



**SPORT
NEW ZEALAND**
IHI AOTEAROA

Active NZ

Participation Trends

The New Zealand Participation Survey 2017–2023

July 2024

Acknowledgements

Sport New Zealand's Active NZ survey measures nationwide participation in play, active recreation and sport. This is the seventh year of data collection, with data collected between 2017 and 2023.¹

This report highlights how activity levels, attitudes and preferences have changed over seven years for young people and adults. It focuses on more detailed results for young people who are at the heart of the Sport New Zealand strategy.

Special thanks go to all those who have provided feedback to guide the development of this report and the thousands of New Zealanders who took part in the Active NZ survey.

Authors

The main authors of this report are Sport New Zealand's Research, Evaluation and Insights team and Verian.

Citation

Sport New Zealand, 2024

Active NZ Participation Trends: The New Zealand Participation Survey 2017–2023

Wellington: Sport New Zealand

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¹ In 2020 data collection paused between April and June due to COVID-19 pandemic disruption. Because of the effect of seasonality on participation results, trends analysis excludes 2020 data.

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Glossary

Adult	Respondents aged 18-plus.
Being active	Refers to being physically active in play, active recreation and sport.
Children and young people	Respondents aged from 5 to 17.
Ethnicity	Results by ethnicity throughout this report – European, Māori, Pacific (including Samoan) and Asian (including Indian and Chinese) – are based on respondents’ self-identification.
Informal participation	Applies to children and young people only. Informal sports and activities include being physically active through play with others, playing alone, extra training activities or practising without a coach or instructor.
Non-participants	People who have not been physically active in play, exercise, active recreation or sport in the past seven days.
Organised participation	Applies to children and young people only. Participation in a competition or tournament is one component of organised participation. Other organised sports and activities include being physically active in physical education or class at school, sports and activities undertaken in a competition and training or practising with a coach or instructor.
Participants	People who have been physically active in play, active recreation (including exercise) or sport in the past seven days, where this participation excludes any physical activity undertaken for work or chores. Participation can include physical activity undertaken to get from one place to another if the respondent considers it to be for sport or active recreation.
Participation in competitive and non-competitive sports or activities	Participating through an organised structure, for example, in a league or club competition, tournament or competitive event. Non-competitive participation refers to sports or activities undertaken outside of a league or club competition, tournament or competitive event.
Play, active recreation, and sport	Play, active recreation and sport are used throughout this report for simplicity. However, participation is multi-faceted. Play and active recreation are terms used by Sport New Zealand to capture participation in activities not considered to be sport, for example, playing with friends or alone, dance and tramping. Sport can be undertaken in an organised structure, for example, in a competition or tournament, or informally outside an organised structure. Sport is associated with being competitive, but individuals differ in their degree of competitiveness, irrespective of how they participate.
Rangatahi	Respondents aged 12 to 17.
Respondents	People who took part in the survey.
Tamariki	Respondents aged 5 to 11.
Weekly participation	Refers to being physically active in play, exercise, active recreation or sport at least once in the past seven days.
Young adults	Respondents aged 18 to 24.

Active NZ

This report focuses on participation trends in play, active recreation and sport between 2017 and 2023 for New Zealanders aged 5-plus.

It should be read alongside the snapshot of the 2023 participation landscape report, which sets out how results vary over the lifespan of New Zealanders aged 5-plus through the lenses of age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation and disability.

About this report

Based on data collected through the Active NZ survey between 5 January 2017 and 4 January 2023 from 31,127 young people and 128,353 adults, this report highlights how activity levels, attitudes and preferences in play, active recreation and sport for New Zealanders aged 5-plus have changed over seven years.²

Reported differences between the total result and subgroups are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, unless noted. Significance testing means we can be highly confident that any differences reported are not random variations due to carrying out a survey among a sample of the population rather than a population census.

Data tables and figures accompanying the report contain all base sizes and highlight all statistically significant differences at the 95 percent confidence level. Please note, in some cases, a significant difference is reported between two numbers that appear to be the same and/or no significant difference is reported when it may appear there should be one. This is due to rounding and variation in sample sizes.

Knowing a difference is statistically significant does not mean the difference is important. While all statistically significant differences are shown in the figures and tables in this report, the commentary focuses on the significant differences that are meaningful.

² In 2020 data collection paused between April and June due to COVID-19 pandemic disruption. Because of the effect of seasonality on participation results, trends analysis excludes 2020 data.

Executive summary

Context

Based on data collected through the Active NZ survey between 5 January 2017 and 4 January 2023 from 31,127 young people and 128,353 adults, this report highlights how activity levels, attitudes and preferences in play, active recreation and sport for New Zealanders aged 5-plus have changed over seven years.³

Results should be read in the context of the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic,⁴ a slow New Zealand economy^{5, 6} and extreme weather events that occurred in the latter part of this trend series (between 2020 and 2023).

Main participation trends

- In 2023 young people's participation stabilised at the lower levels evident in 2021 and 2022. However, the picture is different for tamariki and rangatahi.
- The story for tamariki is positive, with weekly participation rebounding to 2017 levels and the increase in time spent being active evident in 2021 sustained. In 2023 the proportion of tamariki meeting the physical activity guidelines⁷ reached an all-time high while the proportion of inactive tamariki is at an all-time low: 5 percent in 2023 compared with 7 percent in 2017.
- Rangatahi are driving the poorer levels of participation for young people on all five participation indicators: weekly participation, average time spent in weekly participation, average number of sports and activities, proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines and proportion who are inactive. The proportion of inactive rangatahi is at an all-time high: 13 percent in 2023 compared with 7 percent in 2017.
- It is a mixed picture for adults. They have not sustained the increase in time spent in weekly participation, and the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines and average number of sports and activities seen in 2021 has also not been sustained. All three participation indicators are below pre-COVID-19 levels.

Trends in how participation is happening

- Organised and informal participation have recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels for tamariki. Time spent in organised participation for tamariki is also trending up, from 3.3 hours each week in 2017 to 4.5 hours in 2023.
- Tamariki club membership has returned to 2017 levels. This is driven by school club membership, which in 2023 is significantly higher than any year since 2017.
- In 2023 participation in events by tamariki is at an all-time high.
- In contrast, for rangatahi, organised and informal participation are trending down as is club membership. Events participation has returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- For rangatahi, doing extra exercise without a coach or instructor has been trending down since 2017 (14 percentage points), while for tamariki, it has been trending up since 2021.

³ In 2020 data collection paused between April and June due to COVID-19 pandemic disruption. Because of the effect of seasonality on participation results, trends analysis excludes 2020 data.

⁴ First COVID-19-related lockdown in March 2020; COVID-19 Protection Framework ('Traffic-light system') established in December 2021 and eliminated in September 2022.

⁵ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Economic Survey of New Zealand, (May 2024). https://issuu.com/oecd.publishing/docs/new_zealand_brochure_2024_en_web-final.

⁶ For example, a constant increase of the Official Cash Rate since 2021; and New Zealand being in a recession since 2023.

⁷ Meeting the physical activity guidelines is based on the recommendation of at least 7 hours per week of any intensity for young people and at least 2.5 hours for adults. Ministry of Health. *Physical Activity. How much activity is recommended?* 22 November 2021. Retrieved from www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-activity-and-sleep/physical-activity/how-much-activity-recommended.

- For adults, club membership has fluctuated since 2017, while gym membership has trended upwards. In 2023 membership for each is matched at one in four.
- Physical education (PE) as less fun is trending up for tamariki and rangatahi regardless of levels of activity.
- Despite a stable level of agreement for tamariki with liking school and PE since 2017, in 2023 the agreement is almost double on 'not enough PE being offered at school' and 'school not offering the activities they are interested in' over the same period. This is driven by more active tamariki who are meeting the physical activity guidelines.
- Not enough PE offered at school is trending up as a barrier to increasing participation for more active rangatahi: one in 10 in 2023.
- Desire for greater flexibility in participation has been trending up for rangatahi since 2017, with an increasing preference for activities that fit in with their schedules and less structured options.
- In 2023, the use of technology is trending up, reaching 35 percent for rangatahi and 45 percent for adults.

Trends in relationship with sport

- Our less active tamariki and rangatahi are driving trends in decreasing enjoyment in playing sport.
- This is more pronounced for rangatahi than tamariki where a downward trend can be seen on several attitudinal statements, including decreasing agreement on liking the challenge of sport, liking playing with a team, learning essential life skills and being good at sport.
- Trending down for tamariki and rangatahi is agreement that New Zealand sports teams and athletes make good role models, and successful New Zealand sports teams and athletes inspire them to be more active. The reverse is the case for adults.
- Again, this downward trend is more pronounced for rangatahi than tamariki whose sense of pride and belonging when New Zealand teams or athletes do well is trending down.

Trends in benefits of being active

- Tamariki, rangatahi and adults who meet the physical activity guidelines are happier than those who do not.
- Happiness levels for tamariki and rangatahi who do not meet the physical activity guidelines have been trending down since 2017.
- For adults, happiness levels have been trending down since 2017, but at a steeper rate for those who do not meet the physical activity guidelines.
- The past two years have seen improvements in the proportion of tamariki agreeing that they know being active is good for them and being active makes them feel good. In contrast, agreement levels have been trending down for rangatahi on knowing that being active is good for them (since 2017) and being active makes them feel good (since 2021).
- Trending upwards is the proportion of adults who know being active is good for them and beneficial for their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Conclusion

- The COVID-19 pandemic has been a significant disruptor to participation in play, active recreation and sport in New Zealand, and the effect continues. Following a period of similar activity levels for tamariki and rangatahi pre-COVID-19, a divergence has occurred whereby tamariki are faring well and rangatahi are deteriorating.
- This is reflected in several long-term attitudinal trends among rangatahi, including a weakening relationship with sport and weakening engagement with high performance sport and the benefits of being active.

Main participation trends 2017–2023

This section outlines trends in levels of participation in play, active recreation and sport for young people, tamariki, rangatahi and adults on five participation indicators: weekly participation, time spent being active each week, the number of sports and activities participated in, the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines and the proportion being inactive.

Summary

- For young people, participation is lower in 2023 compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic on all five participation indicators.
- The picture for tamariki is positive, with weekly participation rebounding to 2017 levels and the increase in time spent being active evident in 2021 sustained. In 2023, the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines reached an all-time high, while the proportion being inactive is at an all-time low.
- Rangatahi are driving the poorer levels of participation for young people, especially younger rangatahi aged 12 to 14, on all five participation indicators.
- It is a mixed picture for adults who have not sustained the increase in time, proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines and average number of sports and activities seen in 2021. All three participation indicators are below pre-COVID-19 levels.

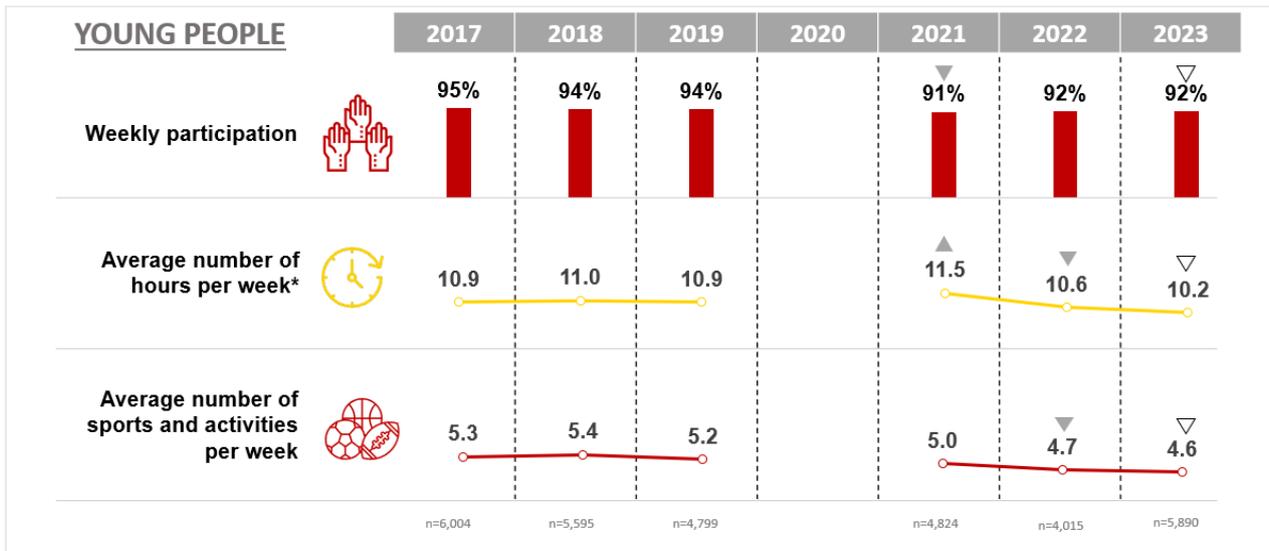
Participation trends for young people

For young people, participation is lower in 2023 compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic. This applies to all five participation indicators: weekly participation, time spent being active each week, the number of sports and activities participated in, the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines and the proportion of young inactive.

In 2021, following the disruption to participation choices as the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic was managed,⁸ fewer young people were participating each week but spending more time doing so, in the same number of sports and activities (figure 1A and figure 1B).

