

ARE AUSTRALIANS ACTIVE? PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL RECREATION

Thursday 19th March 2015 – Analysis of ABS data released last month shows that 2 in 5 (40%) Australians aged over 15 have not participated in any sport or physical recreation even once in the last 12 months – which increased from just over a third (35%) in the past year.

Walking more popular than the gym

The most popular type of physical recreation Australians participate in is **walking**, indicated by 2.3 million females and 1.2 million males. This is followed closely by going to the **gym or fitness**, again more popular with females - almost 1.8 million females go to the gym with 1.4 million males doing the same. Males are more likely to go for a **jog or run** (740,500) than females (624,000).

The top 10 sports:

	Males	Females	Persons
Walking for exercise	1,233,100	2,319,700	3,544,900
Fitness / Gym	1,442,700	1,769,700	3,214,000
Jogging / Running	740,500	624,000	1,363,100
Swimming / Diving	457,300	716,400	1,174,800
Cycling / BMXing	777,400	378,700	1,151,900
Golf	603,500	127,400	732,000
Tennis (indoor and outdoor)	305,000	255,500	563,100
Outdoor soccer	321,300	118,700	438,800
Netball (Indoor and outdoor)	25,500	387,100	413,800
Basketball (indoor & outdoor)	281,900	123,500	406,100

Whilst still popular, swimming and diving as a sport has dropped down the list in the most recent study, with an estimated 226,200 less people involved now than a year ago. Bushwalking has also lost participants, declining by 150,900 participants to a total of 285,600 being involved with the activity.

Aqua aerobics is rising up the list, growing from 75,300 participants to 90,800 in the past year along with triathlons which have become more popular, growing from 47,700 participants to 58,800 in the last year.

Younger generations most active:

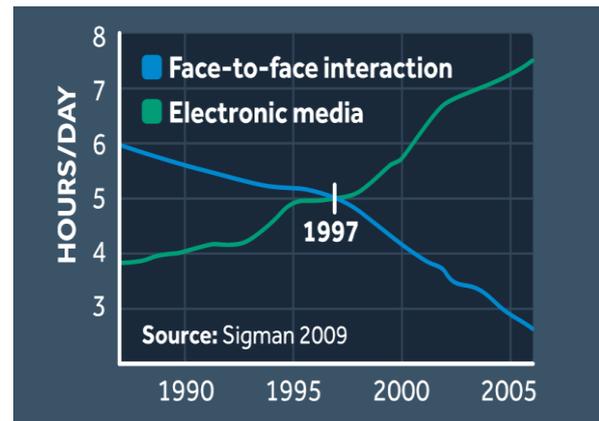
Participation in sport and physical recreation was generally highest among younger generations. Almost three quarters of those aged 15-17 participated in sport (73.8%) which declines after finishing school to just over two-thirds of 18-24 year olds (67.2%). Just under half (46.6%) of Australians aged over 65 continue to participate in physical recreation and sport.

Sedentary lifestyles and the Screenage:

The sport participation rate has been declining across the board, and these younger generations are no exception, declining from a participation rate of 78 to 73.8 for Gen Zeds aged 15-17 in the last year.

In addition, Generation Z (born 1995-2009) have been born into the Screenage – where since 1997 we have spent more time on digital devices than in human face to face interaction.

Sedentary lifestyles are on the rise in this Screenage era, and based on a projection of the current trends, by the year 2027, when Gen Z have all reached adulthood, 77.9% of males and 61.8% of females are likely to be obese or overweight.



Media Enquiries

For comment or enquiries, please contact **Ashley McKenzie** at ashley@mccrindle.com.au or via 02 8824 3422.

Sources: McCrindle Research, ABS Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation, 4177.0