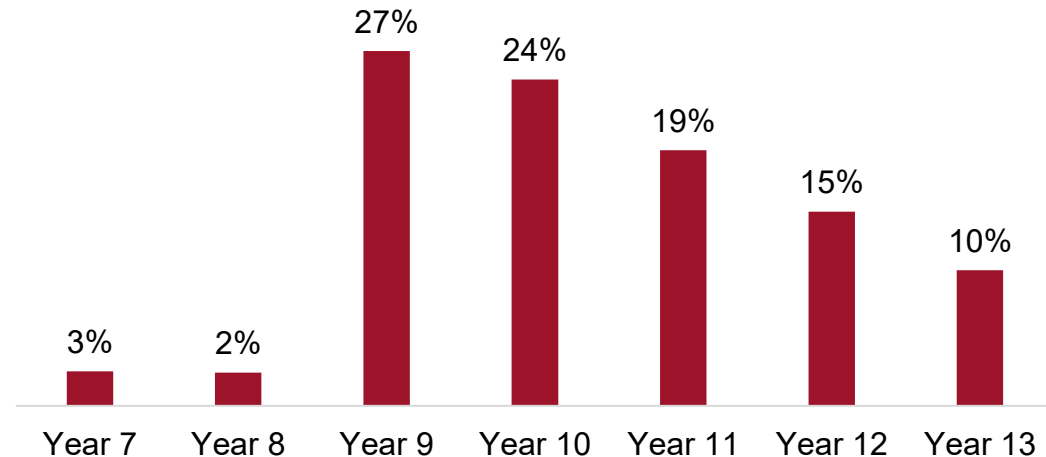
Disability:

The Washington Group on Statistics Short Set (WSS) of questions have been used to identify disabled people. In the voice of rangatahi survey, disabled people are people who self-report at least 'a lot' of difficulty across 1 or more of 6 domains. Non-disabled people are people who self-report 'some difficulty' or 'no difficulty' in all 6 domains. In our sample, 78% of rangatahi are identified as not disabled and 22% reported being disabled.

Respondent distribution by gender

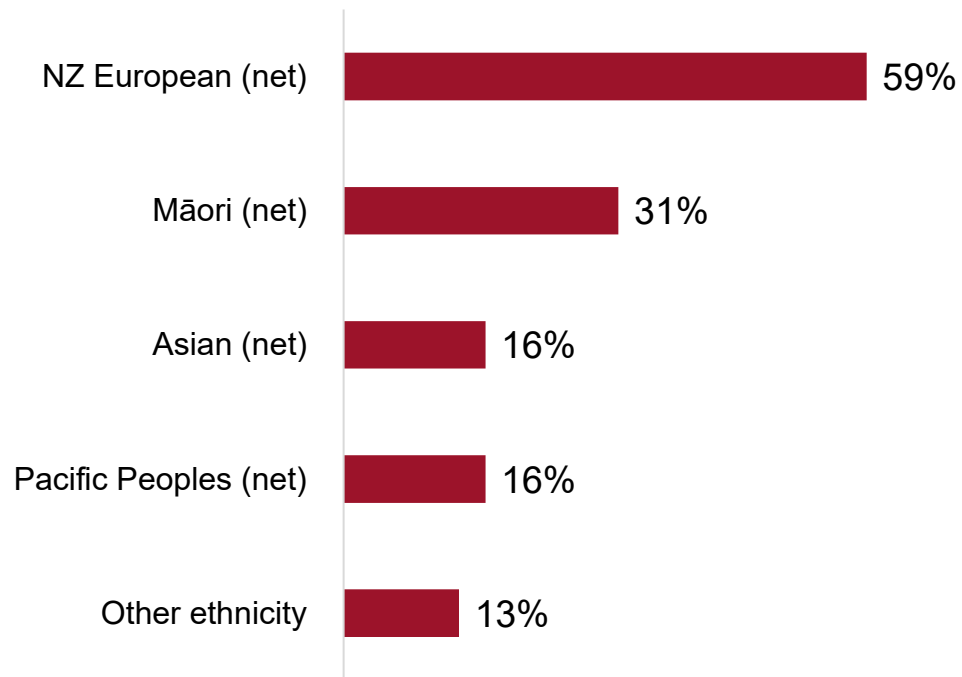


Respondent distribution by school years



Roughly 6 in 10 rangatahi identified as NZ European*, 3 in 10 as Māori and 1 in 6 as Pacific Peoples and Asian. Most of responses are from Auckland, followed by Taranaki and Bay of Plenty.

Ethnicity



| Region | Number of responses | Percentage of responses |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Auckland | 4248 | 21% |
| Taranaki | 2,939 | 15% |
| Bay of Plenty | 2,551 | 13% |
| Canterbury | 2,071 | 10% |
| Hawke's Bay | 1602 | 8% |
| Northland | 1,417 | 7% |
| Waikato | 1,038 | 5% |
| Otago | 988 | 5% |
| Wellington | 871 | 4% |
| Tasman | 768 | 4% |
| Manawatū | 713 | 4% |
| Whanganui | 377 | 2% |
| Gisborne, Tairāwhiti | 215 | 1% |

**Participants were able to identify as more than one ethnicity*