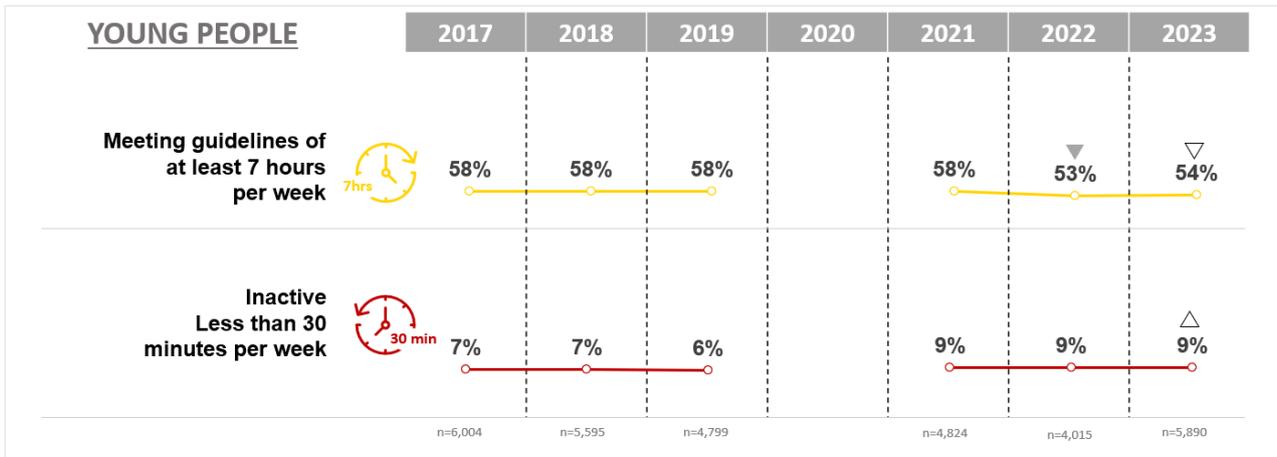
⁸ This involved lockdowns, social distancing, school closures, withdrawal of competitive sport and other restrictions.

Figure 1A: Young people – Main participation trends



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17
 *Average number of hours per week filter: ≤ 75

Figure 1B: Young people – Trends in meeting the guidelines and being inactive



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Participation trends for tamariki

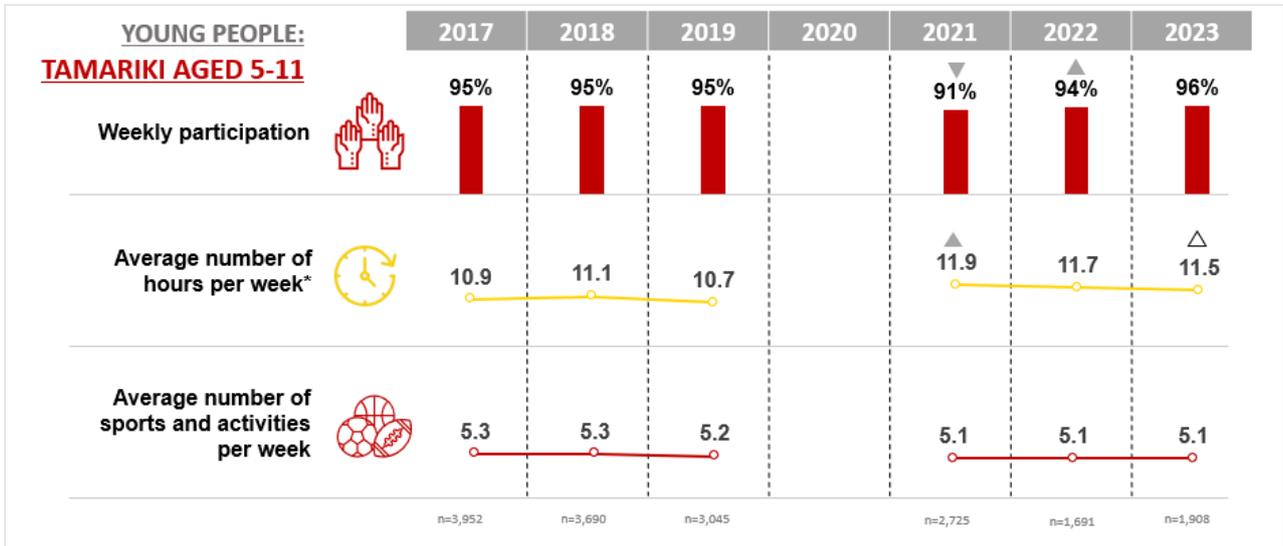
The pattern of participation evident in 2021 for young people is driven by tamariki, because fewer were participating each week but spending more time doing so, in the same number of sports and activities.

Weekly participation for tamariki has rebounded to 2017 levels, and the increase evident in 2021 in time spent being active has been sustained. The average number of sports and activities being participated in has been stable over time.

The proportion of tamariki meeting the physical activity guidelines is higher than pre-COVID-19 and the proportion of inactive tamariki, which was higher in 2021 than pre-COVID-19, is now at an all-time low (figure 2A and figure 2B).

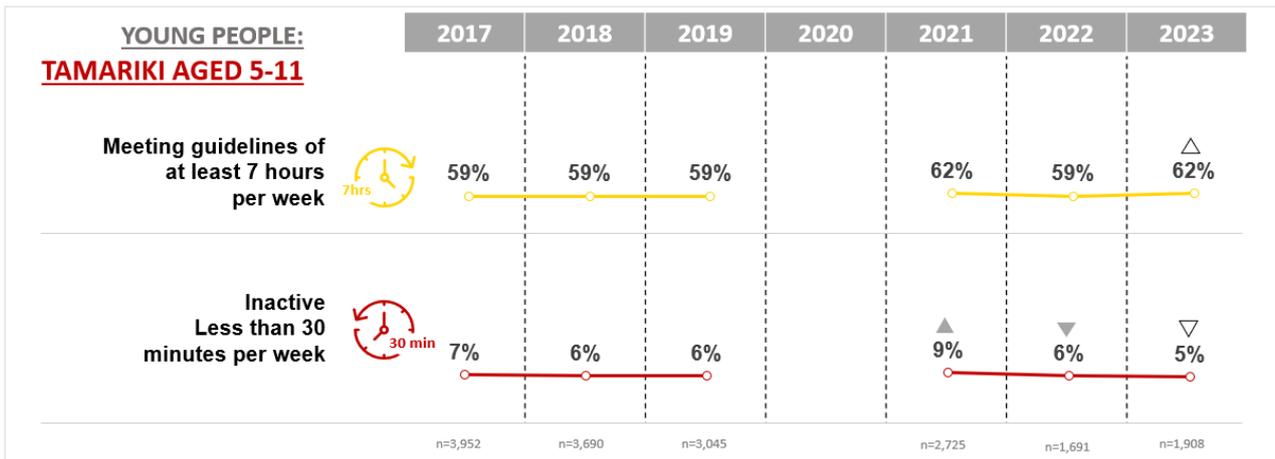
The proportion of tamariki from low and medium deprivation areas meeting the physical activity guidelines has trended upwards since 2021, while the reverse is true for tamariki from high deprivation areas (2021: 58 percent, 2022: 57 percent, 2023: 54 percent). However, a decrease has also occurred in the proportion of inactive tamariki from high deprivation areas over the same three years (2021: 14 percent, 2022: 10 percent, 2023: 7 percent). This means more tamariki are active but are not doing enough to meet the physical activity guidelines.

Figure 2A: Tamariki – Main participation trends



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11
 *Average number of hours per week filter: ≤ 75

Figure 2B: Tamariki – Participation trends in meeting the guidelines and being inactive



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11

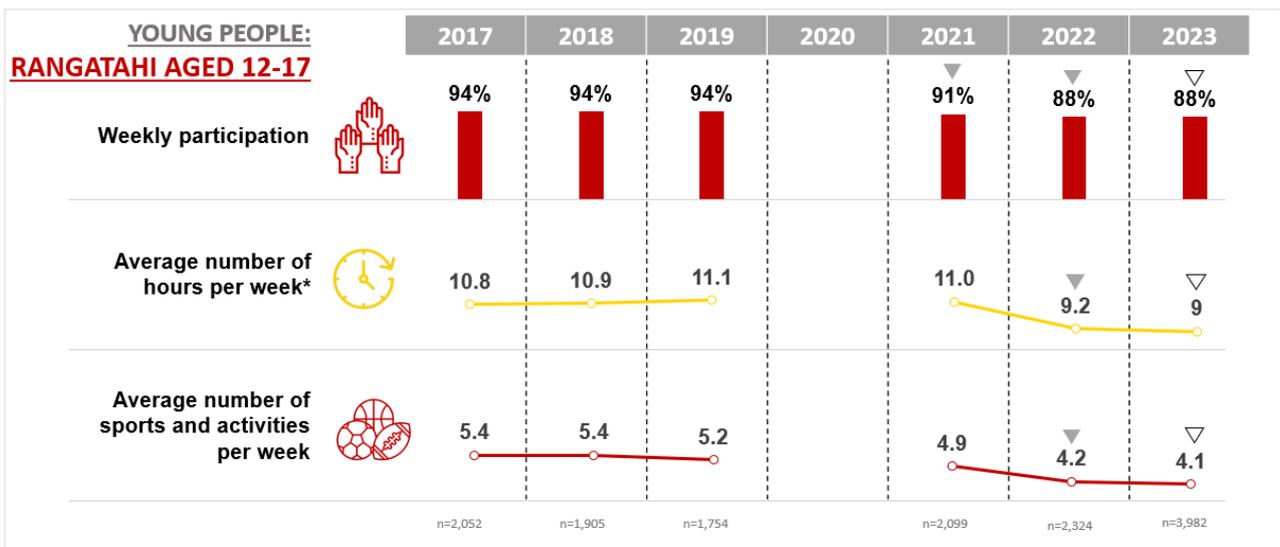
Participation trends for rangatahi

The poorer participation results for young people are driven by rangatahi on all five participation indicators.

After a period of stability between 2017 and 2019, weekly participation dropped to below pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels in 2021, dropped again in 2022 and, in 2023, has stabilised at this lower level.

Time spent in weekly participation and average number of sports and activities participated in each, and the proportion meeting the physical activity guidelines, dropped in 2022. Both have stabilised at lower levels in 2023. The proportion of inactive rangatahi has been increasing since 2021 and is now at an all-time high (figure 3A and figure 3B).

Figure 3A: Rangatahi – Main participation trends



▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

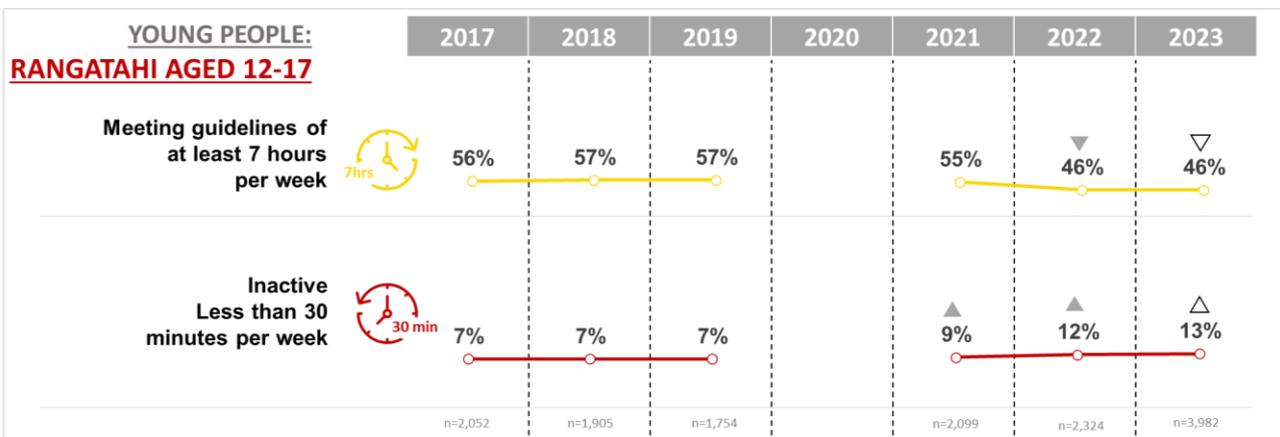
Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

*Average number of hours per week filter: ≤ 75

Figure 3B: Rangatahi – Trends in meeting the guidelines and being inactive



▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

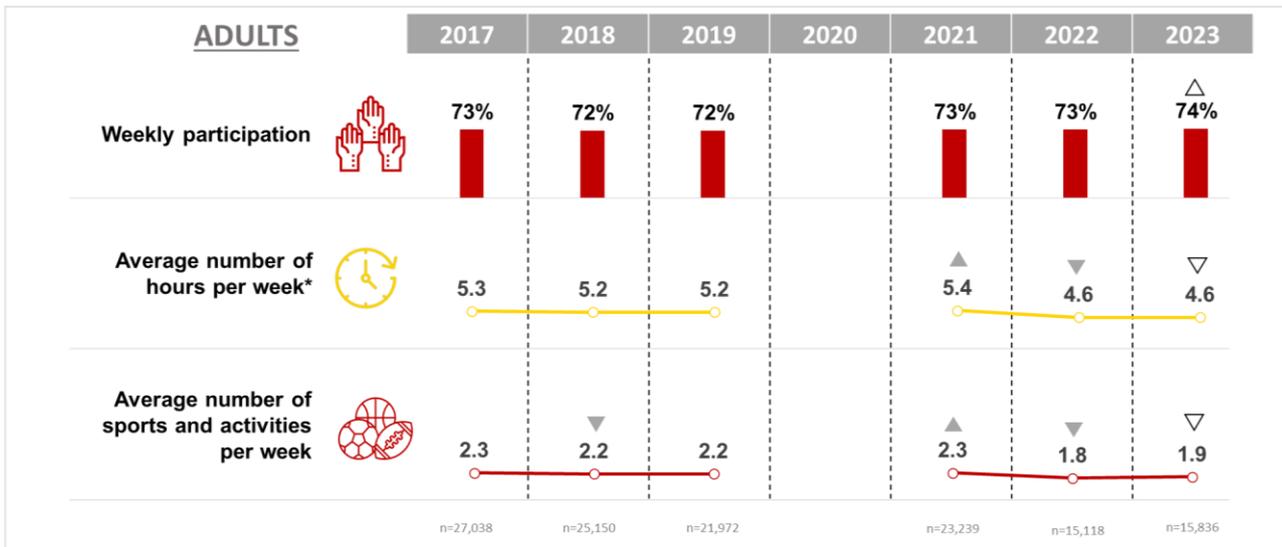
Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Participation trends for adults

After a period of stability since 2017, in 2023, the proportion of adults participating each week increased to above pre-COVID-19 levels. The increase in time spent, average number of sports and activities and proportion of adults meeting the physical activity guidelines evident in 2021 have not been sustained. All are now at lower levels than before the COVID-19 pandemic. The proportion of inactive adults has been stable since 2017 (figure 4A and figure 4B).

