

# Respect in Sports

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A monthly newsletter for everyone interested in supporting a positive youth sports experience.



The Sports Alliance of Minnesota is a coalition of sports organizations whose mission is to provide tools for creating a positive sports environment.

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## Growing Physically Active Youth

By Deborah Istre, R.N.

In a world of super-sized soft drinks, fries, and television screens, poor nutrition and physical inactivity is on the rise no matter what age group you belong to. Children and adolescents have a slight edge on adults in being generally more physically active, yet many youth do not participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity on a *regular* basis. Growing physically active youth is challenging when they're engaged in activities that require little physical exertion.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 65% of high school students participate in *vigorous* physical activity on three or more days a week and 26% participate in *moderate* physical activity on five or more days a week. That percentage decreases as children and adolescents grow older. Other factors include gender, age, and race or ethnicity. Male high school students are more likely than female students to participate in vigorous physical activity (70% vs. 55%). Older children and adolescents are less active than younger children and adolescents, and black youth are less active than white youth. Youth with disabilities are often denied opportunities to participate in physical activities due to the myth that they can't or won't participate.

It is recommended that *all* children and adolescents should be physically active daily. Youth should engage in a minimum of three physical activities per week that last 20 minutes or more at a time and that require moderate to vigorous levels of exertion. Moderate physical activities could include brisk walking, dancing, bicycling, and swimming. Vigorous activities can include sports, running, and aerobics. Ideally, children and adolescents should engage in at least **60 minutes** of physical activity on most days of the week.

CDC factors that increase physical activity in young people:

- Confidence in ability to participate in physical activities.
- Belief that they are good at physical activity.
- A positive attitude towards physical education.
- Enjoying physical activity.
- Belief in benefits from physical activity.
- Being involved in sports.

For more information:

[www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/PhysicalActivity](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/PhysicalActivity)  
[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)  
[www.sparkpe.org/index.jsp](http://www.sparkpe.org/index.jsp)

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