Figure 4A: Adults – Main participation trends



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

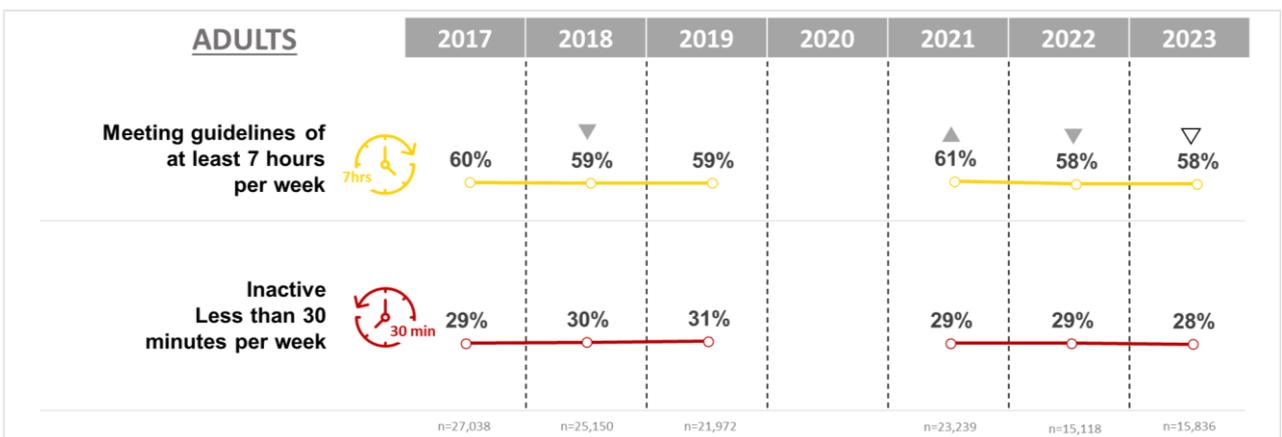
Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Adults aged 18 and over

*Average number of hours per week filter: ≤ 51

Figure 4B: Adults – Trends in meeting the guidelines and being inactive



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

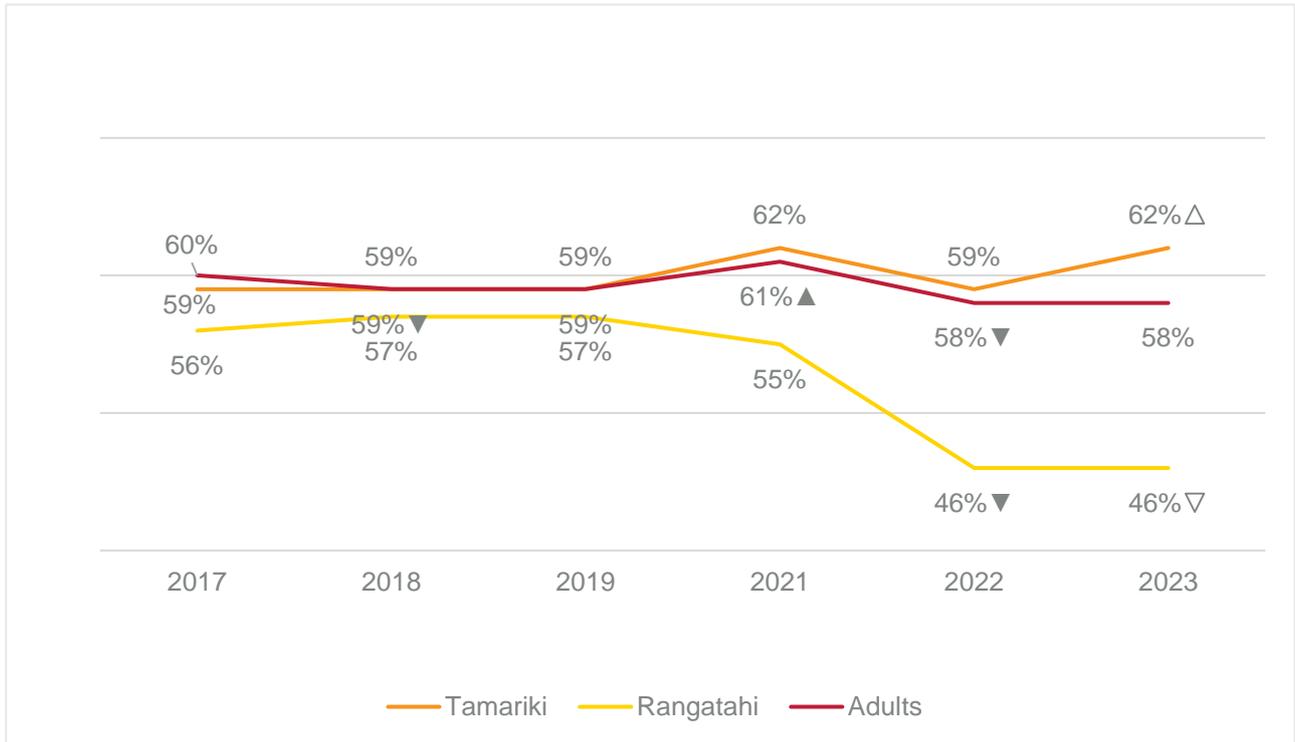
Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Adults aged 18 and over

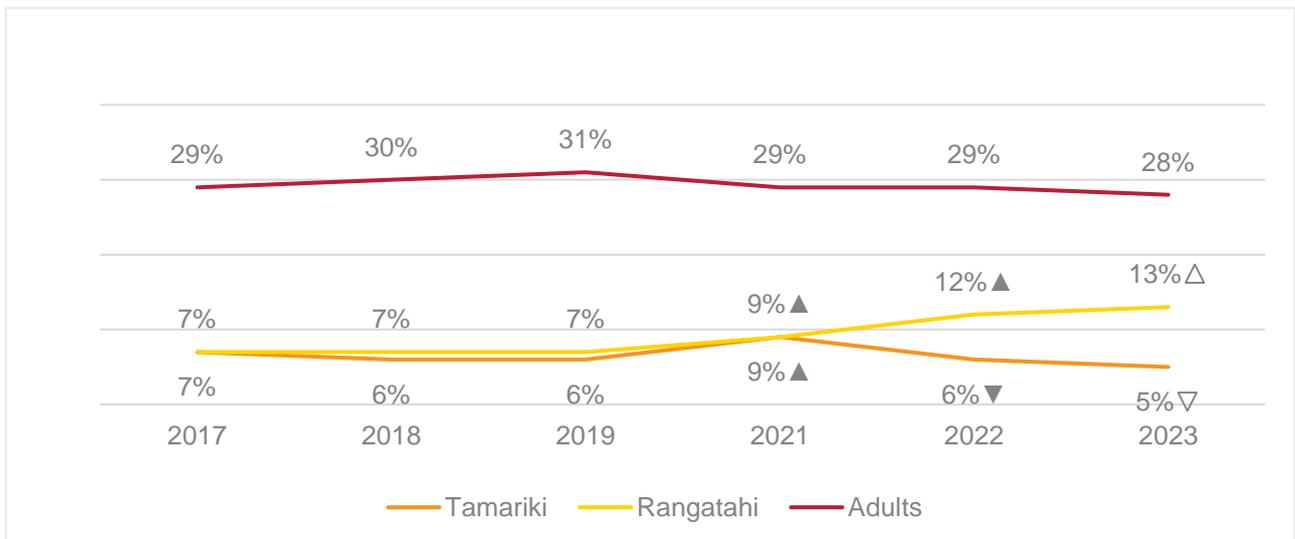
Participation summary for tamariki, rangatahi and adults

Figure 5: Summary – Meeting the physical activity guidelines



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 Δ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Figure 6: Summary – Inactive



▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 Δ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Trends in how participation is happening

This section outlines trends in organised and informal participation, attitudes towards physical education (PE),⁹ club and gym membership, participation in events and use of technology.

Summary

- After a drop in weekly organised participation for tamariki and rangatahi in 2021, in 2023 tamariki rebounded to 2017 levels. For rangatahi, organised participation continued to drop in 2022 and 2023 to the lowest level since 2017.
- The drop in weekly organised participation for rangatahi applies both to those who do and do not meet the physical activity guidelines.
- Time spent in organised participation for tamariki is also trending up, from 3.3 hours each week in 2017 to 4.5 hours in 2023.
- For tamariki, club membership has returned to 2017 levels driven by school club membership, which in 2023 is significantly higher than for any previous year since 2017.
- In contrast, club membership for rangatahi has been trending down since 2017.
- For adults, gym membership is trending up while club membership has fluctuated. Membership for each is matched at one in four.
- Participation in events has rebounded to pre-COVID-19 levels for rangatahi and is the highest evident for tamariki since 2017. For adults, despite some recovery, event participation has not rebounded to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- PE as less fun is trending up for tamariki and rangatahi regardless of levels of activity.
- Despite a stable level of agreement for tamariki with liking school and PE since 2017, in 2023 the agreement is almost double on 'not enough PE being offered at school' and 'school not offering the activities they are interested in' over the same period. This is driven by more active tamariki who are meeting the physical activity guidelines.
- Not enough PE offered at school is trending up as a barrier to increasing participation for more active rangatahi: one in 10 in 2023.
- Desire for greater flexibility in participation is trending up for rangatahi, with an increasing preference for activities that fit in with their schedules and less structured options.
- The use of technology has been trending up since 2017 reaching 36 percent for rangatahi in 2023 and 45 percent for adults.
- Over the same period, the proportion of rangatahi who agree they find electronic games more exciting than real-life ones has increased to 34 percent in 2023 compared with 20 percent in 2017.

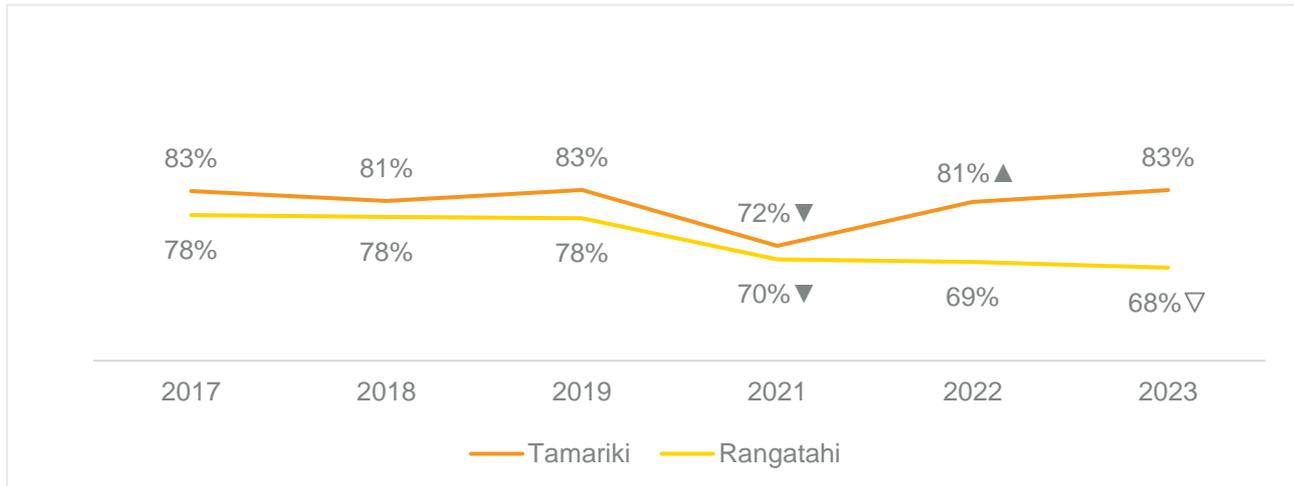
⁹ Organised and informal participation apply to young people only. Physical education is one of three components of organised participation; competitions or tournaments and practising with a coach or instructor are included in organised participation. Informal participation is playing alone or with others and extra exercise without a coach or instructor.

Organised participation¹⁰

Organised participation for tamariki and rangatahi dropped in 2021, before rising for tamariki in 2022, then returning to pre-COVID-19 levels in 2023. Over the past seven years, tamariki have spent increasingly more time in organised participation (with average time spent increasing from 3.3 hours each week in 2017 to 4.5 hours in 2023).

In contrast, organised participation for rangatahi has not recovered from the low in 2021 and, in 2023, is significantly lower than in 2017. Rangatahi meeting the physical activity guidelines show a similar downward trend in organised participation as those who do not meet the guidelines (figure 7).

Figure 7: Young people – Organised participation



Q: Where or how did [you / child] do [activity] in the last 7 days? (Net answers: In PE or class at school, In a competition or tournament, Training or practising with a coach / instructor)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

For tamariki, the return to pre-COVID-19 levels in organised participation applies to PE, competitions or tournaments and training or practising with a coach or instructor.

For rangatahi, the proportion participating in competitions or tournaments and training with a coach or instructor continued to drop in 2022 and stabilised in 2023 but at a significantly lower level than in 2017. Although the proportion participating in PE stabilised at the lower level in 2022 and 2023, it remains lower than in 2017.

For rangatahi meeting the physical activity guidelines, no decline is evident in participation in PE but, instead, can be seen in competitions or training with a coach or instructor (table 1).

¹⁰ Applies to young people only. Participation in a competition or tournament is one component of organised participation. Other organised sports and activities include being physically active in physical education or a class at school, sport and activities undertaken in a competition and training or practising with a coach or instructor.

Table 1: Organised participation

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Tamariki						
In PE or class at school	67	64	67	58▼	66▲	68
In a competition or tournament	28	25	26	20▼	26▲	27
Training or practising with a coach / instructor	58	56	54	48▼	54▲	57
Rangatahi						
In PE or class at school	59	58	56	53▼	55	53▽
In a competition or tournament	36	36	36	28▼	24▼	25▽
Training or practising with a coach / instructor	56	56	55	46▼	41▼	40▽

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

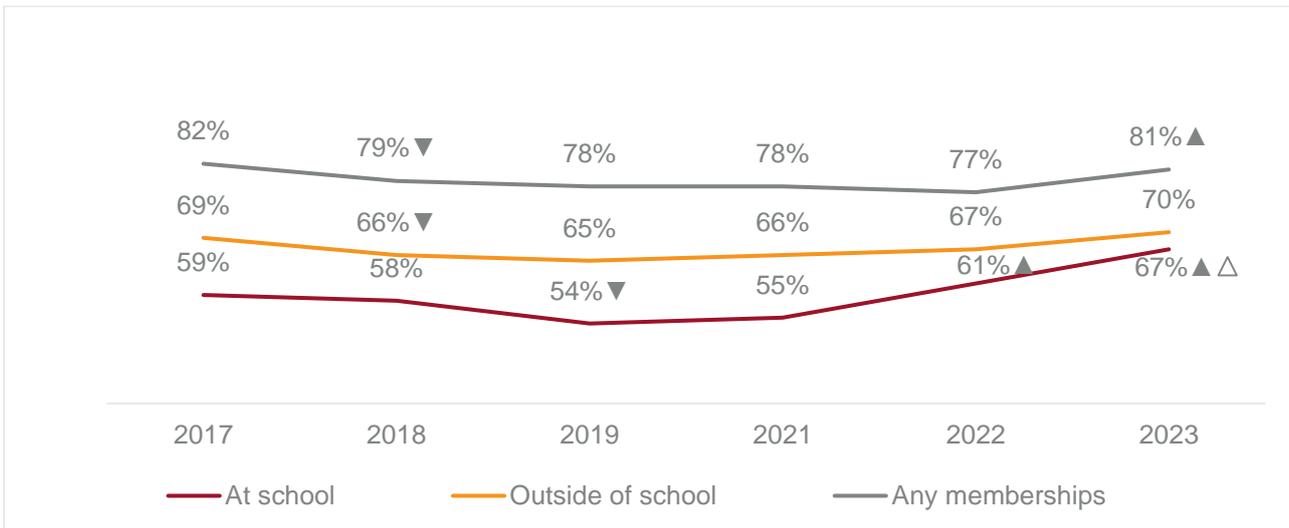
Trends in participation through clubs, gyms and events

Following a significant increase between 2022 and 2023, club membership for tamariki at and outside of school has rebounded to 2017 levels.

After a dip in 2019, school club membership increased in 2022 and in 2023 to a significantly higher level than any previous year since 2017. This increase is driven by male tamariki, European and Pacific, and tamariki from low deprivation areas.

Among tamariki for whom affordability is not a barrier, school club membership is trending up. The reverse is true for tamariki where affordability is a barrier. In contrast, club membership outside of school seems to be less affected by affordability as a barrier to being more active (figure 8).

Figure 8: Tamariki – Trends in club membership

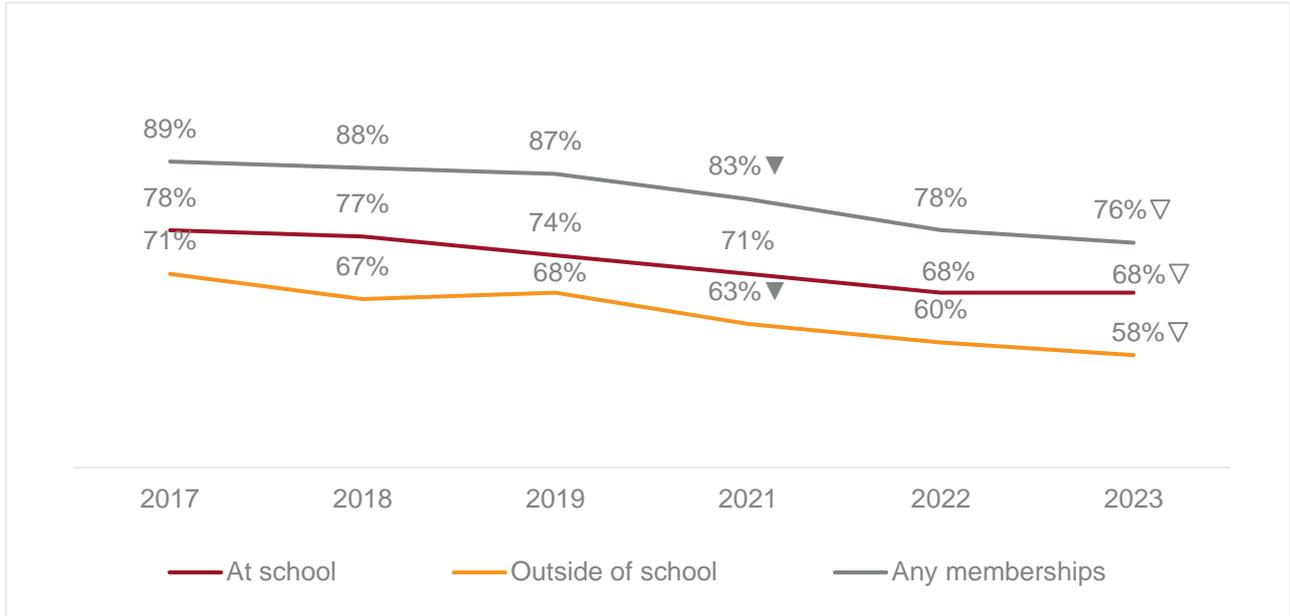


Q: In the last 12 months, how many (if any) sports teams or recreation clubs/groups [have you / has the child] been in at school? / And how many [have you/ has the child] been in outside of school?
 ▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11

The proportion of rangatahi club membership at or outside of school has been trending down since 2017, except for stabilising in 2023 at the lower 2022 level for school club membership.

The longer-term trend in declining school club membership applies to all rangatahi. However, the drop between 2022 and 2023 is evident only for older rangatahi (from 64 percent to 60 percent) (figure 9).

Figure 9: Rangatahi – Trends in club membership

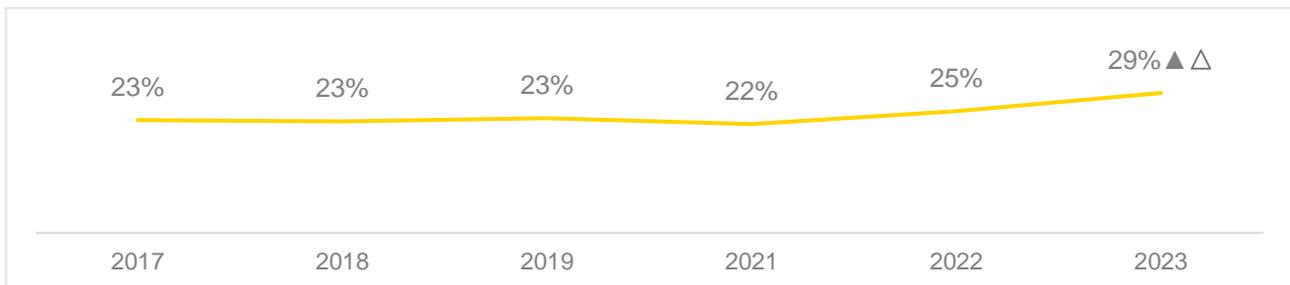


Q: In the last 12 months, how many (if any) sports teams, or recreation clubs/groups [have you / has the child] been in at school?
 / And how many [have you/ has the child] been in outside of school?
 ▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

While club memberships are declining for all rangatahi, gym membership has been stable between 2017 and 2021 and is trending up in 2022 and 2023 (figure 10)

The increase in gym membership is driven by male rangatahi.

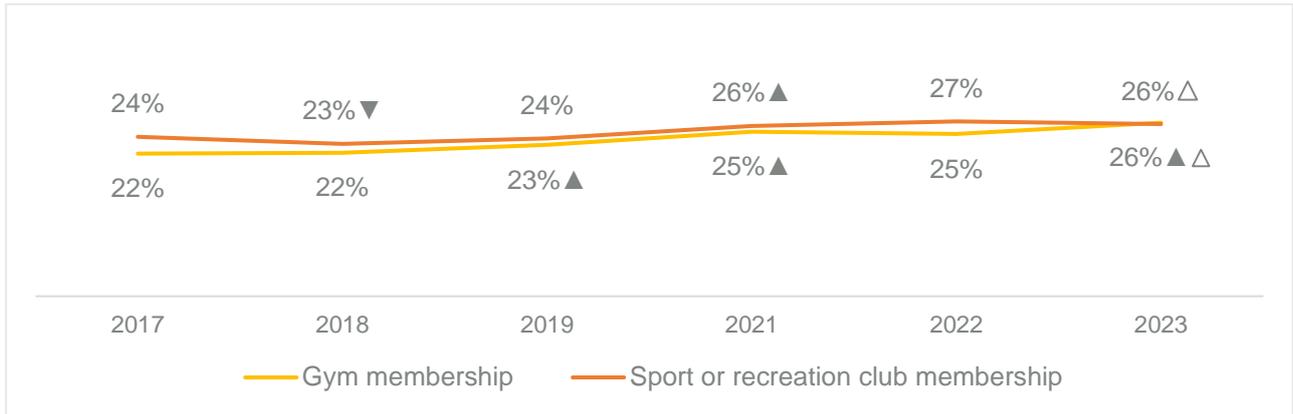
Figure 10: Rangatahi – Trends in gym membership



Q: Do you currently belong to a gym or fitness centre?
 ▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Rangatahi 15 and over

For adults, gym membership has steadily increased since 2017, while club membership has fluctuated. Both memberships are higher than in 2017 and have the same proportion of adult members, at one in five (figure 11).

Figure 9: Adults – Trends in club and gym membership



Q: Do you currently belong to a gym or fitness centre? / Are you currently a member of any sport or recreation club (other than a gym or fitness centre)?
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Adults aged 18 and over

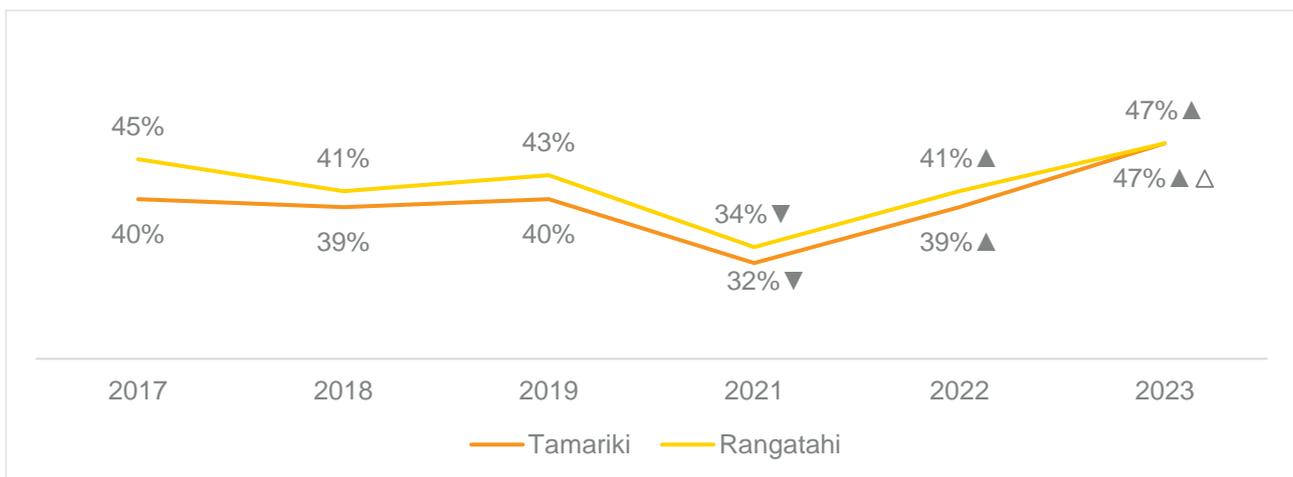
Following a dip in 2021, event participation has continued to grow for tamariki and rangatahi. Event participation for tamariki now exceeds pre-COVID-19 levels. In 2023, almost one in two tamariki and rangatahi had participated in at least one event in the past 12 months.

Higher participation is evident among older tamariki and younger rangatahi, indicating a run-up period for young people from ages 5 to 7 and a drop-off at ages 15 to 17.

Female tamariki are more likely to participate in events than male tamariki. In contrast, male rangatahi are more likely to participate in events than female rangatahi. Pacific and Asian rangatahi are also more likely to participate in events than average.

Rangatahi are more likely to participate in endurance running events, compared with tamariki, but are otherwise relatively even in other events (figure 12).

Figure 12: Young people – Trends in event participation



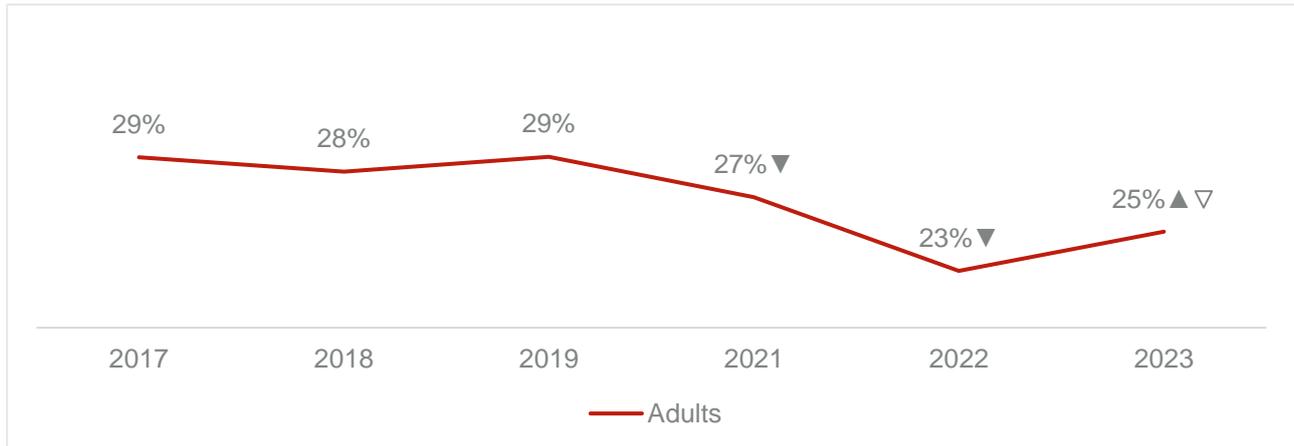
Q: In the last 12 months, have you actively participated in any of these events where lots of people take part?
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Adult participation in events also dipped in 2021, continued to drop in 2022, before rebounding in 2023, but to below pre-COVID-19 levels (figure 13).

Running and walking events (anything up to 10 kilometres, eg, fun runs) continue to be the most popular overall, seeing an increase in 2023 but remaining significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels. The second most popular activity in 2023 is sports tournaments but remains lower compared with 2017 and 2021. Participation in fishing tournaments has trended down since 2017.

The only ethnicity where events participation has been stable over time is Asian adults, but their overall participation continues to be the lowest.

Figure 13: Adults – Trends in event participation



Q: In the last 12 months, have you actively participated in any of these events where lots of people take part?
 ▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Adults aged 18 and over

Spotlight on physical education

In 2023, participation in PE rebounded to 2017 levels for tamariki and stabilised at the lower level evident in 2022 for rangatahi (53 percent in 2023 compared with 59 percent in 2017).

Trends vary in attitudes and barriers towards PE and school among tamariki and rangatahi who want to increase their participation.¹¹

Although the proportion of tamariki aged 8 to 11 agreeing they like school and PE has been stable over the past seven years, agreement with not enough PE offered at school in 2023 is almost double that evident in 2017. Also almost double is the level of agreement that school does not offer the activities tamariki are interested in over the same period.

Agreement that PE classes are not fun increased in 2019 and stabilised in 2023 at this higher level, which is higher than 2017 and 2018 levels (table 2).

Trends in not enough PE offered at school and school not offering the activities interested in are driven by more active tamariki, while the upward trend in PE classes not being fun applies to all tamariki.

¹¹ Results are rebased to tamariki and rangatahi who want to increase their participation because attitude statements are reported for all, while barriers are reported on those who want to increase their participation.

Table 2: Tamariki – Trends in attitudes towards physical education

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
I like school	87	84	86	82	83	85
I <like/liked> PE or fitness classes at school	84	79	79	78	78	80
PE / fitness classes at school are not fun	1	1	3▲	2	3	3△
Not enough PE offered at school	7	4▼	7▲	9	7	13▲△
My school doesn't offer physical activities I'm interested in	5	6	5	7	5	10▲△

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

In contrast, for rangatahi the proportion agreeing they like school and PE is trending down, while agreement that PE classes are not fun is trending up, reaching one in ten in 2023. The proportion agreeing they like PE is trending down. In 2023, it is 7 percentage points lower than in 2017. These trends apply to all rangatahi, irrespective of activity levels (table 3).

Not enough PE offered at school is trending up as a barrier to increasing participation for more active rangatahi: one in 10 in 2023.

Table 3: Rangatahi – Trends in attitudes towards physical education

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
I like school	66	63	65	63	60	61▽
I <like/liked> PE or fitness classes at school	76	74	76	70▼	70	69▽
PE / fitness classes at school are not fun	8	6▼	7	8	9	10△
Not enough PE offered at school	11	10	11	11	10	11
My school doesn't offer physical activities I'm interested in	9	10	10	8	8	7▽

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

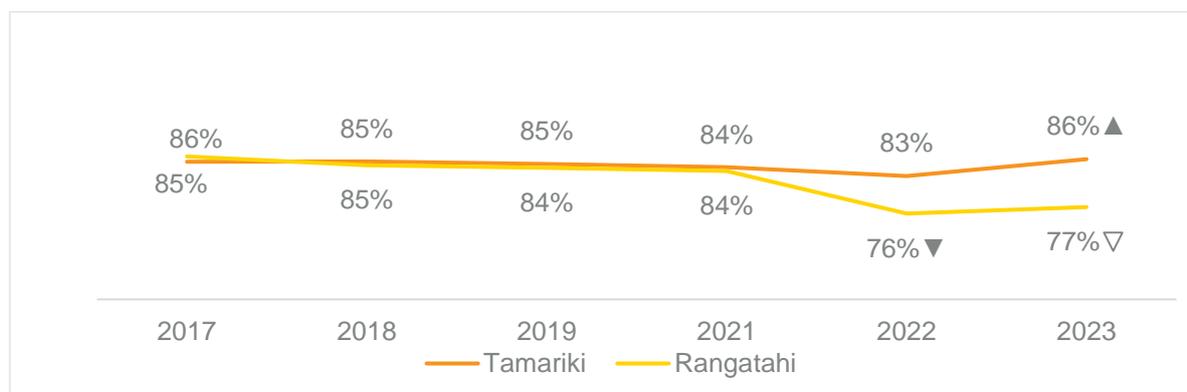
Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Informal participation¹²

The proportion of tamariki and rangatahi participating informally is matched between 2017 and 2021. In 2023 a return is evident to pre-COVID-19 levels for tamariki. For rangatahi, informal participation dropped in 2022 and stabilised in 2023 to lower than pre-COVID-19 levels (figure 14).

Figure 14: Young people – Informal participation



Q: Where or how did [you / child] do [activity] in the last 7 days? (Net answers: Playing or hanging out with family or friends, Playing on my own, For extra exercise, training or practice without a coach / instructor)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 Δ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023

The proportion of tamariki playing has returned to pre-COVID-19 levels, despite fluctuation in 2021 and 2023. An increase in playing alone for rangatahi in 2021 has not been sustained, and playing alone and with others has not returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.

For tamariki, extra exercise or training without a coach or instructor is now higher than pre-COVID-19 levels, trending up since 2021. For rangatahi, in contrast to tamariki, doing extra exercise without a coach or instructor has been steadily trending down since 2017 (14 percentage points between 2017 and 2023) (table 4).

Table 4: Informal participation

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Tamariki						
Playing or hanging out with family or friends	80%	80%	79%	79%	78%	80%
Playing on my own	57%	59%	58%	60%	52%	56%
For extra exercise, training or practice without a coach / instructor	11%	11%	10%	12%	14%	14%Δ
Rangatahi						
Playing or hanging out with family or friends	68%	69%	69%	66%▼	59%▼	61%▽
Playing on my own	53%	51%	50%	56%▲	47%▼	48%▽
For extra exercise, training or practice without a coach / instructor	47%	45%	44%	41%▼	33%▼	33%▽

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 Δ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

¹² Applies to young people only. Informal sports and activities include being physically active through play with others, playing alone, extra training activities or practising without a coach or instructor.

Preference for flexibility

Consistent since 2023, two-thirds of older rangatahi chose activities that suited their mood at the time. Since 2021 a steady increase has occurred in older rangatahi preferring flexible and less structured activities that allow them to follow their own schedule, with both being higher than in 2017 (table 5).

Table 5: Older rangatahi – Trends in participation preferences

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
I prefer physical activities that allow me to follow my own schedule rather than someone else's	61	64	61	64	70▲	73△
I prefer to do physical activity that is more flexible and less structured	47	46	46	51	60▲	59△
I choose physical activity that suits my mood at the time				63	67	66

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 15 to 17

Trends in use of technology

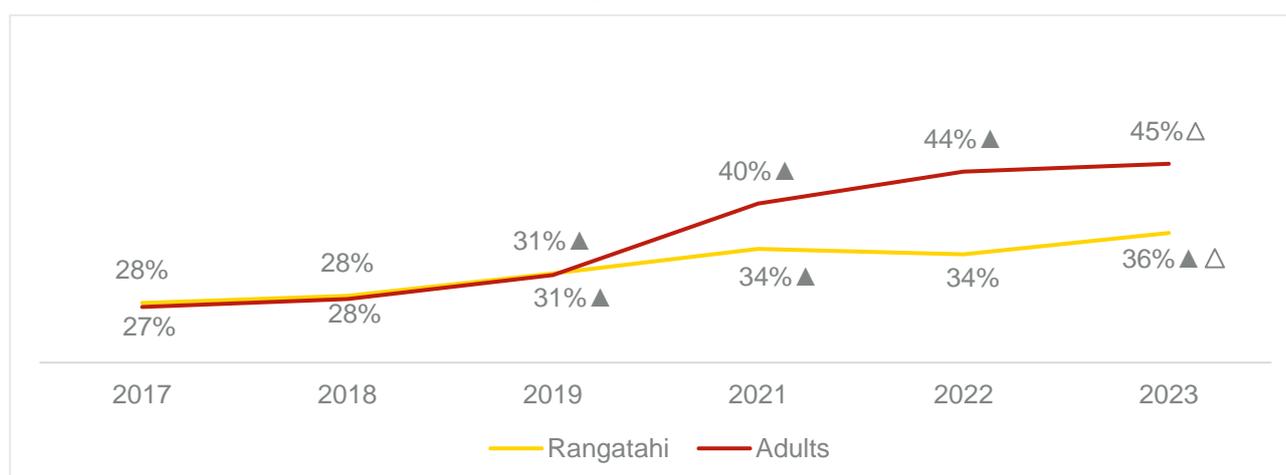
Use of technology has been trending upwards for rangatahi and adults and, in 2023, is higher for both compared with 2017 (table 15).

From 2021 the upward trend in technology use has been steeper for adults, with almost one in two using technology by 2023. Technology use for rangatahi over the same period has risen to one in three.

Use of technology is higher for rangatahi who meet the physical activity guidelines and lower for those who do not.

Rangatahi who use technology are more likely to run or jog (59 percent), walk for fitness (44 percent) and do workouts (weights or cardio, 34 percent). This pattern follows through into adulthood where the most popular activities among technology users are walking (71 percent), individual workouts using equipment (37 percent) and running or jogging (33 percent).

Figure 15: Trends in use of technology while being active



Q: In the last 7 days have you used any technology (Fitbits, smartphone apps, pedometers, etc.) when you have been physically active for sport, exercise or recreation? / In the last 7 days (not including today) have you used any technology (Fitbits, smartphone apps, pedometers etc.) when you have been physically active for sport, PE, exercise or fun?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

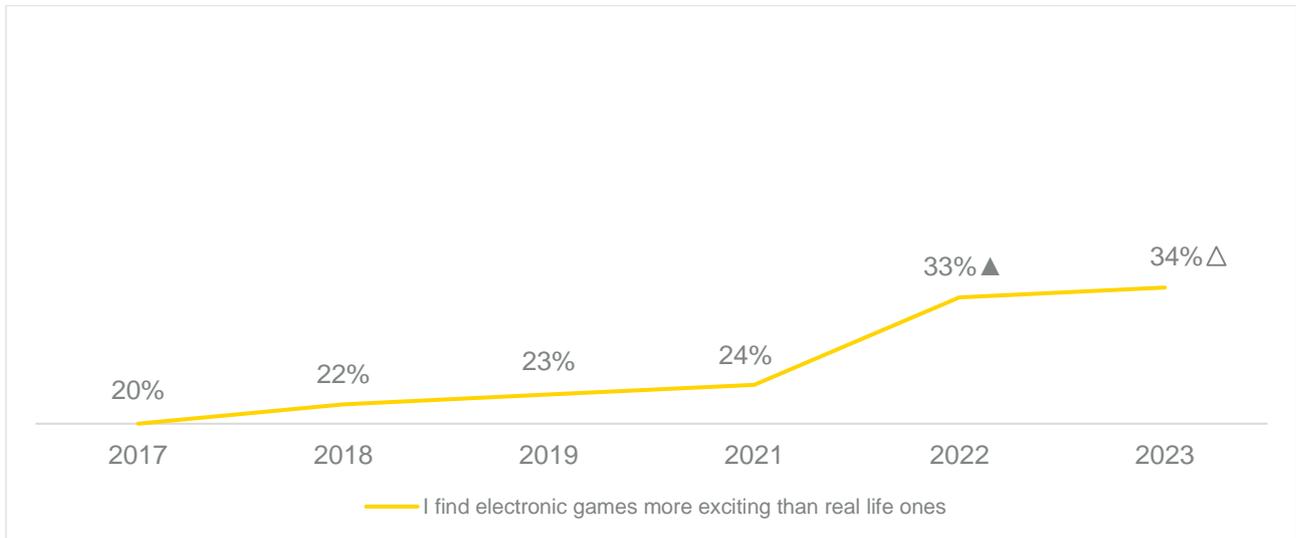
Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Adults aged 18 and over, rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Base: All respondents who have participated in physical activity in the past 7 days

Rangatahi finding electronic games more exciting than real-life ones is trending up, from 20 percent in 2017 to 34 percent in 2023 (figure 16).

Figure 16: Rangatahi – Trends in finding electronic games more exciting than real-life games



Q: How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (Top2Boxes)

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Trends in relationship with sport

This section outlines trends in attitudes to playing sport and trends in the role of national sports teams and athletes on New Zealand's national identity.

Summary

- Our less active tamariki and rangatahi are driving trends in decreasing enjoyment playing sport.
- This is more pronounced for rangatahi than tamariki where a downward trend can be seen on several attitudinal statements, including decreasing agreement on liking the challenge of sport, liking playing with a team, learning essential life skills and being good at sport.
- Trending down for tamariki and rangatahi is agreement that New Zealand sports teams and athletes make good role models and successful New Zealand sports teams and athletes inspire them to be more active. The reverse is the case for adults.
- Again, this downward trend is more pronounced for rangatahi than tamariki whose sense of pride and belonging is trending down when New Zealand teams or athletes do well.

Although the proportion of tamariki who agree they enjoy playing sport is lower in 2023 than 2017, between 2018 and 2022 agreement was stable. In contrast, since 2018, enjoyment in playing sport has trended down for rangatahi and, in 2023, fell to below 2017 levels.

While the downward trend in decreasing enjoyment applies to male and female rangatahi, overall scores are lower for female rangatahi. Fewer females think that they are good at sport (59 percent) compared with males (71 percent).

Other trends in attitudes towards sport where agreement has been trending down and that are lower in 2023 than 2017 include:

- I'm good at sport
- I love challenging myself and trying to win
- I have learned many essential life skills through playing sport.

Agreement with 'I like playing sport with a team' has been trending down since 2018 and is now lower than 2017.

The downward trend in decreasing enjoyment playing sport is more prominent for less active young people who do not meet the physical activity guidelines.

Table 6: Young people – Trends in attitudes towards playing sport

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Tamariki						
I enjoy playing sport	85	84	84	84	84	83▽
Rangatahi						
I enjoy playing sport	84	87	86	83	79▼	77▼▽
I love challenging myself and trying to win	81	81	80	78	75▼	75▽
I like playing sport with a team	80	81	80	76	73▼	71▽
I have learned many essential life skills through playing sport (e.g. teamwork and cooperation)	80	79	77	73▼	72	72▽
I am good at sport	71	71	69	67	67	65▽

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

For tamariki and rangatahi, agreement that New Zealand athletes make good role models and successful New Zealand athletes and sports teams make them want to be more active have been trending down since 2017.

A weakening relationship is also evident for rangatahi in the downward trend in agreement in feeling proud when New Zealand athletes or sports teams do well, wanting to represent country or region and, since 2021, feeling a sense of belonging when New Zealand athletes and teams compete (table 7).

Table 7: Young people – Trends in attitudes towards New Zealand sport teams and athletes

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Tamariki						
I think NZ athletes and sports teams make good role models	67	64▼	63	60	57	60▽
Successful NZ athletes or sports teams make me want to be more physically active	56	52▼	50	51	49	47▽
Rangatahi						
I feel proud when New Zealand athletes or sports teams do well	81	80	76▼	74	73	72▽
I think NZ athletes and sports teams make good role models	74	73	71	69	66	66▽
Successful NZ athletes or sports teams make me want to be more physically active	61	60	55▼	54	52	53▽
I want to represent my country or region	59	58	56	50▼	48	50▽
I feel a sense of belonging to New Zealand when New Zealand athletes and teams compete				41	36	34▼

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

△▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2021

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

In contrast to tamariki and rangatahi, adult agreement is higher between 2021 and 2023 than between 2017 and 2019 that New Zealand athletes and sports teams make good role models and successful athletes inspire them to be more active. Higher levels of inspiration are driven by adults aged 18 to 24.

For adults, although a steady downward trend can be seen in feeling proud when New Zealand athletes or sports teams do well between 2017 and 2019, this stabilised between 2021 and 2023 (table 8).

Table 8: Adults – Trends in attitudes towards New Zealand sport teams and athletes

	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
I feel proud when New Zealand athletes or sports teams do well	84	82▼	81	80	80	80▽
I think NZ athletes and sports teams make good role models	63	64	64	66▲	65▼	66▲△
Successful New Zealand athletes or sports teams inspire me to be more physically active	31	31	31	35▲	37▲	37△

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Adults aged 18 and over

Trends in benefits of being active

This section outlines trends in happiness, life satisfaction and awareness of the benefits of being active.

Summary

- Tamariki, rangatahi and adults who meet the physical activity guidelines are happier than those who do not.
- Except for tamariki where happiness levels for those who meet the guidelines has been stable, happiness and life satisfaction has been trending down since 2017 for tamariki who do not meet the guidelines, rangatahi and adults.
- For rangatahi and adults, happiness and life satisfaction have been trending down since 2017, but at a steeper rate for those who do not meet the physical activity guidelines.
- The past two years show improvements in the proportion of tamariki agreeing that they know being active is good for them and being active makes them feel good. Since 2017, agreement has been trending down for rangatahi on knowing why being active is good for them and, since first measured in 2021, why being active makes them feel good.
- Trending upwards is the proportion of adults who agree that being active is good for them and beneficial for their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Tamariki and rangatahi are less happy in 2023 than in 2017, which is a downwards trend following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. While tamariki happiness levels have stabilised at 80 percent, rangatahi sit at their lowest reported value of 47 percent after a significant drop in 2021. After a significant drop in life satisfaction for adults in 2022, this has stabilised in 2023 (figure 17).

All adults aged 18 to 64 have lower levels of life satisfaction compared with before the COVID-19 pandemic.

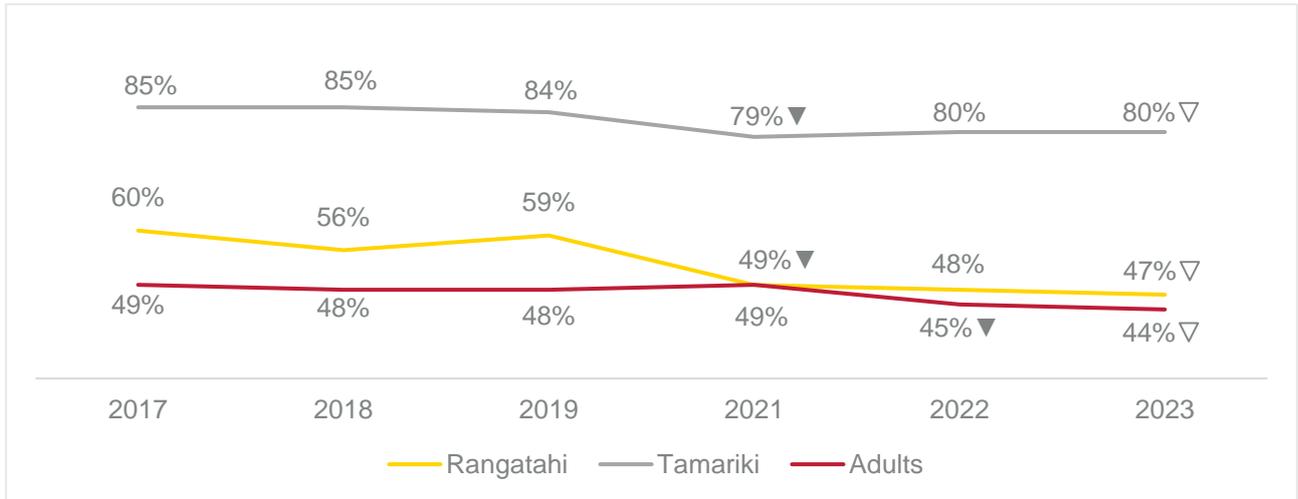
Tamariki, rangatahi and adults who meet the physical activity guidelines are happier than those who do not.

Except for tamariki where happiness levels for those who meet the physical activity guidelines have been stable since 2017, happiness levels have been trending down for rangatahi and adults irrespective of whether they meet the physical activity guidelines. However, the drop in happiness or life satisfaction is smaller for those who meet the guidelines compared with those who do not.

For rangatahi there has been an 18 percent downward trend for those who meet the guidelines compared with 25 percent for those who do not. For adults who meet the guidelines life satisfaction has trended down by 6 percent compared with 16 percent for those who do not. Happiness levels for tamariki who do not meet the guidelines has trended down by 12 percent.

These trends suggests that, although a correlation exists between being active, happiness and life satisfaction, the downward trend in happiness and life satisfaction is effecting all tamariki, rangatahi and adults.

Figure 17: Trends in happiness and life satisfaction



Q: On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very unhappy and 10 is very happy, in general how happy [are you / is the child]? (Young people survey)/ How do you feel about your life as a whole? (Adult survey) (Top 3 boxes)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Adults aged 18 and over, young people aged 5 to 17

In 2022 and 2023 tamariki have higher agreement with understanding why being active is good for them and that being active makes them feel good (figure 18).

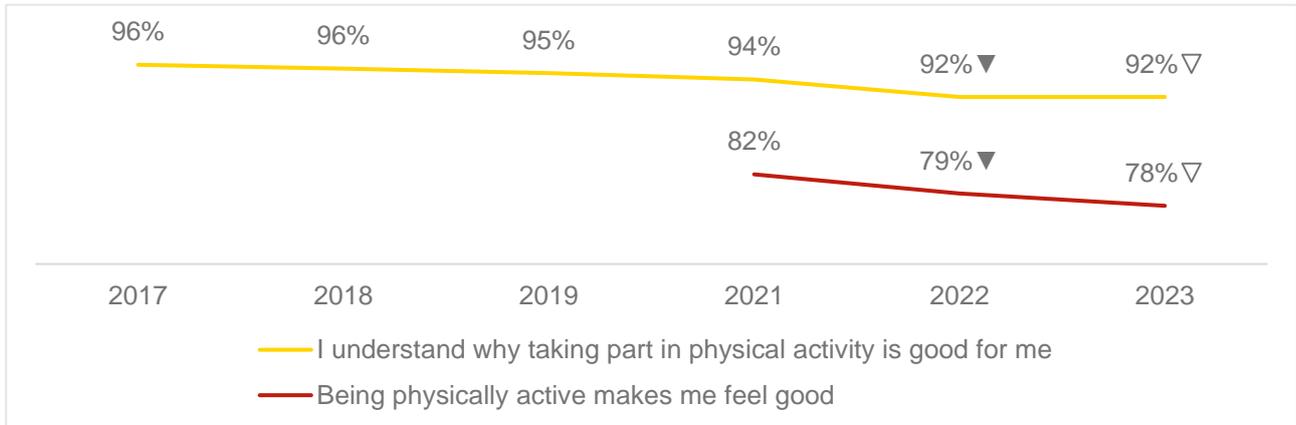
Figure 18: Tamariki – Trends in attitudes towards being active



Q: How strongly do you agree with each of the following statements (Top 2 boxes)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11

The proportion of rangatahi agreeing that they understand why being active is good for them and being physically active makes them feel good is trending down (figure 19).

Figure 19: Rangatahi – Trends in attitudes towards being active

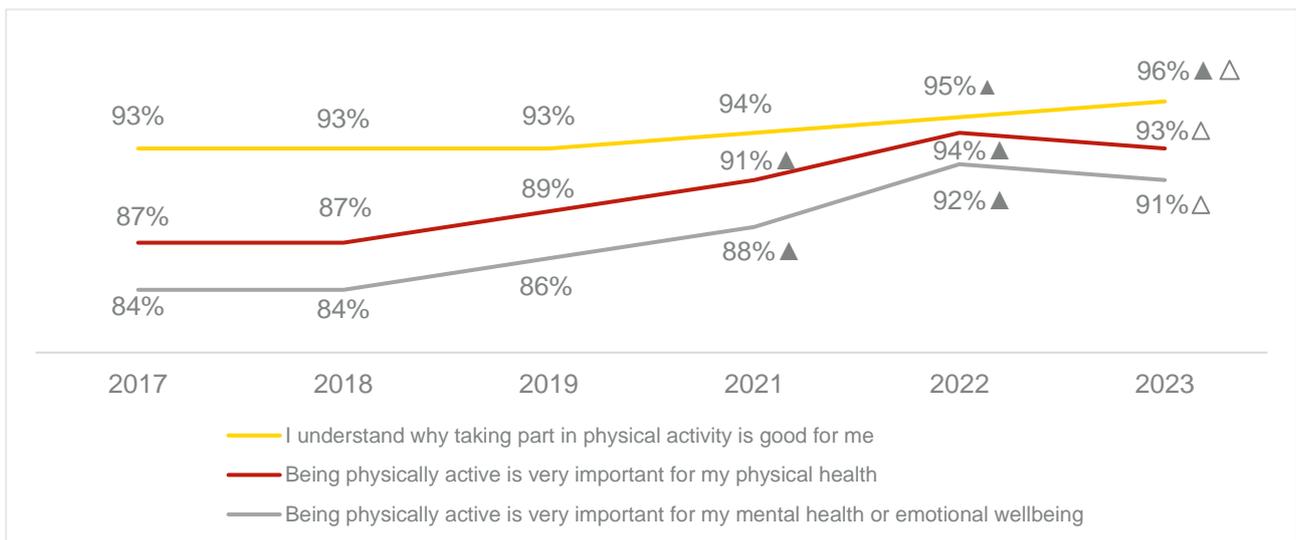


Q: How strongly do you agree with each of the following statements (Top 2 boxes)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

The benefits of being active are trending up for adults. This applies to increasing agreement that being active is good and beneficial for physical and emotional wellbeing.

Adults who are aware of this positive effect of being active are more likely to meet the physical activity guidelines as well as more likely to be satisfied with their lives (figure 20).

Figure 20: Adults – Trends in attitudes towards being active



Q: How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (Top 2 boxes)
 ▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year
 △ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017
 Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 Results are from 2017 to 2023
 Base: All adults aged 18-plus

Appendices

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Appendix A: Tamariki and rangatahi participation trends by age and gender

Table 9: Tamariki – Participation trends by age within gender

	Males aged 5-7						Females aged 5-7						Males aged 8-11						Females aged 8-11					
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Weekly participation (%)	95	93	93	85▼	92▲	95	92	94	95	92	92	96	95	96	96	92▼	96▲	97	96	95	95	94	95	96
Average number of hours per week	11.1	11.1	11.3	12.6	12.3	12.6	9.8	10.5	10.3	12.2▲	11.2	11.4	11.7	12.0	11.1	11.4	12.7▲	11.9	10.9	10.8	10.2	11.7▲	10.4	10.7
Average number of sports and activities a week	5.2	5.2	5.0	4.8	5.2	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.2	4.8	4.9	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.0	5.5▲	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.2	4.9	5
Meeting guidelines of at least 7-plus hours per week (%)	62	55	62▲	60	60	66	53	54	58	61	55	61	62	64	60	62	66	65	59	59	56	63▲	54▼	58
Inactive – Less than 30 minutes per week (%)	6	8	7	15▲	9	6	10	7	6	9	8	5	8	4	5	8▲	4	4	6	6	5	6	6	5

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11

Table 10: Rangatahi – Participation trends by age within gender

	Males aged 12–14						Females aged 12–14						Males aged 15–17						Females aged 15–17					
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Weekly participation (%)	98	97	96	97	94▼	92▽	98	95	97	95	93	92▽	89	93	90	85	85	83	89	88	90	85	80	80▽
Average number of hours per week	13.1	12.1	13.7	12.7	12.2	10.5▽	11.7	11.8	11.8	12.4	9.6▼	10.1	8.4	11.7	9.6	8.4	7.9	7.7	8.1	7.7	7.8	7.1	6.4	6.8
Average number of sports and activities a week	6.3	6.2	6.1	5.8	5.1▼	5.0	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.0	5.0▼	4.9	3.8	4.5	3.9▼	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.1	2.9
Meeting guidelines of at least 7-plus hours per week (%)	65	65	67	62	56	53▽	62	59	62	62	48▼	51▽	47	58	52	48	44	42	44	43	42	38	34	33▽
Inactive – Less than 30 minutes per week (%)	3	4	5	4	7	8△	4	5	3	5	7	9△	14	9	11	17	16	18	13	13	12	16	21	22△

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Appendix B: Sports and activities participation trends

Table 11: Young people – Trends for weekly participation in top 25 sports and activities

	Year					
	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
NET: Running / jogging / cross country	52	59▲	57	53▼	52	50
Playing (eg, running around, climbing trees, make-believe)	41	40	39	36▼	40▲	36▼▽
Playing on playground (eg, jungle gym)	36	36	34	32▼	34	31▼▽
Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball)	36	36	34	32▼	32	30▽
Walking for fitness	29	25▼	25	33▲	30	29
Swimming	36	35	33	29▼	30	31▽
NET: Cycling	31	32	32	32	27▼	24▼▽
Scotering	20	21	20	21	18▼	18▽
NET: Football/soccer/futsal	19	19	17▼	15	18▲	18
Trampoline	26	24	22▼	24	13▼	12▽
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop and so on)	16	15	14	15	13▼	13▽
Workout (weights or cardio)	14	14	13	14	12▼	14
Basketball or miniball	12	13	12	11	12	12
Tramping or bush walks	10	9	9	11	9	9
Group exercise class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit, jump jam)	12	11	11	10	8▼	8▽
Netball	11	10	10	9	8	9▽
Rugby or rippa rugby	10	10	9	7▼	8	8▽
Athletics or track and field	9	9	9	6▼	6	6▽
Touch	8	8	9	7▼	6	7▽
Gymnastics (eg, rhythmic, artistic)	8	8	7	6▼	6	6▽
Cricket	6	7	6	5	6	5▽
Kapa haka	6	6	7	5▼	5	7▲
Skateboarding	6	5	5	6▲	5	4▼▽
Hockey or floorball	6	6	6	6	5	4▽
Mountain biking	5	5	6	5	5	5

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to COVID-19

Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Table 12: Tamariki – Trends for weekly participation in top 25 sports and activities

	Tamariki aged 5–11					
	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Playing (eg, running around, climbing trees, make-believe)	53	53	51	48	55▲	52
NET: Running, jogging or cross country	47	53▲	53	51	55	52△
Playing on playground (eg, jungle gym)	53	53	51	46▼	51▲	50
Swimming	45	44	41	37▼	40	44▲
Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball)	35	35	33	33	33	35
NET: Cycling	37	37	38	37	33▼	30▽
Walking for fitness	19	17▼	17	26▲	27	24
Scootering	31	31	30	30	26▼	28▽
NET: Football/soccer/futsal	17	18	16	15	19▲	22▲△
Trampoline	32	31	28▼	31	16▼	16▽
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop and so on)	16	16	15	15	14	16
Basketball or miniball	8	8	7	7	12▲	10△
Tramping or bush walks	9	8	9	11	9	10
Rugby or rippa rugby	9	9	8	7	9▲	9
Gymnastics (eg, rhythmic, artistic)	10	10	9	8	9	10
Netball	8	7	8	6	8	7
Group exercise class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit, jump jam)	10	9	9	8	8	8▽
Athletics or track and field	9	8	8	5▼	7▲	6▽
Kapa haka	7	7	7	7	6	8▲△
Cricket	6	6	5	5	6	5
Touch	6	6	6	5	6	5
Skateboarding	5	4	4	6▲	5	4▼▽
Hockey or floorball	5	4	5	4	5	4
Tennis	4	4	4	5	4	5△
Rollerblading	2	2	3	4	3	4△

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Tamariki aged 5 to 11

Table 13: Rangatahi – Trends for weekly participation in top 25 sports and activities

	Rangatahi aged 12–17					
	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
NET: Running, jogging or cross country	57	64▲	61	55▼	47▼	48▽
Walking for fitness	39	35▼	35	40▲	35▼	34
Games (eg, four square, tag, bull rush, dodgeball)	38	37	36	31▼	29	25▼▽
Workout (weights or cardio)	27	28	26	29	23▼	25
Playing (eg, running around, climbing trees, make-believe)	27	24	26	21▼	21	20▽
NET: Cycling	25	26	27	26	20▼	19▽
Swimming	25	25	24	19▼	18	19▽
NET: Football/soccer/futsal	21	21	19	16	17	17▽
Basketball or miniball	17	18	17	16	13▼	14▽
Playing on playground (eg, jungle gym)	16	16	15	14	12	13▽
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop)	15	13	13	14	11▼	9▽
Netball	15	13	14	13	9▼	10▽
Trampoline	19	16▼	15	15	9▼	8▽
Scootering	9	10	10	11	9	8
Tramping or bush walks	11	10	9	10	8	8▽
Volleyball or Kiwi volley	7	5	7	11▲	8▼	7
Group exercise class (eg, aerobics, CrossFit, jump jam)	15	14	12	12	7▼	8▽
Touch	11	10	12	9	7▼	8▽
Badminton	7	6	7	5	7▲	5▼▽
Rugby or rippa rugby	10	11	9	8	6	7▽
Athletics or track and field	9	9	10	8	6▼	6▽
Hockey or floorball	7	8	8	8	5▼	5▽
Tennis	6	6	7	6	5	5
Skateboarding	6	6	5	7	5	4▽
Kapa haka	5	5	6	4	3	5▲

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Rangatahi aged 12 to 17

Table 14: Adults – Trends for weekly participation in top 25 sports and activities

Note: Comparisons with historical results are indicative only for adults, due to a questionnaire change in 2022.

	Year					
	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Walking	59	57▼	57	60▲	50▼	51▽
Individual workout using equipment	22	21	22	24▲	22▼	23▲△
Running/jogging	20	19▼	20	21	17▼	17▽
Gardening	25	24▼	23▼	24	13▼	14▽
NET: Cycling (including BMX, excluding e-bikes)	11	11	11	11	9▼	9▽
NET: Cycling (excluding BMX)	10	10	11	11	9▼	9▽
NET: Pilates/yoga	8	8	8	10	9▼	10△
Playing games (eg, with kids)	16	16	15	14▼	7▼	7▽
Group fitness class (eg, aerobics, crossfit)	9	9	9	9	8▼	9▲
Swimming	9	9	9	8▼	7▼	7▽
NET: Tramping	4	4	4	5	4▼	3
Golf	4	3	3	4	4	4△
Dance/dancing (eg, ballet, hip hop and so on)	4	4	4	4	3▼	3
Rode an e-bike	–	–	1	3	3	3▲
NET: Fishing	3	3	3	3	2▼	2
Football (soccer)	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tennis	2	2	2	2	2	2
Basketball	1	1	1	1	2	1
NET: Rugby/touch rugby	1	1	1	1	1	1
Surfing/body boarding	1	1	2	1	1	1
Netball	1	1	1	1	1	1
NET: Bowls	2	1	1	1	1	1▽
Motorcycling	2	1	1	1	1	1
Boxing	2	1	1	1	1	1
Rugby League	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Base: Adults aged 18 and over

Appendix C: Regional participation trends

Table 15: Young people and adults – Regional weekly participation trends

	Young people						Adults					
	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	2017 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Northland	93	93	94	92	94	90	69	67	69	68	70	65
Auckland combined	94	92	94	90▼	90	91▽	73	72	73	74	74	75
North Harbour	95	93	96	92	95	94	77	75	76	76	79	78
Auckland	94	94	94	93	92	91	77	78	75	78	79	79
Counties Manukau	93	91	93	89	87	87▽	67	66	68	69	66	69
Waitakere	93	91	95	89	90	97	68	69	70	71	73	72
Waikato	96	96	94	93	91	93	71	70	70	70	71	72
Bay of Plenty	95	92	94	92	94	90	76	73	74	72	74	75
Gisborne	96	92	95	88*	88*	94*	71	67	69	71	62▼	62▽
Taranaki	95	95	93	90	91	95	74	69	69	69	70	73
Whanganui	96	94	94	95	86	91	65	66	66	70	65	65
Hawke's Bay	98	95	96	84▼	91	92▽	71	69	70	72	71	72
Manawatu	93	91	93	89	88	91	71	68	65	68	68	70
Wellington	96	96	95	91	92	92▽	77	75	75	76	77	77
Tasman	97	97	94	94	92	94	76	74	74	78	79	78
Canterbury and West Coast	94	98▲	94▼	93	94	93	75	74	75	73	73	76
Otago	97	99	94▼	92	94	93	75	73	74	74	74	74
Southland	96	94	97	93	90	92	67	65	66	68	68	73

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

*A base size of less than 100 is small and caution is advised when interpreting the results

**A base size of less than 30 means the base size is very small and therefore the results are indicative only

Base: All respondents

Table 16: Tamariki and rangatahi – Regional weekly participation trends¹³

	Tamariki aged 5–11					Rangatahi aged 12–17				
	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)	2018 (%)	2019 (%)	2021 (%)	2022 (%)	2023 (%)
Northland	92*	92*	96*	98*	99*	94*	97*	86*	89*	84
Auckland combined	92	95	91	94	96	92	93	90	86	86▽
North Harbour	91	96	92	98	97	95	95	92	91	90
Auckland	97	93	91	93*	97	91	95	95	90	84▽
Counties Manukau	90	94	89	89	92	91	91	88	84	83
Waitakere	92	96	93	99*	100*	90*	94*	84*	79*	92
Waikato	96	95	93	93	96	96	92	93	88	91▽
Bay of Plenty	94	93	87	95*	95	89	96	98*	93	86
Gisborne	92	96*	88*	94*	95**	93*	93*	88*	80*	94*
Taranaki	95	93	90*	93*	98*	95*	93*	91*	89*	91
Whanganui	96	96*	96*	90*	99*	92*	91*	93*	82*	85
Hawke's Bay	94	97	75*▼	90*	93*	96*	94*	96*	93*	91
Manawatu	92	94	92	91*	96*	90*	92*	86*	85*	88
Wellington	96	95	91	97	94	95	96	92	86	88▽
Tasman	97	97	92	93*	98*	96*	90*	96*	91*	90
Canterbury and West Coast	98	94▼	94	96	95	98	94	91	92	90
Otago	99	99	92▼	99▲	97	98*	88*	92*	88	88
Southland	97	97	96*	92*	99*	90*	98*	89*	87*	86

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2018

Results are from 2018 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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**A base size of less than 30 means the base size is very small and therefore the results are indicative only

Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

¹³ The 2017 data is not included for analysis in appendix C due to changes in the survey and data structure. Survey results are stable from 2017 to 2019.

Table 17: Young people and adults – Regional trends in average time (hours) spent in weekly participation

	Young people						Adults					
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Northland	12.0	11.6	12.3	11.5	13.2	10.5	5.1	4.8	5.3	5.2	5.3	4.5▽
Auckland combined	10.3	10.2	9.9	10.1	8.9▼	9.3▽	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.1	4.4▼	4.3▽
North Harbour	12.2	9.6▼	10.7	9.9	9.3	10.7	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.5	4.8▼	4.6▽
Auckland	9.3	10.0	9.6	10.2	8.6	10.2	5.0	5.2	5.0	5.5	4.6▼	4.5▽
Counties Manukau	10.1	10.4	9.2	10.3	8.5	8.1▽	4.4	4.3	4.7	4.6	3.8▼	4.1▽
Waitakere	9.7	10.7	10.7	10.0	9.3	8.5▽	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.6	4.2
Waikato	11.1	10.3	12.1▲	12.4	12.1	10.7	5.4	5.3	4.9	5.3	4.4▼	4.5▽
Bay of Plenty	11.9	11.5	11.7	11.7	11.3	10.5	5.9	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.1	4.8▽
Gisborne	11.6	13.6	11.1	12.3*	10.5*	12.6*	5.6	5.4	5.3	5.1	3.6▼	4.2
Taranaki	11.8	11.8	11.6	13.1	11.4	11.9	6.0	5.1▼	5.0	6.1▲	4.3▼	4.6▽
Whanganui	11.3	11.1	13.5	14.3	12.3	10.7	5.1	5.2	4.9	5.2	3.9▼	4.1▽
Hawke's Bay	11.2	12.7	11.2	10.8	9.7	11.4	5.3	4.9	5.3	5.8	4.2▼	4.4▽
Manawatu	9.7	10.6	10.3	10.7	9.1	10.0	5.3	5.0	4.8	5.1	4.1▼	4.0▽
Wellington	10.3	11.5	11.1	11.3	11.3	10.4	5.4	5.4	5.8	5.5	4.8▼	4.5▽
Tasman	12.3	12.5	12.7	12.1	11.1	12.8	6.1	5.9	5.7	6.8▲	5.1▼	5.2▽
Canterbury and West Coast	10.8	11.4	10.4	10.9	11.9	10.6▼	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.4	4.7▼	4.9▽
Otago	12.2	12.6	12.0	12.4	11.8	10.7▽	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.1	5.0▽
Southland	12.2	11.3	12.1	11.8	9.4	9.7	5.0	4.8	4.9	5.1	4.4	4.5

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2017

Results are from 2017 to 2023

Data was not reported in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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**A base size of less than 30 means the base size is very small and therefore the results are indicative only

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Table 18: Tamariki and rangatahi – Regional trends in average time (hours) spent in weekly participation

	Tamariki aged 5–11					Rangatahi aged 12–17				
	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023
Northland	11.4*	12.2*	14.2*	14.3*	13.7*	11.8*	12.5*	7.8*▼	11.7*	8.0*▽
Auckland combined	9.9	9.5	11.0▲	9.6	10.7	10.4	10.3	9.1	8.0	7.9▽
North Harbour	9.0	11.2▲	10.2	10.1	11.5	10.2	10.2	9.6	8.3	9.9
Auckland	8.9	9.6	10.8	9.9*	12.2	11.4	9.5	9.4	7.2	7.7▽
Counties Manukau	10.5	8.8	11.4▲	8.8	9.6	10.3	9.7	8.9	8.1	7.2▽
Waitakere	11.7	8.5▼	11.3▲	10.1*	9.4*	9.4*	13.4*	8.3*▼	8.3*	7.4
Waikato	11.3	11.4	11.6	13.7	11.5	9.2	12.9▲	13.4	10.1▼	10.0
Bay of Plenty	12.6	12.4	10.6	13.5*	12.4	10.1	11.0	13.0*	8.4▼	9.1
Gisborne	13.0	11.1*	10.7*	11.8*	14.1**	14.4*	11.1*	14.1*	8.7*	11.7*
Taranaki	11.7	12.6	13.8*	12.5*	13.7*	11.9*	10.3*	12.3*	9.8*	9.5
Whanganui	12.4	11.9*	16.2*▲	13.6*	12.3*	9.6*	15.2*	12.0*	10.9*	9.6*
Hawke's Bay	11.7	11.2	11.3*	10.9*	12.7*	13.9*	11.3*	10.1*	8.2*	9.7▽
Manawatu	10.8	10.2	12.8	9.5*	10.8*	10.4*	10.3*	8.2*	8.7*	9.3
Wellington	11.9	11.0	11.2	12.3	10.9	11.2	11.2	11.3	10.2	9.9
Tasman	13.5	11.9	11.8	13.1*	14.4*	11.2*	13.5*	12.4*	8.8*▼	10.9
Canterbury and West Coast	11.4	10.7	11.5	12.9	11.2	11.5	10.1	10.2	10.7	9.8
Otago	11.3	11.7	12.6	13.6	12.5	14.0*	12.3*	12.2*	9.6	8.5▽
Southland	11.8	12.7	13.1*	9.4*	11.1*	10.9*	11.5*	10.1*	9.4*	8.6

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than the previous year

△ ▽ Significantly higher/lower than 2018

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Base: All young people aged 5 to 17

Appendix D: Research objectives and method

This Active NZ survey aims to:

- collect information on the 'who', 'what', 'how' and 'where' young people and adults participate
- identify and describe links between participation (and non-participation) and other influential factors; the 'why' and 'why not' people participate
- measure the quality of participation and the contribution participation makes to an individual's health and wellbeing
- understand the value placed on participation by people in New Zealand.

Survey method

Online and postal self-completion using sequential mixed methods, we are targeting 20,000 adults and 5,000 young people each year.

Fieldwork period

Fieldwork dates for the surveys are as follows:

- 2017 survey: 5 January 2017 to 4 January 2018
- 2018 survey: 5 January 2018 to 4 January 2019
- 2019 survey: 5 January 2019 to 4 January 2020
- 2021 survey: 5 January 2021 to 4 January 2022
- 2022 survey: 13 January 2022 to 4 January 2023
- 2023 survey: 13 January 2023 to 4 January 2024.

Completed responses

Across the five years, responses have been received from n=128,353 adults aged 18-plus and n=31,127 young people aged between 5 and 17. In 2023, responses have been received from n=15,836 adults aged 18-plus and from n=5,890 young people aged between 5 and 17.

Weighting

Results have been weighted to the total New Zealand Regional Sports Trust population using 2013 Census statistics for the data between 2017 and 2019, and 2018 Census statistics for the data from 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Survey is self-completion

Target respondents are selected at random from the Electoral Roll. Mailings are then sent inviting them to complete the survey online. Before 2022, non-responders were subsequently sent a paper copy of the survey. However, following analysis that demonstrated the low take-up of paper copies by younger people, those aged 18 to 49 no longer received paper copies from 2022 onwards.

A summary of the two approaches for adults aged 18 to 49 and 50-plus is presented below.

Respondents aged 18 to 49

ELECTORAL ROLL	INVITATION LETTER	REMINDER POSTCARD 1	REMINDER LETTER
Sample selected from Electoral Roll	<p>Invitation letters are sent to the named adults (aged 18-plus) inviting them to complete the questionnaire online (with instructions and log-in provided).</p> <p>A postcard is included to encourage young people aged 12 to 17 to complete the children and young people's questionnaire online.</p> <p>An 0800 number and email address are provided for questions.</p>	<p>About a week later, a reminder postcard is sent thanking respondents and acting as a reminder to those still to respond.</p> <p>This communication is targeted to adults only.</p>	<p>A week after the postcard, non-respondents are sent a reminder letter to complete the survey online.</p> <p>A flyer is included for ages 12 to 17 to complete the survey online.</p>

Respondents aged 50-plus

ELECTORAL ROLL	INVITATION LETTER	REMINDER POSTCARD 1	SURVEY PACK	REMINDER POSTCARD 2
Sample selected from Electoral Roll	<p>Invitation letters are sent to the named adults (aged 18-plus) inviting them to complete the questionnaire online (with instructions and log-in provided).</p> <p>A postcard is included to encourage young people aged 12 to 17 to complete the children and young people's questionnaire online.</p> <p>An 0800 number and email address are provided for questions.</p>	<p>About a week later, a reminder postcard is sent thanking respondents and acting as a reminder to those still to respond.</p> <p>This communication is targeted to adults only.</p>	<p>A week after the postcard, non-respondents are sent a survey pack with a hardcopy of the questionnaire, letter and a reply-paid envelope.</p> <p>A flyer is included for ages 12 to 17 to complete the survey online (no paper questionnaire is available for the children and young people's survey).</p>	<p>A final reminder is sent to adults who have not yet taken part in the survey.</p>

Note: Parents or caregivers are asked to respond on behalf of tamariki aged 5 to 11 in their household (and encouraged to do the survey with their child and/or check responses with them).

Appendix E: Question wording and base descriptions

Figure 1A/1B (all young people) & 2A/2B (tamariki) & 3A/3B (rangatahi) & 4A/4B (adults)

Tables 14 & 16 (all young people and adults), 15 & 17 (all young people), & 18 (rangatahi)

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q12 (5–17) In the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity specifically for sport, physical education (PE), exercise or fun?

Q7 (18+) Thinking back over the last 7 days (not including today) have you done any physical activity that was specifically for the purpose of sport, exercise, or recreation?

Note: The physical activity guidelines were agreed to by the Ministry of Health and Sport NZ and they outline the minimum levels of physical activity required to gain physical health benefits:

- young people need to do at least 7 hours of activity per week at any intensity.
- adults need to do at least 150 minutes of activity per week at any intensity.

Q16b (5–17) About how many minutes did <you/name> spend doing <insert activity> in the last 7 days (not including today) when...?

Q19 (18+) Still thinking about the physical activities you have done in the last 7 days, in total how many hours did you spend being physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?

Q13a (5–17) Please tick all the ways <you/name> have been physically active for sport, PE, exercise, or fun in the last 7 days (not including today).

Q8a (18+) Which of the following have you done in the last 7 days? Please only select the activities where you have been physically active specifically for sport, exercise, or recreation.

Figure 5 & 6 (all young people)

Table 1 & 2 (all young people)

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q16 (5–17) Where or how did <you/name> do <activity> in the last 7 days?

Table 3, 4, 5 & 6 (all young people)

Base: All respondents aged 5 to 17

Q39a (5–17) How much do <you agree or disagree / name agrees or disagrees> with each statement.

Figure 7 (tamariki) & 8 (rangatahi) & 9 (adults)

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q29/Q29b (5–17) In the last 12 months, how many (if any) sports teams, or recreation clubs/groups have <you/name> been in at school? And how many <have you/has name> been in outside of school?

Q37 (18+) Do you currently belong to a gym or fitness centre?

Q39 (18+) Are you currently a member of any sport or recreation club (other than a gym or fitness centre)?

Figure 10 (all young people) & 11 (adults)

Base: All respondents aged 5 and over

Q35 (5–17) In the last 12 month, have you taken part in any of these events where lots of people take part?

Q35 (18+) In the last 12 months, have you actively participated in any of these events where lots of people take part?

Figure 12 (rangatahi and adults)**Base: All respondents aged 12 and over**

Q28 (12–17) In the last **7 days (not including today)** have you used any **technology** (Fitbits, smartphone apps, pedometers etc.) when you have been **physically active** for sport, PE, exercise or fun?

Q26 (18+) In the last 7 days have you used any technology (Fitbits, smartphone apps, pedometers, etc.) when you have been physically active for sport, exercise or recreation?

Table 7 (tamariki) & 8 (rangatahi) & 9 (adults)**Base: All respondents aged 5 and over**

Q39b (5–17) The next few statements are about sport rather than other physical activity. How much do <you agree or disagree / name agrees or disagrees> with each statement.

Q47/Q48/Q53 (18+) How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Figure 13 (all young people and adults) & 14 (adults)**Base: All respondents aged 5 and over**

Q48 (5–17) On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very unhappy and 10 is very happy, in general how happy are you?

Q68 (18+) How do you feel about your life as a whole?

Table 11 (all young people), 12 (tamariki), 13 (rangatahi), & 14 (all adults)**Base: All respondents aged 5 and over**

Q13a (5–17) Please tick all the ways <you/name> have been physically active for sport, PE, exercise, or fun in the last 7 days (not including today).

Q8a (18+) Which of the following have you done in the last 7 days? Please only select the activities where you have been physically active specifically for sport, exercise, or recreation.